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Rick Acker

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Attorney Ben Corbin travels to Norway to settle a dispute between Karl and Gunnar Bjornsen, feuding brothers on the verge of developing a revolutionary neural stimulant that could turn first responders into superheroes. But more than just the fate of their pharmaceutical empire is at stake.

What starts as a sibling rivalry takes a deadly turn as Gunnar flees with the secret formula and Karl finds himself in the crosshairs of a bribery investigation. As Ben navigates a web of intrigue involving the Russian mob, embezzled funds, and black-market deals, he and his legal team are targeted for violent reprisals. Whoever is behind the attacks, it quickly becomes clear that no one and nothing—including the miracle drug itself—is as it seems.

Will lust for profit and unbridled ambition drive Cain to slay Abel—or will the intrepid lawyer trying to save them from destroying each other pay the ultimate price?

Revised edition: This edition of *Blood Brothers* includes editorial revisions.

Blood Brothers Details

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Author : Rick Acker

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From Reader Review Blood Brothers for online ebook

Don Maker says

In a lot of ways, “Blood Brothers” (unfortunately, not a good title for this) is a lot like a John Grisham novel, only more intricate. You can read the synopsis, so I won’t bother. It is clear Rick Acker did his homework on a lot of subjects, based on his own background in the California DA’s office, and all of the details about the pharmaceutical industry, the rich broads who run society charities, the law, and even the stories about the berserkers, sound authentic. The plot keeps moving, and if you like the legal/business/social undercurrents to a story (which I obviously do), then you might well like this book.

At first, the protagonist Ben Corbin sounded a little too good to be true, and his wife, Noelle, seemed incredibly contrary. We soon find out she’s pregnant, so perhaps the hormonal wife and the patient husband are credible. I found the two brothers who are fighting over their corporation to be very interesting, and the opposing lawyer to be just smarmy enough to be a stereotypical cynical lawyer without being “evil”. Ben’s detective helper, Sergei, was needed because someone had to do the investigations, but he did not have to be a born-again Christian to fulfill his role. On the other hand, his girlfriend, the FBI agent Elena, was really superfluous to the story. She seemed to have been thrown in mostly so they could have discussions about the virtues of religion, rather than being in any way integral to the story.

Frankly, I don’t mind proselytizing in a novel. After all, literature is supposed to be about human values, a lesson in making us all better people, so an author is going to get his messages in there or it’s just another thriller/action story. Actually, I thought the religious message scenes were distinct enough to skip, which I did, without missing a beat in the plot, because Elena was just supercargo.

Overall, the writing is as good as most of the enjoyable novels in the genre, the research is probably better than most, and the plot and subplots (including the goings-on related to the testing of a new wonder drug) kept me interested. If you like Grisham and/or Crichton, give this a try.

Brent Soderstrum says

I enjoyed the first book of the series dealing with Ben Corbin called Dead Man's Rule but this one is even better. I am a litigation attorney and Rick knows his stuff. He covers the courtroom action with flair to make the ordinary exchanges between the parties and the court exciting. There were twists and turns in the legal action and the story which I always enjoy. I hope we have more adventures of Ben Corbin to read in the future.

In this adventure, Ben is representing Gunnar, one of two Russian brothers in a battle for control of a company which manufactures a drug which, if approved by the FDA, will change the world. The drug stimulates the brain for clearer thinking and quicker reactions. It also results in the person taking it being able to accomplish physical activities they wouldn't have been able to do without it. There could be some potential problems with the drug however.

I also enjoy how Acker weaves in Christianity into the story. Not a flashing billboard sharing the message but a subtle character background reference or side story which shows his faith. Keep bringing your message to your readers Rick. We never know what leads others to take a look into God and their relationship with Him.

Lamar says

This was one interesting drama novel and this keeps up the pace till the very end, I want to recommend this to friends!

Jeri says

Interesting and methodical at turns

I won this book as a result of the Goodreads giveaway. There are parts of the book that hold your interest and sprint right along and others where they creep along. I especially loved the trip to Norway and references to sights there. Enjoy.

