



# Sucker

*Mark Lingane*

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**Sucker** Mark Lingane  
#1 Best Seller on Amazon.

Van H. Avram, PI, stumbles from case to case, getting by on his good looks and appeal to desperate dames. But when a missing-person case dumps the body of a skinny blond thing on his doorstep, he finds himself plummeting into the clutches of an underworld intent on human sacrifice. An underworld of biblical origin.

An ancient evil rises up to destroy the world and, without asking for it, Van is thrust into the role of savior. As reality—and the occasional building—collapses around him, he's chased, battered, and seduced by demons, vampires and unhinged women, all against a background of a war-ravished world wrapped up in vintage fashions and flying diesel-powered vehicles.

Time ticks down to a do-or-die moment as the fate of the universe is decided in one final battle. But to save the universe, Van must face his own demons and an unremembered past.

For fans of Terry Pratchett, Neil Gaiman, and Douglas Adams.

## **Sucker Details**

Date : Published March 1st 2015 by Insync Holdings Pty Ltd

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Author : Mark Lingane

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Genre : Fantasy

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## From Reader Review Sucker for online ebook

### Hákon Gunnarsson says

I grabbed Sucker when it was free on Amazon, mainly because I'm interested in dieselpunk and this one is right up my alley as it comes with an hard boiled detective.

Sucker turned out to have quite a pulpy story line, with constant plot twists and turns. This is both good and bad. It's never boring, it moves to a rather frantic pace and it never really slows down. The problem with this pace is that occasionally I did have to back track a little to see if I had missed something. But it only happened a couple of times, so it didn't really stop me from enjoying this ride.

I didn't see that ending coming. It came as a complete surprise and I liked that a lot. The high point of the novel is quite dramatic and it is much stronger ending than the one I was starting to expect.

The world Ligane has built has elements of hard boiled detective novels, and film noir, both of which I enjoy. Those things are rather well combined with fantasy, making the world quite fascinating. Still there are a few little things that bothered me about it. It is not historically correct, but a modern version of 1930s, 1940s, something like that, dieselpunk basically. But occasionally things like heavy metal fans are mentioned in the story even though they don't seem to fit in. Again this is a minor detail, that didn't really stop me from enjoying the book.

All in all, this is a fun dieselpunk detective novel. The hard boiled narrative is often well executed, and it is quite exciting pulp. If there will be a sequel to Sucker I would really like to read that one too.

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### C.J. Anaya says

This story left me a little befuddled because I kept checking to make sure that I was reading book 1 in the series and not a continuation of a paranormal detective series. The author seemed to take for granted that we already knew the main character. Van's shaky history with law enforcement appeared to be a longstanding irritant for both detective and police. There just wasn't much character development, and I had no idea he was in love with L. Mallory until his internal dialogue came right out and said it. Revelations kept popping up out of nowhere with some seriously obscure foreshadowing, and I had a difficult time keeping some of the characters straight because, again, they were presented as if the reader should already be up to date on their history and bizarre behavior.

Due to the spotty character development and the outlandish situations that kept cropping up out of nowhere, I had a hard time following the plot and figuring out where the main character was running off to next or even why. Structurally, the plot was a bit disjointed. I don't need things spelled out for me, but this just baffled me. There was a lot of blood, guts, fighting, and crazy things happening with little or no explanation.

For example, why is the police officer a rabid dog, and why did he/it attack Van and then attack Phoenix who I thought had previously been killed by Levi due to the fact that his body was struck by a lightening bolt and then charred to a crisp? Where were all of the police officers when the tank exploded? Why is Van so ambivalent toward the girl he supposedly loves until more than halfway through the book? These are just a few things that kept giving me serious reader whiplash.

I think the premise is great and the artistic, almost lyrical language is intoxicating. The opening sentence alone really grabbed me. "The phone rang, all innocent and coy." It caught my attention because I could just picture the phone pretending there isn't someone on the other end of the line a person might want to avoid like the plague. "The glass had little more than ice and a bucket load of regret." These gems are sprinkled throughout the entire book. I only wish the development of the book was as wonderful as the descriptive nuances. I think the mood and tone are great, but this book would be a far better read if a content editor took a look at it.

All in all, I wouldn't label this as a real detective book. It reads more like a paranormal adventure with extremely bloody elements.

