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L. Ron Hubbard

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Detective Terry Lane is a standout homicide cop who thought he'd seen it all . . . until now.

As tough as Kevin Costner as Eliot Ness of *The Untouchables*—and just as incorruptible—Lane has seen the darkest side of human behavior. But he's never seen a murder spree like this, targeting the wealthy, the powerful and the privileged. For the evidence is clear: the killers have not emerged from the seamy underside of the city . . . but from six feet under it. They are the walking dead, spreading terror and showing no mercy.

Following a trail of drugs, blackmail, and the twisted clues of a seductive nightclub singer, Detective Lane will have to think outside the box...or he could end up inside one, buried alive.

In 1934, while living in New York, the heart of the publishing industry, Hubbard struck up a friendship with the city's medical examiner—a relationship that started his education in undetectable crime and provided him with authoritative clinical background for his detective stories.

“A rollicking horror yarn [that] taps into the current craze for zombies. . . . heart-pounding.”
—Publishers Weekly

*An International Book Awards Winner

Dead Men Kill Details

Date : Published January 1st 2010 by Galaxy Press (first published September 30th 2006)

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Author : L. Ron Hubbard

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From Reader Review Dead Men Kill for online ebook

Rebecca says

This is not a book I would suggest reading at night if you get spooked easily. At times I let my imagination run wild and at night time, reading scary stories, I can get pretty nervous. I have to say that Dead Men Kill was really awesome as it combined horror and mystery which I love.

The writing style was really good. It's different to the kinds of books I usually read and so I find it to be quite a nice change of pace.

The story itself had the ability to keep me sucked in. I felt like there was never a dull moment in the book because everything was just go, go, go. I really enjoyed that as it helped me get through the story faster. I have to say that I had fun guessing who the bad guy was and I did get it right, I always like it when I guess right.

Overall, I really enjoyed Dead Men Kill. It was something a little different and had a lot of horror and mystery thrown in that made it awesome.

Chris says

Before seeing this book (and other similar books) on the shelf, I had no idea that L. Ron Hubbard had written pulp fiction. I honestly only knew about him peripherally as the writer of Dianetics and founder of the Church of Scientology. Since I never really had any interest in either of those, I never bothered to learn more. So I was surprised to find that he had a number of pulp adventure stories like Dead Men Kill.

Based on the cover and the blurb, I was anticipating something akin to the action/detective thrillers of Dashiell Hammett or Raymond Chandler. The main story arc of Dead Men Kill follows a young police Detective, Terry Lane, as he tries to solve a series of murders. This story takes a turn for the supernatural in that the murders are being committed by dead men, as the title suggests. Detective Lane sees a fairly obvious pattern to the murders and can logically link them together. Each man killed was a wealthy and/or prominent citizen in the community who has received death threats demanding money. Someone close to the victim dies of a fever or illness of some sort and then shortly after that funeral, the corpse turns up at the wealthy associate's house and kills them.

The supernatural twist made the whole thing feel very "Scooby Doo" to me. The writing certainly isn't as gritty as Hammett's work so it could potentially be accessible by Scooby fans. There is violence in the terms of shootouts and car chases but no harsh descriptions. The writing is also fairly simple and doesn't feel as tight or as elegant as hard boiled detective thrillers. With the other books, even though there were sequences of intense action and adventure, the writing still had a flow and tone that made it feel solid. Hubbard's writing got the job done but it wasn't anything overly impressive. If anything, it was written very simply and straightforward which once again makes it accessible to the young Scooby crowd.

As the story went on I was impressed by the degree of tension, twists and turns integrated into the plot. Rather than a simple shoot-em-up adventure mystery there was a fair amount of good detective work to be done. There were some pretty good character interactions and tension between Detective Lane and his superiors as well as some of the suspects and informants. As the story goes on, Lane finds himself the object of threats and attempts on his life. While some of the situations felt a little laughable (very "Scooby Doo" style - capture or just threaten the hero rather than kill him), they did create some good tension and left me

wondering just how Lane was going to escape from one predicament after another.

When the final solution to the mystery was revealed, I found it to be actually fairly satisfying. I really liked the way the supernatural elements were dealt with, especially considering this was written in the 1930s without our 21st century sophistication. *grin* Some of the accomplices and motives were a little thin, but this is pulp fiction after all. It's never meant to be high drama with amazingly realistic and fully-fleshed-out characters.

Overall this wasn't a "great" read but it was a "fun" read. I haven't decided yet whether I'll seek out any more Hubbard in the near future. More likely I'll probably turn to Hammett or Chandler. But this was a fun way to broaden my horizons and find a new author I otherwise never would have turned to.