Olivia Farr says

"Blood Brothers" is a well written litigation thriller about the Bjornsen brothers and a new drug called Neurostim. Ben, an independently wealthy attorney who takes very select cases, it's approached by Gunnar Bjornsen for representation in a lawsuit to get the key steps to make Neurostim after he has been forced to step down as president and CEO. Karl, his brother, is the shady other side of the case. Complete with PIs, questionable deaths, and shady science, thus is an intriguing book.

I really appreciated that Neurostim is not just a performance enhancer that unlocks the mythical 90% of our brain we don't use (in fact, we use all of it always) but rather it makes neurons fire faster. This could have unintended consequences and surely enough, though in animal study stages, there are problems and cover ups you would expect in a pharmaceutical thriller.

The lawsuit is well written and an interesting premise for the story. It's an enjoyable read all in all. I also enjoyed the alternating perspectives which give the reader more knowledge than any individual character.

Please note that I received this book through Goodreads giveaways.

Jennifer says

Sucks you in

Great book! Many winding roads throughout the plot and character development. Surprises, dead-ends, and questions in every chapter. Completely caught off-guard by religious undertones, but enjoyed their added layer of interest.

Won this book on goodreads.com

MsONEal says

There are a couple of things I really like about Rick Ackerman's novels (and after having read three in a row, I speak with relative authority):

The first is his ability to craft characters -good and bad- that readers are invested in. Getting to know characters is key to enjoying a novel and too many authors rush the process. Mr. Ackerman doesn't. The characters in this book are fully-developed and thus, so is the story.

I also love the educational aspects of Mr. Ackerman's stories. Whether it's civil procedure, Norwegian folklore, or some Chicago factoid, I learned things in this novel. If a fictional book makes me want to read more on a non-fictional subject, then the author has done an exemplary job.

For me, this novel excelled most in its subtle reminders about the important things in life. The message was not a drumbeat(which would've been annoying), it was a bass line. In the background, but persistent. Really well done.

skw says

Disclosure:

I won this book in a goodreads giveaway. Goodreads encourages, but does not require, winners to review the books they've won.

Review:

I really liked this book. It's #2 in a series about attorney Ben Corbin. I read #1 before I read this book. I don't really think that's entirely necessary, but I'm wired that way, so there you go. I will be on the lookout for book #3. I hope it's even half as good as these two. They kept me on the edge of my seat from about the 60% mark on.

Our hero is a reasonably intelligent lawyer. He doesn't always come to his conclusion or notice the clue as quickly as one would like but he does get there. In both these books, human frailty/mistakes cause quite a bit of chaos, pain and even death, but if it were any other way, we'd have to call this a superhero novel. We can't always notice the one thing that will make a difference in time to prevent something from happening. (Of course, for most of us, that doesn't mean people get shot and buildings burn down, but this is a thriller, not a history.)

As with most legal thrillers, the courtroom scenes are pretty tense, but there's only so much you can do in a courtroom. It's the investigation part of the story where the mayhem happens. This series is VERY well done. The thoughts of our hero in the courtroom are interesting enough to keep that part going and the mayhem that accompanies the investigation is not too over-the-top. And there are little twists along the way to keep you on your toes.

Recommendation:

Overall, I'd say that if you like legal thrillers, this series will be right up your alley. If you enjoy solving a puzzle, this series will give you good ones. If you're not a big fan of this sort of thing, read at your own risk.

Katy says

LOOOOOOOOVE it, really fast-paced although it took me 3 months to finish it (thanks to exams).

Recommended to all :)

Amy Wofford says

Court room drama! Love it

This book was very well written and the narrator did an amazing job with narrating the story. I usually am not a fan of court room dramas but Rick Acker definitely adds a lot of extra drama around the court room.

Joann says

Great legal thriller

I really enjoyed the characters and the interesting medical/legal/criminal story line. I love the redemption that comes at the very end (I will leave it that, so as not to spoil it). I did think the speedy jump in the main conflict at the Norwegian company could have been drawn out a bit for clarity, but it sure had the element of surprise.

I did receive this book for free through Goodreads advance reading program.

