



The Martyr's Curse

Scott Mariani

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AN ANCIENT CURSE. A SHOCKING MASSACRE.
A THREAT TO UNLEASH THE ULTIMATE DISASTER.

Ex-SAS major Ben Hope has found sanctuary in a remote monastery in the French Alps. But wherever Ben goes, trouble is not far behind.

When a team of merciless killers slaughter the innocent monks Ben's revenge quest draws him into a bewildering mystery of stolen treasure, deception and murder.

As he works to unravel the clues he is confronted with a terrifying reality that threatens to cruelly reshape the future of humanity. What is the significance of an ancient curse dating back to a heretical burning? What are the real ambitions of the enigmatic 'Army of the Prepared'?

The race is on to prevent global devastation, and there's only one man who can do it.

The exhilarating and addictive new thriller by the master bestseller, Scott Mariani.

The Martyr's Curse Details

Date : Published June 4th 2015 by Avon

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Author : Scott Mariani

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Genre : Thriller, Adventure, Fiction, Mystery, Crime

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From Reader Review The Martyr's Curse for online ebook

Robert Bradberry says

1348

Fantastic transition for an incredible character who realistically hit rock bottom only to come out guns blazing as the hero we all know and love. And a great story to boot. Where will Ben go now? I'm hooked on this five-star series and can't wait to read on.

Giuseppe Ruotolo says

I really enjoy Ben Hope however this one was a bit below par, hence the 2 stars.

Usual good start couldn't turn the pages fast enough, Then it kind of seemed to sag in the middle with a load of mambo-jumbo about chemical of mass destruction which went for far too long and I found myself skipping to the action.

Let's hope Hope comes back stronger in the next one.

Hano-Chan says

I had some conflicted feelings about this book. I started reading it almost a year ago and only now was I able to finish reading it. I liked the beginning very much but then a few chapters in it felt quite boring to me, I kept reading the same page I was stuck at, over and over and over again, not really interested in moving forward. Then, after I finished reading The Bach Manuscript I became excited to finish this one. The later chapters were more engaging and fun to read. 5 Stars like always!

A few quotes I liked:

"Why is it that everyone under the age of thirty seems to think all the mysteries of the world can be solved on Google?" haha!

"A light, delicate and insubstantial pale silk nightdress that seemed to be more holes than material". I found this one to be quite funny because it is how we feel about the fashion industry these days!! It is becoming quite difficult to find a full proper outfit without the need to complement it with something else to cover up the missing material sections.

"Human error. The fallibility principle. No matter how secure the system, there was always a weak link somewhere." Very true, I like it!

Sandy Adams says

4.5 stars

Perhaps Mariani's books could be called a bit formulaic but they are just so good! I wish the author would do as James Rollins and Steve Berry and end his books with comments on what was true and what was part of his imagination as portions seem to be based on fact. Or maybe he is just that good. Another not to be missed Ben Hope adventure.

Jo says

Good escapist thriller. You know what you are getting when you read Ben Hope. a quick read. Ben Hope saves the world again.

AN ANCIENT CURSE. A SHOCKING MASSACRE.
A THREAT TO UNLEASH THE ULTIMATE DISASTER.

Could Ben Hope have found peace at last?

That's the question he's asking himself after his wanderings through Europe have led him to a remote medieval monastery in the French Alps. A haven of serenity, a place he wants to remain.

But wherever Ben goes, trouble is never too far behind.

When a team of merciless killers invade his newfound sanctuary and slaughter the innocent monks, Ben's revenge quest quickly draws him into a bewildering mystery of stolen treasure, deception and murder.

What is the truth behind the cache of gold bullion apparently hidden for centuries under the monastery? What is the significance of an ancient curse dating back to a cruel heretic burning in medieval times? What are the real ambitions of the enigmatic leader of an organisation of doomsday 'preppers' calling themselves Exercitus Paratorum: the Army of the Prepared?

Melly Kallon says

I read these books too fast and too hungrily. And I know the next one won't last too long unread. Until I am out of published books, hell I have only 5 left, not very comforting thought since I read 4 already for quite a short time. And I'm pretty sure I'll read the next one 'til the end of this week, oops.

I've always taught the worst kind of criminals are lunatics because they're maniacal, extreme in their beliefs and would stop at nothing to achieve what they stand for, usually something very, *very* massive and destructive. And it just sounds ridiculous to put in jail a person intending to kill millions and what not. No, here Ben Hope's methods work perfectly fine and are the best solution ever. I was pleased to see in this book that for the first time in forever officials gave Ben the carte blanche to act however he seems it's best to do so. There's nothing like death sentence which, unfortunately, we lack nowadays, one thing the past can teach us how efficient it was.