3 out of 5 stars

Sarah says

[View my review on Booklikes or Leafmarks.](#)

Craig says

Originally published in the July, 1934, issue of THRILLING DETECTIVE MAGAZINE, Galaxy Press has reprinted this novella in the mystery category of their Hubbard series. I would have labeled it as a horror title (zombies, right?), and thought it would have been equally at home in an issue of WEIRD TALES in its time. It's a squeaky and creaky old-fashioned tale, a little silly in spots, as pulpish as can be, and I really enjoyed it. It would have been a wonderful old black-and-white noir hard-boiled detective Universal film in the pre WWII days. Read it with popcorn and an old instrumental soundtrack playing... I won this copy in a Goodreads Firstreads Giveaway.

EZRead eBookstore says

As pulpy and fictiony as pulp fiction can be, "Dead Men Kill" has everything. Femme fatale? Check. Hard-boiled, lucky, and crazy hunky lead detective? Check. Billions of flying bullets? Also check. It's a throw-back to a time when all conversations came in one-liners, and night clubs were full of disguised henchmen. Was it just me or did the leader of the nightclub band shoot at the detective? The thing that really sets "Dead Men Kill" apart from other mystery/noir adventures is zombies. Yes, there isn't anything the EZ Read team won't do for a good zombie read.

Detective-sergeant Terry Lane is part James Bond, part superhero, and all man. While the rest of the police department appears to be having deep tissue massages and tea parties back at the station, Lane is out searching for zombie killers. Indeed, rich men are being killed by what appears to be the walking dead: former employees that appear conveniently after an extortion attempt. And no, this isn't Scooby Doo, there are fingerprints and everything. Without giving away any of the plot, let's just say I haven't caskets get this much action since...ever.

Fast-paced and fun, "Dead Men Kill" will satisfy readers who love the noir genre and want a quick read with tons of quotable lines. Pretty much every time Terry Lane punches the cold clammy flesh of a zombie, it's worth sharing. And at 80-something pages, it keeps a consistently action-packed pace that reminded me of old "Batman" cartoons, or old timey radio mysteries. True to the genre and first published in 1934, it is exactly how a noir should be: quick, exciting, and unsentimental.

Trying to resist making a pun or a one-liner,

EZ Read Staffer Jenifer

Lu Patterson says

I was attracted by the title of this book, which is weird given that it has the word "kill" in it LOL. In my head the title echoed of recent TV shows, like "Supernatural" or "The Walking Dead" and I was spot on, with zombies and situations that cannot happen in real life, but will make you wonder....what if???

What I loved about this book was first and foremost the pagination, as it was divided in chapters instead of being a one piece novel like "The Iron Duke" and that made it easier for me to take breaks.

That said, it was very easy to read in a whole afternoon. I couldn't put it down as I love mystery books like this and I wanted to "solve" it.

The main character, Detective Terry Lane, is kind, handsome and very strong. Picture Dean of Supernatural, smoking hot, but with the kid heart of Sam (from the beginning of the show anyway). He's a good man, always trying to do the right thing by every one, but I find him also a bit too naive at times, making me scream: "Really??? And you fell for that???" right at the book, like he could really hear me now. (My husband thought I was hilarious)

Then there is the beautiful and mysterious nightclub dancer, Dawn Drayden, that really confuses and fascinate both the reader and poor Detective Lane. She's also a character full of surprises that leave the readers breathless with every single action! Until the very end!

If I had to find a flaw about this book it will be that I saw right through the plot from the very beginning. Now mind you, it could be because I love mystery books and read a lot of them, so I was able to pick up little hints here or there of who the stranger villain would be.....and found out I was totally right.

In this respect, I think that if there is a lesson to be taken from the novel, it will be to keep your friends close and keep your enemies even closer because you'll never know at any given time, who's after you and what their motives might be. But also it made me think about not being so paranoid about every little thing all the time, because troubles struck when you least expect it. The important thing is not to give up hope and use all the resources available to get out of a dangerous situation.

Jessica-Robyn says

Books like Dead Men Kill are pretty much made to be listened to. In the style of old 1950's radio plays the

audiobook is executed very well. There are different people doing the voices and various sound effects which bring the story to life and really makes it feel like the time period. This audio version is only two hours long and it moves at a swift pace.