Carla says

Blindingly fast paced read, intricate plot and characters made this an entertaining and memorable novel. Loved the twists and arcs of the characters made along the way. High recommend.

Lghiggins says

Satisfying. *Blood Brothers* by Rick Acker is satisfying. That may not sound like much of a compliment, but it really is--the same way that an excellent meal is satisfying. When I finished the book, I found the ending had come at the right time and in the right way without being predictable. Through Acker's writing I had experienced just the right amount of excitement and intrigue within a framework of our legal and

investigative systems and a background of scientific research. There was even a touch of history and the romance of a foreign country.

When I reviewed Acker's book *Dead Man's Rule*, I mentioned that the main character's wife, Noelle, had only a minor role and was not well-developed. That deficit was rectified in this novel as Noelle is presented as a three-dimensional character adding realism to the novel.

Blood Brothers deals to a great degree with relationships--mainly focusing on two rich brothers, Karl and Gunner, at odds over control of their pharmaceutical company and also on lawyer Ben Corbin and his spouse Noelle. Private investigator Sergei Spassky, who is a new Christian, has to confront his feelings for FBI agent Elena Kameney, a nonbeliever who shares his Russian heritage. Together they have to face the ramifications of very different religious beliefs.

The intricacies of the lawsuit and countersuit were handled well including the reactions of a fairly new judge and the chosen jury. Insights into the science trials were also interesting and included one loose end (a mistake made by a summer intern) that surprisingly was not included in the book's resolution. I appreciated the brief afterword containing nonfiction information related to some of the technical aspects of the book. I definitely advise reading it after you finish the book, however, as reading it in advance would spoil the story for you.

Rick Acker has written three legal thrillers for adults and two detective mysteries intended for a younger audience, but as is often the case with a well-written book for youth, several reviewers also recommend them for a fun read for adults. I definitely was not disappointed by *Blood Brothers*, the second of Acker's engaging tales for me and certainly not the last.

I would like to extend my thanks to netgalley.com and to Waterfall Press for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an unbiased review.

Nora St Laurent says

Reading this fast legal suspense story, "Blood Brothers" was like being buckled into an intense thrill ride. You know the kind. The extremely amazing roller coaster ride with all its surprises, twists, turns, ups and downs. I just couldn't put this book down. I kept reminding myself "This is just Fiction" (breathe)! What was so unnerving to me was the story line about the pharmaceutical companies and how they rule the world! (or would like to). It was fascinating and scary all at the same time when Rick Acker describes the internal workings of a large pharmaceutical company and how they interact with the FDA. All the court room drama in the story was just as powerful. It reminded me of the TV show Law and Order "Criminal Intent" on steroids, very vivid and deep.

Two brothers start a pharmaceutical company so both could use their talents and work together to build something they could be proud of. The company becomes more successful than either of them could imagine. The struggle for power and control of the money begins when they both think they have discovered the wonder drug of the century. The results of the animal testing is almost done, what do they have to show and tell the FDA to start human testing? The Bjornsen brothers start to see the billions that could be made if this drug was FDA approved.

I'll leave you with a quote from Blood Brothers "Love does call, you know. He calls us to do what we cannot

do alone. He asks us to give without counting the cost, to walk through the furnace, to love the unlovable. He asks everything of us, and He has the right to expect it...Because He gave everything for us!" Rick Acker unveils an example of this thru the story that will knock your socks off.

This is one riveting story you won't soon forget.

Disclosure of Material Connection:

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising"

Nora St.Laurent

The Book Club Network www.bookfun.org

The Book Club Network blog www.psalms16.blogspot.com

Book Fun Magazine www.bookfunmagazine.com

Marliss says

I know what "berserk" means now... Both *Dead Man's Rule* and this book deal with just-inside-the-realm-of-possibility biological issues. This book totally fits in with the current climate of doing the best one can to forestall aging and be in the best possible physical condition as long as possible.

There was some gruesomeness, just so you know, but it was handled very well, in my opinion.

As with the first in this series, the characters are well-drawn and deep. Enjoyable read.
