



# Damnable

*Hank Schwaeble*

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## **Damnable** Hank Schwaeble

After being disgraced and wrongly imprisoned, special military operative Jake Hatcher finds himself standing watch against an unimaginable threat to humanity. For he's about to discover that the streets of New York City have become a secret battleground between forces he cannot comprehend.

## **Damnable Details**

Date : Published September 1st 2009 by Berkley Books (first published 2009)

ISBN : 9780515146912

Author : Hank Schwaeble

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# From Reader Review Damnable for online ebook

## Matthew says

An enthralling read. Full review to come.

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## Kristin (MyBookishWays Reviews) says

You may read the entire review here: <http://www.mybookishways.com/2011/01/...>

Jake Hatcher is a man with a problem. A special military operative, he's been wrongly imprisoned, and on the day of his release, finds out his brother has been killed; a brother he never even knew existed. This mystery begins a journey for Hank that will take him into the darkest heart of man, and beyond.

Damnably is a wonderful debut novel, and Jake Hatcher is my kind of hero! In a sea of kick ass, tough chicks, he's a male hero to root for! Wisecracking, resourceful, and tough, I had a blast following Jake as he battled zombies, half-human, half-demons, and his own growing feelings for a certain beautiful woman. I loved the author's unique take on heaven and hell, and the creatures that inhabit them. Add to the mix Demetrius, a truly nasty villain that loves a good torture chamber, the mystery of Jake's brother, plus a dash of romance, and you have a fun, fast-paced read! I couldn't help thinking that Damnably just about has something for everyone, however, with Schwaeble's talent for description, the violence may make you squirm a little. That said, I never felt that anything was gratuitous. If anything, it appealed to the horror fan in me, and gave us a picture window into the villain's twisted psyche.

The novel switches from third person view between Jake and Demetrius, and the only complaint I have is I would have loved to have Jake's passages be first person. Although, Schwaeble makes up for this with fun asides of Jake's funny, sarcastic train of thought.

Damnably won the 2009 Bram Stoker Award for Best Novel, and it shows! It's a testament to the author's talent when he can make an over-the-top plot seem believable and make us sympathize with a hero that has such a shadowed past, but we do, and for me, that makes it a successful story. If you loved Jonathan Maberry's Joe Ledger, or Nelson DeMille's John Corey, then you'll love Jake! I know I do, and I'll follow him anywhere!

5/5

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## Mark says

A great hunt for a serial killer who turns out to be more ambitious than he seems. Great fun and well written.

Read my full review at Feo Amante Horror Thriller: <http://www.feoamante.com/Stories/Revi...>

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## Frank Errington says

5 of 5 Stars

Not long ago, I received an advance copy of *The Angel of the Abyss: A Jake Hatcher Thriller* by Hank Schwaeble. Having previously read *American Nocturne*, I was excited about the prospect of reading more of Hank's work. Then I found out, the new novel is the third book in a series. Even though I was assured the new book works well as a stand-alone novel. I had to read the whole series. Maybe I have a touch of OCD.

Long story, slightly longer. I'm so glad I'm a completist. Had I not read *Damnable*, I would have missed a terrific read, and a Bram Stoker Award winner for best First Novel, which I didn't realize until after I read the book.

In the beginning of *Damnable*, the author shows a bit of his love for noir. It doesn't hold through the entire book, but it was nice to see.

At the counter nearby, the babe, a sultry minx with milky skin, sat sidesaddle on one of the stools, smartly arrayed in a taupe linen skirt and vest, sipping her coffee like a lounging starlet nursing a gin and tonic.

There we meet Jake Hatcher, in military prison, basically for doing his job, perhaps a bit too well. When Jake is released to attend the funeral of a brother he never knew he had, things start going sideways, quickly.

Meet Valentine, an amazingly well-crafted villain and a truly despicable character, bent on bringing an end to heaven. His scheme is complex and includes a monster he calls the Get of Damnation.

