



## **The Blood Cloth Syndicate (A Relics Novel, #1)**

*Joseph Racconti*

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## **The Blood Cloth Syndicate (A Relics Novel, #1) Joseph Racconti**

A group of people forged in the fire of ancient Israel, the shadowy remnants of a French claim to power and one of the most controversial relics to ever exist.

Brothers John and Jimmy have a big night planned with one of their childhood friends, but when they arrive at his house to find he is missing, their plans take an unexpected turn. Information they receive while visiting their grandfather, and last remaining relative in a nursing home, spurs the reunion of old friends who discover their relationships were not by chance.

## **The Blood Cloth Syndicate (A Relics Novel, #1) Details**

Date : Published (first published April 11th 2014)

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Author : Joseph Racconti

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Genre :



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## **From Reader Review The Blood Cloth Syndicate (A Relics Novel, #1) for online ebook**

### **Susan says**

A group of brothers and friends get swept up into a mysterious conspiracy. As one by one they are threatened or injured, they band together to sort things out. Brothers John & Jimmy think their aged grandfather, their last living relative, may have some answers. What they learn about an ancient religious relic is almost too much to believe. However, their French foe is definitely convinced of it's existence and will stop at nothing to locate it. This thriller will take the reader to various parts of the world as you follow along on this entertaining ride.

This book combined mystery, action, and archaeology – some of my favorite things. As this band of men dig into the mystery, they must visit various archaeological sites to find the answers. These characters are constantly in motion. Which is a good thing because the bad guys aren't holding still either. There is a French organization convinced of their moral right to attain and hold on to the bloody shroud Jesus was wrapped in when he was taken down from the cross. They have funds, trained personnel, and a deep drive to accomplish their task. Indeed, our good guys face true danger and not all of them live to the end of the book.

There is even some collateral damage. Sad, but realistic. I really appreciated that the author kept this real. Many action flicks don't really include a good guy body count. By showing us that the bad guys are competent and willing to kill to achieve their goal, the story was that much more gripping. Some scenes were very potent because of this, especially when there was collateral damage to those not involved in the pursuit of the shroud.

There is one weakness to this book: the ladies. Yep. There are just a handful, none of them make plot decisions, they are not working with the good guys, and we never see two of them together chatting about the plot (which is something the guys do all the time). With that said, I did like Jenny who was competent with handguns and hand-to-hand combat. She's a bit of a psycho, but late in the story we see a more human side to her.

The author had characters of various ethnic backgrounds which was awesome! It also tied into the plot as the characters dig into their roots and try to figure out what their ancestors and dead relatives did or did not know concerning the relic. While the ancient relic is of a religious nature, the story never gets preachy. This was awesome as well.

I was provided this audiobook at no charge by the author in exchange for an unbiased review. Thanks!

The Narration: Shaun Toole did a decent job. His French accent was better than it was in The Statement of Andrew Doran. He had distinct voices for all the characters, including the ladies. His voice for Andy threw me off at first as Andy sounded mildly retarded to me; however, it's clear from the story that he is not.

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### **Charlotte says**

I was sent this book to review by the author, however, this does not affect my review of the book. All my thoughts and opinions are entirely my own.

So before I get into this review, I'm going to just mention how my reviews have changed. I used to round half stars up to the next star however, I've decided I'm no longer doing this and instead rounding down. I'm doing this in part to highlight that a 3 star review is in no way a bad review, and I still much recommend 3 star books!

That being said, this is a 3.5 star book for me, one that I really enjoyed and think that had I not been so bogged down with work whilst reading it, I would have enjoyed it far more and given it a 4 star review.

The Blood Cloth Syndicate is a book that is quite hard to place in a genre. It's such an interesting mixture of mystery and action and crime and all three of those genres worked so well together in creating this story.

This is the story of an ancient feud between two rival 'sides'. I don't know how to best describe them so I shall call them the 'Protectors' and the 'Predators'. The families of the group I call 'Protectors' have been protecting the location of several ancient artificers for hundreds of years, most notably Christ's death shroud, which is being hunted by the 'Predators' - or the Blood Cloth Syndicate. The story starts with the latest generation being thrown into the deep end and finding out about this family history, and the story begins when one of them is attacked for his secret.