Recently with the start of this summer I have been listening to a lot of old radio plays in the form of podcasts on my iPod. There are a ton of people who are using podcasts as a medium to bring back some of the old style radio. Back in the day when there wasn't TV or the internet, there was the radio. Radio Detective Story Hour has a bunch of archived radio plays from the 1940's to 1950's and The Thrilling Adventure Hour is a podcast recorded in front of a live audience that brings back all the classic tropes with a wink and a nod tying in science fiction, punch-drunk paranormal, superheroes, and war time tales. When I remembered that I had the audiobook of Dead Men Kill I just had to give it a listen. It was perfect timing, but unfortunately it was a bit of a let down. I can tell you that if I had read this book instead of listening to it I would have gotten bored fast.

In Dead Men Kill, the title says it all. People are seemingly coming back from the dead and killing their former employers in gruesome and brutal fashion. Someone is using the situation to blackmail the city's elite, but people keep dying and no one quite knows what to make of it. But Detective Terry Lane is on the case! To be honest, how Detective Lane manages to solve anything is completely beyond me, but solve he does.

Right now zombie mythology is much more common knowledge than it was back in 2006 when this was first published and that played a big factor in my lack of enjoyment of the mystery itself. The big twist is one that you see coming from a mile away and because of this it came across more like what I would expect from an episode of Scooby-Doo rather than some thrilling suspense novel. However, there were still some creepy moments, especially because I listened to this when I couldn't sleep at four in the morning.

So in the end I would give it three stars for the production, but only two for the story, which has me rounding with a 2.5 star rating overall.

AH says

Free audiobook download from audiobooksync.com.

Kind of reminded me a little of those old CBS Mystery Radio plays. The audio version had a few different narrators, music, and sound effects. The story itself was a little predictable but fun to listen to in small spurts.

Karla says

There's not much to say about this one. It's a hacky pulp that shows its "paid by the word" petticoats with shameless repetition of dialogue and plot recap. But it moves along without stopping, there's plenty of action, a mad(ish) scientist bad guy, and a Sledge Riprock type of hero dealing out the punches and snappy comebacks.

A good way to spend an hour.

Leila says

In the 1930s and 1940s, readers read pulp fiction - rough cut, pulpwood paper that held stories. Pulp fiction authors were considered no-holds barred entertainers and real storytellers that were interested in thrilling plot twists, horrific villains or white knuckle adventure.

Dead Men Kill was a short read - literally a matter of a few hours over two nights. (It didn't help that I found it to be quite a page turner.)

I loved the story. It wasn't your typically zombie story and it held thrill and excitement and mystery. I was actually excited as it neared revealing everything that I was able to piece the puzzle together (at the last minute but still!)

I highly enjoyed this and will be getting hubby to read this because I truly think he would enjoy this. I'm not sure there is anyone that wouldn't enjoy it. It isn't gross or gore-ish, but is a great, easy read.

Disclosure: I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Lori says

Read 10/19/11 - 10/21/11

3 Stars - Recommended for readers familiar w/ pulp fiction

Pgs: 95

Funny story. On the first morning of BEA, as soon as we were given the "go-ahead" to enter the expo floor, as I made my way around the right hand corner of the vendor booths, Galaxy Press stopped me in my tracks and began aggressively pitching me L. Ron Hubbard's books.

Upon hearing the name, I inwardly cringed... "Oh no," I thought to myself, "They are going to try to Scientologize me. Run... run and don't look back!". The woman was incredibly polite and I couldn't find the nerve to be rude that early in the day, so I humored her. After she clarified that these were fictional books with no religious affiliations, we discussed the types of books I enjoy reading and she pointed me towards Dead Men Kill - which, while being incredibly pulpy, at least contained zombies.... Folks, I admit that my curiosity got the best of me and I... I... I stepped on the red carpet. God help me, but I did it! (if you've ever been to BEA, you know what I mean...)

I find pulp fiction to be predictable and generically written, but it can also be quite fun. If you can come to terms with the fact that the writing is a bit dated - my absolute pet peeve with dated literature: using the word "ejaculated" as a term for linguistic excitement / blurting something out - and if you can get past the fact that the covers are incredibly cheesy and gaudy, the few hours you spend reading the books will pass in a rompy, enjoyable blur.

Dead Men Kill is a murder mystery at its core. Executives are turning up dead; all evidence points to strangulation at the hands of their recently deceased secretaries, but how can that be? What is causing the

dead to rise? Why are they only attacking their bosses? And is Detective Terry Lane really on the hunt for... zombies?

Of course, it wouldn't be a true cop caper unless the Detective gets tipped off by a saucy, sexy nightclub girl who's got loads of inside information, and is dragged unwittingly into a dark and twisted plot that may or may not have anything to do with a lone receipt from a pharmacy in Haiti. And wouldn'tcha know it, Dead Men Kill has exactly those sort of ingredients!