They stood there watching as the thing in the cage finished the heart. It ate it like a piece of fruit, crouched over, shifting its weight on its haunches, hiding partially behind its shoulder, looking sideways at them every few seconds. Between bites.

They say the devil is in the details and some of the smallest bits in *Damnable* are some of my favorites, like Jake Hatcher's mother's obsession with flamingos. Certainly not needed, but thoroughly enjoyable.

Schwaeble creates powerful images, both with spurts of lyrical prose and the ability to get down and dirty when he needs to. *Damnable* is both a captivating and horrifying read. It's also an adult read, with both hardcore sex and extreme violence, all totally relevant to the story.

There are a number of well timed twists throughout *Damnable*, enough to keep the reader guessing to the very end.

Published by Jove, *Damnable* is available in both Paperback and e-book formats.

Hank Schwaeble is a writer and attorney in Houston, Texas. His debut novel, *Damnable*, won the Bram Stoker Award for Best First Novel. He is also the author of *Diabolical*, and the soon to be published, *The Angel of the Abyss* (all three in the Jake Hatcher series). Hank is also the author of the horror-noir collection *American Nocturne* and numerous short stories.

Hank is an active member of the Horror Writers Association and the International Thriller Writers

Association.

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## **Ascian says**

Reasonably good. Lots of sex scenes.

I was a bit put off by the fact that the main protagonist, Hatcher, is a former Special Forces guy because it's so cliched these days as the background for a badass. Then I learned the author, Schwaeble, was himself some kind of Special Forces guy. And I saw his good looks and impressive biceps. So I'm fairly pleased now with the choice for Hatcher's background. :)

I also note that Schwaeble has captured quite correctly the crude macho and highly sexed mindset of a typical male American soldier. That's good, too.

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## **William M. says**

3 AND 1/2 STARS

Author Hank Schwaeble won the Bram Stoker award for best first novel for *Damnable*, and for the most part, it is well deserved. It's original premise, some outrageous gore, and many unpredictable moments kept me reading late into the night.

While not as frightening as I think it could have been if more atmosphere was added, Schwaeble keeps the reader hooked by revealing a few pieces to the puzzle with each chapter, until finally, the complete puzzle is revealed in all its evil glory. Some of the military psychology Schwaeble writes of the main character's thought process was quite fascinating and gave an authenticity that really added to the protagonist's decisions.

There were a few coincidences that bothered me, but for the most part, it was an enjoyable read. A bit slow in the middle, it picks up nicely and carries you to its violent end. If you are into demons and the occult and like a little action with your horror, *Damnable* is certainly something different to try out.

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## **Alexis says**

This book is not as dark, or "surprising", or disturbing really as the reviews on the covers would have you believe. There are only 3 short scenes, take up an total of 6(?) pages, in the entire book that had anything "disturbing" happen. I was expecting to be on the edge of my seat constantly checking over my shoulder to make sure a monster wasn't trying to grab me, that's what a book named *Damnable* should make you feel and it just didn't.

It's a well written book, there was one chapter towards the end that seemed to never end for me. It makes me think of a James Pattersons writing, which isn't bad I like James Patterson.

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## **Joy says**

More of the same characters as in the first book with a hint at some greater evil purpose to come.

A decent 300 page entertainment.

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## **Jason says**

2.5 Stars

This came across to me as a readable first novel with some bright points and quite a bit of standard fare.

I chose to read this one as I cannot satiate my love for the biblical horror sub genre. This book with the name Damnable and the cover synopsis had me intrigued. This story really is a lite-biblical horror with some angels and demons and a lot to do with hell. Jake is a take on the Antihero but I never really connected with him.

There are some decent horror elements but overall, this played out more like a thriller than a horror novel.

The story was ok and the conclusion works, it just all seemed play out as one would expect it too. This one was a bit too safe to really enjoy. I will probably read another novel by Svhwaeble but this one can be skipped.