I found Racconti's writing to be so lovely to read. It was easy to read and captivating so that when I did get a chance to read it, I was engrossed and didn't want to put it down. The book is so fast paced that there is never a dull moment and everything moves seamlessly. It's very fun and very explosive and was incredibly entertaining. I couldn't put it down! It's told in a third person narrative that doesn't feel contrived or forced, but instead feels natural and makes it seem that I am watching the story unravel on screen rather than page (though, I suppose I was since I read this on kindle, but you know what I mean!) It was truly engaging.

I also felt an immense amount of anxiety for the characters. I'm not going to spoil anything, but there is a LOT of death in this book and it's so bloody brilliant. You never feel safe. Each page you read you feel one step closer to another character dying and you never know how that's going to pan out or who is going to be the target next. I particularly felt anxious for Pete and his younger brother, Andy. They were two of my favourite characters, and they felt the most complex and fleshed out. There were so many characters in this book that it was hard to keep up with them all and sometimes we didn't skim more than the surface of them, but this is a series and I am looking forward to learning more about the remaining characters in the future books. I'd love to read a short story about Pete, Andy and Jen's lives together.

Some things I'd love to see improved upon in the next book is the convenience of everything. All the choices seemed so convenient and simple and I'd have loved to hear more about the complications of the plans. However, this is a short book and this would have added a bit of perhaps unnecessary story. The convenience definitely pulled the story forward, but perhaps a bit more depth, particularly in the travel scenes, would have boosted my rating.

Other than that, I really enjoyed this book. October was such a busy month for me and I only wish I would have been able to read this them, because the book is just so exciting! I can't wait for the sequel and I definitely recommend this to people who love a hot of adult action and adventure, mystery and crime and just want a bit of fun!

Oh and that ending? Yeah, that ending is a KILLER!

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### **Teressa says**

I thought this was an exceptionally good story with realistic characters. Very enjoyable and terrific narration by Shaun Toole.

I'd recommend giving this one a listen and will likely check out the next in the series.

Audiobook received in exchange for an honest review.

(Apologies) I still can't type or stay on my computer any length of time due to shoulder issues.

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### **Rebecca McNutt says**

This novel was amazing; I listened to the audiobook version and it was the author's vivid and intense writing that really made it stand out. A group of friends in Israel find themselves in the middle of conflict and the originality shines through without ever losing momentum. The characters themselves felt alive and complex, almost as if they were real, and the book starts from right away with vibrant and scenic descriptions. *The Blood Cloth Syndicate* is an excellent novel and I highly recommend it.

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### **Laura says**

The Blood Cloth Syndicate was given to me as part of a goodreads giveaway. I am so glad I was that winner. Loved the style of the writing how it was broken down into dates, times and places. I really felt for the characters and wanted to learn more about them. The reading was smooth and descriptive. I started the book and didn't want to put it down. Really enjoy historical fiction, so kudos to the writer.

I will be watching for the next book!

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### **Carrie-Anne O'Driscoll says**

Very much in the same vein as the incredible Sigma Force novels by James Rollins, The Blood Cloth Syndicate is "a hair raising, keep you on the edge of your seat" work.

Five families from the time of Christ are still in contact with one another and it's no accident. In the beginning these families were entrusted with the shroud of Christ. Not the shroud of Turin mind you. It's the real deal. Charged with keep the Holy Relic out of nefarious hands, the five remaining descendants are given a crash course in their history and sent around the globe in a quest to keep their families' secrets.

Historically accurate and very well researched. Looking forward to book two in the Relics Series. Highly recommended.

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## **Lyn says**

ByMiss Lyn "Lyn Askew"on April 26, 2015

Format: Kindle Edition Verified Purchase

I just loved this book. The many twists and turns kept me guessing and turning pages. The author is bold enough to let some of his characters die and this ups the level of tension in the book. Don't miss this wonderful New writer. I will definitely read his books in the future.