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### **Jennifer says**

Free on Amazon

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### **Christie Davis says**

I love a good detective story and this is a good story. Sucker is the second book in the Para-noir-mal Detectives series by Mark Lingane. After reading the first book in the series, Beyond Belief, I knew that I wanted to read the rest of the series.

Van H. Avram is a PI who talks old school and moves from case to case and "dame" to "dame" on his good looks. But all is not as it seems. There are paranormal forces out there in the world that he is sucked into. Soon, he is beaten, chased and even seduced by vampires and demons in this 50's backdrop of a story.

The characters in this book are fully developed and the back drop is described so vividly that you can practically see the scenes happening in front of your face. If you love the works of authors such as Douglas Adams, Terry Pratchett or Raymond Chandler, then you are sure to enjoy the stories of Mark Lingane.

Whether you are a fan of Lingane or new to his work, this is a must read book for a boring night.

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### **Jay says**

full of cheesy retro dialogue without offering the reader much outside of the typical noir detective stereotypes. The writing is basic and pulpy yet is smattered with overly elaborate (yet illogical) metaphors. Whilst I had high hopes for this book (loved the idea of a classic mystery with fantasy elements), this book failed to deliver for me, it did not grab me, or even maintain my attention, so much so, that I have donated my other (unread) Mark Lingane books, as I have no longer have any intention of starting them. \*Purchased direct from author at a pop culture convention.\*

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## **Pat says**

I won this book in the Goodreads First-reads giveaway.  
Thank you Mark.

An enjoyable fantasy sci-fi-Noir novel, it is interesting, funny and the ending is fantastic.  
I loved it.

Recommend to everyone who enjoys fantasy.

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## **C.L. says**

I really wanted to like this book, but the story is obscured by overwritten prose and a plot that stumbles from one gory scene to another, making no sense to the reader. Characters can be confused by what's going on, but readers should be able to follow. When the narrator changes from a lowbrow gumshoe to a fallen angel, it's completely out of the blue, with no foreshadowing whatsoever. The dialogue at times was brilliant, and the theme is earnest, but after a few pages, all of the similes and metaphors just get in the way of what could be good storytelling.

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## **Ian Miller says**

The genre of the book is probably noir-paranormal; I say probably because the end of the book is almost in a different genre from the beginning. (I can't justify that without spoiling.) We follow the main character, van Avram, thorough what I can only describe as a comic-book plot, with comic-book action, and the stiff-chinned character. Avram gets into a series of extraordinary situations that usually end up as classic comic-book fights, where almost anything can happen, everyone takes enormous punishment, and nothing serious stops them. If you want realism, this is not for you. If you want a plot that makes sense, this is not really for you either. Actually, if you want logical connectivity, it still is not for you. Pistols can be knocked away, and mysteriously reappear again. The villain can be burned to a crisp, but that does not stop their reappearance. In short, it is written in the spirit of a comic, but it is very dark as well. Then, as I hinted above, towards the end, it sort of changes. I also don't really get the title, but that is me.

The writing involves a lot of short sentences. Short sentences are good to generate tension in action, but they tend to be misplaced when the aim is to have a quieter passage. There is also a glut of "smart" comments, and colloquial language, and indeed, I had no idea what some of the words were supposed to convey. If you want comic-book style action and plots, and can tolerate noir, this will be a great book. But read page 1 first, to make sure you can accept the style. The grading I am giving is based on the assumption this is what you want.

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## **Mark says**

Review by Foreword Reviews

<https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/sucker>

Finalist in 2015 Book of the Year (Horror)

Finalist in 2015 Book of the Year (Humor)

**Snappy, funny noir mashes up with vampires and unholy ritual in this entertaining caper.**

Van H. Avram doesn't know much about vampires, but he does know about women. They seem to follow him everywhere: skinny, blond, dead women who appear to have had the very life sucked out of their bodies. As evidence explodes and strange dogs attack him, Avram is forced, reluctantly, to concede that something supernatural may be afoot. In fact, if things get any weirder, he may have to conclude that he's at the very center of it all.