This book reminded me a little bit of Dan Brown's Inferno because of the... main subject. However, I see more reason in Inferno and it seemed almost right to me(yeah, I'm a very extravagant mind for sure). The antagonist there was almost not one at all while in The Martyr's Curse... well, Streicher was a whole lot of a

madman ready to spread a massive attack on the world. So no, I don't think such a person has to be put in jail, that's the distorted view of democracy which is anything but fair. I miss the guillotine, at least that's a fair justice to the worst of criminals.

I think I talked too much off-topic. So, in the eleventh instalment of Ben Hope series, Ben himself has begun to find a little peace at last. He is thankful to the monks who saved him from self-destruction and accustomed to their life in the isolated monastery in the French Alps. And is happy to stay as there and maybe start anew the life he was planning for himself a long time ago. Yet, nothing goes exactly as planned, right? In Ben's case, it never does, at least not about his peaceful life far away from danger and trouble. I'm not sure Ben Hope will ever be the guy to settle down peacefully and I'm wondering how exactly this will end. Because at some point the series will have an end so will it be *finally* a happy ending or...? No, not the second option, I'll be very upset and mad at the author. I wish he could find a woman he can be happy with, one who will be beside him no matter what happens(it's not his fault bad guys exist, right?) just like my favourite duo Nina Wilde and Eddie Chase. Why couldn't he be with a woman and still doing insane heroic acts just like Eddie? Because it really hurts me seeing him like that, especially when drunk and so aimless.

When the people who helped him and accepted him into their home are brutally slaughtered, Ben will stop at nothing to avenge them. And that's something he does perfectly fine. However, what seems like a gold theft soon reveals to be far more dangerous and terrifying than he'd expected. The odds are too big and there's no place so mistake. Ben is soon in a race with time to prevent the ultimate disaster by stopping the leader of an organisation of doomsday preppers.

It was nice to see again the once Paris detective Luc Simon who had said 'Men like us are lone wolves.' in the very first book when Ben had met him not in a very friendly environment. He was damn right, they're good men but so unlucky in their personal lives. It makes me sympathise them. But here's another Ben Hope adventure on the road so don't miss it!

Andrew says

It was great to see this book get back to the high quality of many of the earlier ones in the series (I just felt one or two of the recent books, although very good, were not at the standard of the earlier ones). If you haven't got the message - I loved reading this book and read it almost non-stop! This book had a quite modern theme that I don't want to give away as a spoiler. There was great contrast in the book from the early parts where we had Ben in great crisis, to Ben at peace and then Ben at his best as avenging angel! However, I do worry about what is next for Ben! This became fast pace, high octane stuff that rivals the likes of Jack Reacher, Mitch Rapp, John Puller and Gabriel Allon. If you enjoy any of these books and characters I am sure you would enjoy this series, especially if you like a historical connection to your books that these always provide. What have you got to lose!

Matt says

Seeking to reinvent Ben Hope (and have the character do some of that himself), Scott Mariani tries to turn the tables on the traditional path taken by novels in this series. Emotionally lost, Hope spent some time after his last mission in America wandering around the European continent. After settling in a French monastery, Hope uses the kindness of the monks to regroup and turn away from his personal vices. Seven months into his stay, Hope begins to wonder (again?!) if he ought to commit to a life of godliness and away from the toils of the outside world. While running an errand for the monastery, the sole vehicle breaks down and Hope, in a moment of weakness, turns to his old ways of drinking to excess. During this sojourn, Hope encounters

someone from his past, only making the situation worse. Picking himself up, Hope returns to the monastery, only to find that all the monks have been murdered. One of the killers appears to have died in the crossfire as well, his getaway bag weighed down by two large gold bricks. After a pat-down, Hope finds a mobile phone and through a series of phone calls, coaxes one of the team to meet him. After grilling her, Hope discovers that this Sylvie Valois is actually working for French Homeland Security, trying to infiltrate a gang headed up by Udo Streicher, Swiss mercenary and devious criminal. Hope and Sylvie begin their slow search for Streicher, learning a little more about some of the hidden secrets the monastery has been saddled with over the centuries, all of which followed the controversial execution of Salvator l'Aveugle. Might Streicher have been stealing the gold as part of a larger plan related to Salvator's final professions before being burned alive? Heading into Switzerland, Hope and Sylvie do their best to learn more, all while dodging the French and INTERPOL officials. When Hope learns of Streicher's final plan and a secret kept in ancient documents that could have cataclysmic results, he and Valois must neutralise things before they get out of hand. An interesting twist in the series, Mariani shows that Ben Hope can never steer entirely away from trouble or action. Series fans will surely enjoy this addition as Hope continues to show his prowess.