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## **Paula Howard says**

WOW, just WOW! Joseph Racconti has it a home run with his 1st novel, The Blood Cloth Syndicate. From the very 1st page, I was pulled into the story. Found my heart racing as John, Jimmy, Paul, Pete, Andy and Mark are drawn into an adventure that began in ancient Israel. The major problem..... they have absolutely no idea what is going on at the beginning John and Jimmy's grandfather doesn't have time to tell them everything.

Betrayal is everywhere. The organize group out of France, with connections to someone in the Vatican, seems to always been one step ahead of them or right behind them.

Trying to do the right thing isn't without sacrifice... sacrifice of life and security. Everything you have believed to be true... may not be as it seems.

The Blood Cloth Syndicate is laced with history, adventure, mystery, shadowy organizations and ruthless enemies.

Hold on to your seat and this books takes you on a real adventure.

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## **David says**

A hunt for hidden relics in the vein of the DaVinci code. I enjoyed the action and the suspense. Although I can see the appeal of the "band of brothers" in this, I would have enjoyed seeing a few competent, strong women on the hero's side. Still it was a good ride and I enjoyed the way Racconti explored the lore of what might have happened to real and conjectured Biblical artifacts.

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## **Catherine says**

A thriller in the vein of Dan Brown, but not anywhere near the storytelling skill. It was a fun read, but I was distracted by the very poor editing. The grammar mistakes were to the point of distracting me from even the most intense action in the story. I also wasn't sure what the people who wanted the blood cloth were going to do with it, unless they believed it held some kind of power that would further their cause. But what was their cause? The chase was there, the conflict was there, but the purpose beyond the conflict was missing, leaving

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the story somewhat superficial.

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### **Kelly says**

I really enjoyed this book, it had a lot of twists and turns, definitely keeps the reader guessing. A few complete shocks too.

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### **Alli Brooks says**

I was not expecting that.

I have been reading a lot of fantasy here lately mixed in with some YA and some historical fiction and while those stories are great, I wanted a break. Something different.

I've read a decent amount of thrillers and when I was offered a chance to review this one, I took it. Timing seemed perfect. I was just in the mood for this kind of book.

I didn't have many expectations going in. I was hoping for a good story, something that could hold me over while I was trying to decide what to pick up next...

I was not expecting to be totally engrossed in the story. I was not expecting to have my heart racing, fearing for the character's lives. Simply put, I was not expecting this at all.

The story starts out with a flashback of sorts which really sets up the entirety of the novel. You have a character being summoned by Queen Elizabeth, who is then asked to protect.... it. Very vague. You learn a few key points such as the French involvement and IT'S obviously something they don't want the French to have... Basically it just throws you in and you HAVE to keep reading to put the pieces together, because it's just so intriguing not to.

You then go on to meet the main characters. There are quite a few of them, so it does take a while to really get the story rolling, but the in between is so action packed, it doesn't drag. The main idea is you have a group of normal guys just living their lives, until they find out that their ancestors were wrapped up in some crazy shizz and now it's their turn. I don't want to give too much of the plot away because half the fun of this book is reading and figuring out everything for yourself. I will say that keeping the characters straight did get a little confusing. There are quite a few and their names range from Paul and Pete, to John, Jimmy, and Joe. The more you read, the more these characters really become their own, so this was only a problem for a short while.

This story was very fast paced and action packed. It's the kind of story that keeps on edge until it's resolved, which I really enjoyed. Also, you have an author who isn't afraid to kill off his characters so take that as you will.

It also has a resolution. As I was getting closer to the end, I found myself getting nervous because there didn't seem like enough pages for what I thought needed to happen. I ended up pleasantly surprised (as

seems to be the theme for this book) in how everything wrapped up and was left with a very satisfied feeling.

Racconti is a natural. He had a great idea and executed it very well. His writing flowed, his characters were more than just words on the page, and the entertainment value was definitely there. I was impressed and I can't wait to see what else this author has up his sleeve.

If you like suspenseful, action packed thrillers I definitely recommend picking this up. You won't be disappointed.

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