If you're looking for a quick, fun, easy-to-swallow read that leaves no question unanswered, this is your book. L. Ron Hubbard must not be a fan of "cliff hangers" or of leaving stories open for potential sequels cause he was quick to solve this mystery and file it away in the drawer forever.

Case Closed!

Josh says

A zombie infused pulp that felt very dated but still semi appealing for fans of the genre. Hubbard blends elements of the supernatural with the trashy detective fiction of the golden age of dime store novels to form a pulp that lacks substance yet maintains the reader interest through the whodunit nature of the plot.

The dialogue was repetitive and characters mostly two dimensional with very little distinguishing one from another. As a result I found it difficult to care much about the outcome or the potential threats the police and civilians were subject to throughout the course of proceedings. The one character highlight was in villain Loup-Garou, who had the perception of the supernatural about him and mystery surrounding his identity.

'Dead Men Kill' is light pulp, easily read in one sitting - a kind of fast food for the mind. Consumed then forgotten about. While this review comes across negative, I should state that it was enjoyable for what it was - a true penny dreadful; a dime store, one-read novel designed for immediate short term entertainment. If you're after intrigue, substance, character depth, multi layered plotting, etc, do not look here. If you're after something light and breezy to get you through a train ride, something trashy to enjoy that requires little attention, then 'Dead Men Kill' fits the bill. 2 stars.

Jessica says

I received a free audio copy from the goodreads giveaway, and I'm glad it was an audio copy! I am sure I would have liked it much less if I actually had to read it, but it was decent background entertainment while working on odd projects. This is definitely everything you'd imagine it would be--ridiculous, cheesy, dated, predictable entertainment. I think audio is really the only way it would work for me, for that radio-show feel about it.

Shawn Deal says

This may be my favorite strictly action oriented book, I have read by Hubbard. Takes off from the first word,

I was sucked into the story immediately. It had a great amount action and some good twists and turns. This did not feel dated at all, which probably helped me get into the story so effectively. Loved this particular gem.

Mary Overton says

Perhaps the Scientologists are trying to raise money by selling reprints of L. Ron Hubbard's pulp fiction. With each copy of this free book is a postage paid reply card for the 80 titles of "Stories from the Golden Age" book club, www.goldenagestories.com, all of them by L. Ron Hubbard and so badly written they are hilarious.

"Inspector Leonard rushed from his desk into the squad room and spotted Detective-Sergeant Terry Lane. 'Lane! Snap into it. Gordon's been murdered and I think it's a clue on your Burnham killing. The man on the switchboard heard Gordon shout "My God, Jackson, get away!" into the phone. Get out there right away!'" "Detective- Sergeant Terrence Lane needed no further word. Like a shot, his wiry figure hurtled through the door, plunged down a flight of steps and swung aboard the scout car at the curb.

"The Gordon residence!' shouted Lane to Monahan [who, alas, will later have his face blown off] at the wheel. 'And step on it!'

"The car roared up the street, Lane hanging to the running board, his blue eyes flashing, the wind tearing at his raven black hair. Monahan had given the wild figure a brief glance, decided that Terry Lane meant what he said, and the squad car ripped past a red light, lanced up a traffic-jammed avenue, screamed around a curve and then came to a stop before the imposing mansion which was the home of the late Ralph Gordon, a well-known wealthy sportsman.

"If Detective Lane was disheveled, he had good reason to be. For a week he had been on the trail of a killer he could never reasonably expect to apprehend. The papers were blatant in their denouncement of the police force in general and Terry Lane in particular." (pp. 4-5)

Action at the night spot, Club Haitian:

"Without stopping, Lane jumped over the footlights and raced in among the panic-stricken guests. Waiters clutched at him, tried to beat him down. Expertly [Hubbard is a great fan of adverbs.] he skirted the tables and made for the main entrance.

"A doorman in a welter of gold braid crouched and whipped out a revolver. Lane saw him and skipped to one side. The doorman's weapon belched smoke. The detective cracked down, shooting from the hip. His automatic snapped back into his palm. The doorman screamed and rolled to the floor, spitting blood.

"Glass was shattering about Lane. Bullets were whipping into potted palms. Splinters flew from the woodwork. The detective ran swiftly to the entrance, lanced [seems to be a favorite verb of Hubbard's] through the door, raced out into the street.

"A cab was cruising past at low speed and Lane leaped for it. 'The Morton residence, and step on it! [something Lane yells a lot]'

"The driver gave Lane a wild-eyed stare, and then stepped all the way down on the accelerator. Bullets were biting into the machine from the doorway of the Club Haitian." (pg. 55)