While I prefer not to compare authors or characters, I cannot stop from stating that Mariani's Ben Hope is becoming more and more like Child's Jack Reacher with each passing book. Series fans (and those who read my reviews) will remember that Hope messed up with his fiancée Brooke Marcel and left her hanging so that he could go about doing his own thing. As with many of the novels, Hope finds himself working with a female sidekick (though sometimes he is the one following his female companion) and there is always a question of chemistry. Hope tends to keep the females away from his heart (having let two in who pained him) and disappears off to the next location when it suits him. This novel continues that Reacher-esque attitude, with Hope hiding away in a monastery to reinvent himself. Hope wants to live his life and steer away from trouble, but it keeps knocking on his door and he is forced to take action. Mariani offers up Sylvie Valois as the latest sidekick and pushes them into a wonderfully devious story that has history and modern day implications in equal measure. I am happy to see the interactions and can only wonder if Hope will remain the 'constant wanderer' that has turned his character into someone new over the last few books. The story itself has some wonderful aspects, to the point that there was a race to see the past in order to stop the future, which always excites me more than a simple "shoot 'em up" plot. Mariani touches on some of the 21st century technology that keeps thriller novels enticing without needing to use the traditional weapons that find their way into many stories. This new Ben Hope might also prove to be even better, as the reader will remain in the dark over where he is and what he does. Brilliant twist!

Kudos, Mr. Mariani for never bowing to the pressure of the genre and keeping readers on their toes throughout the series.

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

Alan Marston says

Ben is a very determined person, determined to drink himself into oblivion at the start, then determined to dedicate himself to a monastic existence, and finally determined to avenge the deaths of his friends, murdered for a secret buried deep in the monastery.
That secret involves the development of a bio weapon that could obliterate a significant proportion of

humanity.

This is a crackingly paced read that I took only a few days to complete, and made me want to move on to the next in the series. Ben takes on cause that most of us would definitely shy away from, in each case with little regard to himself, but reflecting that deep determination to put things right. His methods are not pretty, but can be very effective.

Andra Nicoara says

Poor Ben never seems to catch a break and once again people he cares about get hurt. I enjoyed Silvie's character, gracious and badass at the same time, she balanced the action and ultimately gave Ben the warmth and closeness he badly needed again. I'm looking forward to reading the next book and finding out what kind of shitstorm he's gonna get himself into!

Robert Hinder says

Good Paced Book

Typical Mariani/Hope Combination well paced book some twists and turns along the way interesting start to the book with Ben Hope living as a Monk but then something happens and Ben turns into the person we all know seeking vengeance

Magdalena aka A Bookaholic Swede says

SWEDISH REVIEW

Martyrens förbannelse är den andra boken jag har läst i Ben Hope serien och jag tycker storyn i denna bok är snäppet bättre än i den förra boken jag läste (Dolda). Men så finner jag begravda hemligheter väldigt fascinerande. Sedan är det så att man kan ju inget annat än tycka synd om Ben Hope som äntligen har funnit den frid han har sökt så länge ska tvingas ta itu med onda människor igen. Denna gång en man som är ute efter något som kan innebära världens undergång. För Ben Hope är detta uppdrag personligt, han är ute efter hämnd. Munkarna som dog var hans vänner och han stoppar inte för något eller något förrän de har fått upprättelse.

Martyrens förbannelse är en snabbläst thriller, perfekt för en mörk vinterdag när man vill tillbringa dagen i soffan under en filt. Jag gillar Ben Hope, han är inte en opersonlig mördarmaskin utan en man som har fått utstå mycket men som nu verkar ha funnit ro. Men så krossas det och än en gång måste han stoppa en galning. Jag fann att handlingen i första halvan av boken tilltalade mig mest, när man ännu inte hade svar på alla frågor. Slutstriden kändes en aning förutsägbar men boken är helt klart underhållande.

Tack HarperCollins Nordic för recensionsexemplet!

ENGLISH REVIEW

The Martyr's Curse is the second book I have read in the Ben Hope series and I think the story in this book is slightly better than in the previous book I read (The Forgotten Holocaust). But I find buried secrets very fascinating. I don't you can feel anything but sorry or Ben Hope who has finally found the peace he has sought so long to be forced to deal with evil people again. This time a man who is looking for something that could mean the end of the world. For Ben Hope is this mission personal, he's out for revenge. The monks who died were his friends and he does not stop for anyone or anything until they have been vindicated.

The Martyr's Curse is a fast read thriller, perfect for a dark winter day when you just want to spend the day on the sofa under a blanket. I like Ben Hope, he is not an impersonal killing machine, but a man who has suffered much, but who now seems to have found peace. But then it's crushed and once again he must stop a madman. I found the first half of the book appealed to me the most when you have not yet had all the answers. The final battle felt a little predictable, still, the book is certainly entertaining.

Thanks to HarperCollins Nordic for the review copy!

Kate says

The Ben Hope series is my favourite action thriller series. I've read and loved every one of them. I think it's fair to say that this, the eleventh, is the best of them all and that is a considerable achievement.

Amanda Bayliss says

Thanks to Sally for putting me onto this one

Joe Geesin says

When it flowed it was as good as the rest, but some segments (notably the monastery) used to set the scene were far too drawn out. We all like a bit of Bond-like fantasy in the drama but final scene pushed the limits of being shot to pieces and walking away just a bit too far.