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## **Matthew says**

interesting book and story, liked the characters and the way it was completely different from other types of horror books dealing with 'religious' horror, etc. not quite angels and that but dealt with demons and someone trying to bring hell on earth... very enjoyable, and pretty graphic in some spots if that's your thing...i recommend this for sure.

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## **J.A. Carter-Winward says**

Hank has a really great, strong voice. It makes it so the reader isn't yanked out of the story because of awkward dialog or passages, which is nice. We'll see how the plot plays out. So far, great first novel. Even if it IS horror. :)

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## **Nicole says**

Interesting...not great, but I didn't stop reading.

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## **Geoff says**

A clear and well-written action/horror. Reminiscent of Michael McBride. Great stuff, and I can't wait for the sequel.

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## **Steve Schlutow says**

Diabolical caught my eye, so I ordered this book to begin the series.. It is an interesting series--popcorn thriller.. It is action packed demon/angel book--I was expecting vampires.. I liked being surprised--kinda tired of vampires and zombies.. On to Diabolical..

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## **Mihir says**

I happened upon this book while browsing through a catalogue. The book blurb that caught my eye describes the setting as that in New York City and having it involve an ex-military operative who has to search for his long lost brother. I knew that I wanted to check out this book further based on this description.

The setting of this story might seem a bit cliched and in some ways reminds me of the Jack Reacher series by Lee Child. However after reading the first couple of chapters I knew my perceived idea of this story was wrong and that this was something completely different and a little more violent than what I would have expected.

The story begins with a rather strange accident which sets off the beginning events of the novel. Within the first chapter readers are introduced to the main protagonist Jake Hatcher, who is currently in a military prison due to events that are unknown at the time. His release is facilitated due to events that have been told to readers in the prologue. Jake then goes on to meet up with his mother and tries to get an understanding of the events that have happened and are about to happen.

I would rather not reveal too much of what happens in the novel especially the beginning as it's all intricately connected and the plot line just builds up from there. The surprise of the novel seems to be an important part of the reading of this.

The majority of the chapters are told from Jake Hatcher's POV, however there are a few chapters where the POV shifts to include two other prominent characters who play an important part in the story. The characters, and the roles that they play, I believe will be a lot more beneficial to the readers if they find this out for themselves. There are a few one-off POVs from minor characters scattered throughout the story. This aspect of Hank Schwaeble's writing is very reminiscent of Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child who often insert one-off POVs in between the main POVs.

The story is an amalgamation of horror and thriller as Hank Schwaeble does an admirable job of keeping the reader hooked with his easy and readable prose. He also does a very good job of relaying the action scenes and the story lines to the reader. No space is wasted in reminiscing about anything that took place and all development of the storyline is forward, with no looking back. Another excellent job done by Schwaeble is that of taking all the story threads that are occurring in this novel and twisting them all into one at the end. This is something that can be appreciated as Schwaeble's writing style and story structure is very much like a seasoned author and many readers will not be able to tell that this is his debut novel.

Schwaeble has a nod to John Steinbeck and has inserted it into the plot in a very apropos manner. I thought this was a very interesting aspect of the novel and something that should have its attention drawn to.

The character development within *Damnably* is unique unto itself. The main protagonist is not a cookie-cutter character and has many sides to him, some of which are shown in this story and some of them that are not told within the novel. I'm sure there are many readers like myself who would like to read and know more about Jake Hatcher, as he was able to draw readers in and frustrate them at times. I'd love to see more of this character in other books in the future.

Another character that has great development is that of the antagonist. The antagonist is not just all out crazy, instead Schwaeble does a great job of presenting the antagonist's viewpoint and giving readers a rationale explanation of what is happening and what's behind all the events. I for one could understand the thought process and even sympathize with the "bad" guy because of this portrayal.

In the end, Hank Schwaeble just did a fantastic job in writing his debut novel. He is a talented guy who is sure to light up the thriller scene with future books. This book is a must read for all thriller, horror and supernatural fiction fans. Hank Schwaeble's *Damnably* is by far the best debut thriller of 2009 for myself. Read *Damnably* and find out why for yourself!

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