Steeped in 1950s PI glamour, it's not hard to see the influence of Raymond Chandler in this energetic book. But Sucker also recalls Douglas Adams's *Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency*, both in the absurdity of Avram's interactions with his clientele and the cosmic implications of the cases he addresses out of his rundown yet barely affordable office. The book isn't afraid to venture into overt goofiness, and in fact, this courage often invests it with a campy appeal that belies its complicated thematic mixture of noir, horror, and comedy.

Armchair detectives will enjoy Sucker's merry chase and strict adherence to the rules of its own universe. However, the story also leaves several loose ends untied, including a few baffling peripheral characters whose existence is never fully explained. It's fairly easy to rationalize these based on clues present within the text, but readers who like their novels watertight may find that these little issues injure the book's otherwise excellent polish.

Several of the people who surround Avram seem like stock characters at first introduction but quickly develop into unique and unusual creatures born completely of the book's own world. The book's depiction of women as lusty vixens may strike some feminist readers as problematic, though others may consider this is a wink to classic pulp fiction. Even when inhabiting this gray area, Sucker's characters are fun to watch, even when not completely believable.

Stylistically, the book mimics the hard-bitten noir of the 1950s, but it updates linguistic and social conventions to better suit a modern audience. This choice works well, helping to imbue the book with sophistication that would have been absent in a straightforward homage to the genre. Sucker also adroitly handles enormous, even existential reveals in such a way that they fit into their context and remain surprising.

The potential audience for this book is broad. Science fiction, fantasy, and mystery fans are all likely to be on board from the first page, especially those who have been prepped by the recent popularity of silly-seeming, but ultimately high-quality, genre-crossing titles like Seth Grahame-Smith's *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*. However, anyone who enjoys religiously inclined fiction while simultaneously wishing that the subgenre took itself less seriously will enjoy this imaginative romp.

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**Shannon Savory says**

Looking at the title of this novel I just could not help but to chuckle, but the author is by far one of my favorites. Mark Lingane has written many books and those that I have read have left me with only the need

to read more. This novel is absolutely not an exception to the trend. This is a detective novel that painted a black and white movie feel in my mind as I read it. At first I was unsure if this novel was for me, while I am an avid reader of detective novels I just couldn't see where the story was going. But when it came together it was amazing how all the small details lead to such a larger story line. Unlike most novels that contain the paranormal this one did not see far-fetched. I did not have moments of pure disbelief, it remained very grounded. While refraining from giving anything away I will tell you that the twist in this novel I did not see coming. I expected parts of it eagerly but the final twist is what had me telling one of my best friends that they have to read it. If you like a gritty detective novel then this book is great and if you have a desire to delve into the paranormal world this book will also be a great read. I truly enjoyed the balance of the writing and the characters complex and relatable personalities.

An excellent read!

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### **K.J. Simmill says**

Sucker, a supernatural fiction by Mark Lingane. Van H. Abraham, is plunged into a world with a supernatural twist. As soon as he set eyes on the beautiful Mina his fate was sealed. She requests his services, her man has run off with a skinny blonde thing, and taken all her money to boot. Never one to relinquish a free drink he agrees to hear her story, but in the end refuses. He needs to make the rent but there are easier ways than a missing person case. Fate however had a different idea, the very next day he awakes to find a corpse on his doorstep, a skinny blonde thing. He and the police have never been on the best of terms, in fact it seems they will make any excuse to see him behind bars, so the appearance of the body gives just the excuse for a night in the slammer. And what a terrifying, earth changing night it turned out to be. The hidden world of vampires and demons is revealed, but they don't want to stay hidden, not any more. Now they are moving to force a change, and it seems it is up to Van to stand in their way.

For the first few chapters of Sucker I could almost hear the Dick Tracy style voice over. It brought a familiar voice to a fascinating genre and filled me with nostalgia for those old novels and series. There is certainly no shortage of things to catch the attention, the initial missing person missive soon becomes a quest for things forgotten in history, and reveals the true nature if the world and it's true terrors. The plot is an amalgamation of horror and humour. Whilst entertaining I feel the some parts need smoothing a little, nothing a little application of more show less tell wouldn't resolve, but sometimes it causes the reading flow to be interrupted, and whilst the characters are unique with great dialogue I would have preferred more in the way of character development. The plot itself is unique and puts a new spin on the over saturated vampire and paranormal market. Mark Lingane presents an imaginative tale with some very interesting and unexpected twists. Given the contents I would recommend it to urban/paranormal adventure fans.

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