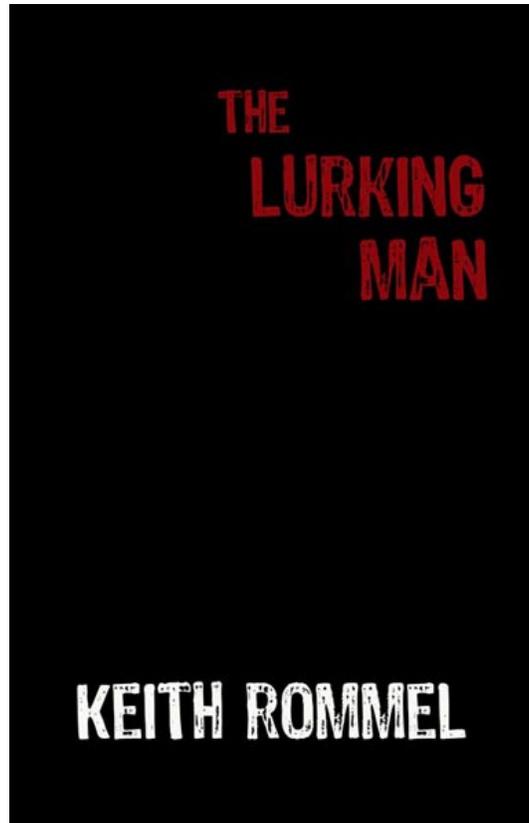


# Praise for The LURKING MAN



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The Lurking Man is Keith Rommel's second novel in the Thanatology Series, the first being The Cursed Man. It is not a sequel as such as none of the characters or locales are the same, other than a very brief mention of Dr Anna Lee and Sunnyside Capable Care late in the book; rather it is a further story exploring the meaning of death\*.

What takes place after we die? Some believe that there is an afterlife. If so what actually happens? Think about it. What do you see, who do you meet, as time unfolds what events occur? What happens first, what follows next then what follows that? Take a moment and contemplate. Scary isn't it. All your current drivers and everything you currently are have been removed. You don't need to go back to work as you don't have bills anymore. But what do you have? What replaces your life and its needs and wants?

Cailean finds herself in this very situation, waking in a strange place with no knowledge of how she got there and a feeling she is being watched by a strange unseen presence. What unfolds is a story told in flashback, interspersed with reflection, as piece by piece her life and the things she has done are revealed. As Cailean comes to terms with the person she was and the suffering she has caused we



have reason to suspect ulterior motives may be at work. While this is indeed the case the overall story is really more about Cailean's relationships with the people around her and her own selfish self delusion. While her actions have dire consequences for those around her it's not really her fault... is it?

Once again Keith Rommel has written an excellent story with the characters, especially Cailean, jumping off the page. While the Cursed Man was more of a horror/thriller in the vein of Stephen King The Lurking Man is a deeper examination of who we are, how selfish we can become and how easily we delude ourselves, even if something else may be at work.

The Lurking Man once again showcases a unique talent in author Keith Rommel and is well worth a read. Recommended.

Thanatology is the scientific study of death. It investigates the mechanisms and forensic aspects of death, such as bodily changes that accompany death and the post-mortem period, as well as wider social aspects related to death; see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thanatology>

– **Review by Nigel ~ <http://www.booklore.co.uk>**

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"Rommel did it to me once again with The Lurking Man! I was found still reading in the early morning after a sleepless night of page turning as he brought me a completely twisted story-telling symphony of mental horror. His antiquated, gothic style in The Cursed Man took on a more modern feel with a tougher character in this sequel, reminding me that Death has no compassion when it comes to his selfish nature. Readers, the sinister mood that seeps through this book will keep you turning pages as if you are possessed by a time clock to complete the tale...or else. The shocking conclusion will leave you questioning your own life for a very long time."

– **Erin Al-Mehairi, owner of Oh, for the Hook of a Book blog**

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Last year, I had the chance to review Rommel's The Cursed Man and absolutely loved the intense world he created so it's not a shock that I jumped at the opportunity to continue the Thanatology series. Once again, Rommel quickly swept me into a dramatic and emotional world. Experiencing the chaos that is Cailean's life first-hand could only be described as a roller coaster ride. It was as if I was plummeting through the depths of hell alongside Cailean as she finds herself captive between the world we live in and the world beyond. Will her time with Sariel change her or will she deteriorate?

As in the Cursed Man, Rommel has crafted the most enthralling plot with equally captivating characters that are frustratingly realistic. At first, Cailean angered me to no end but as the story progressed, you learn so much about her and the anger begins to subside. Does it go away? Heck no. The emotion that dwells within the pages of The Lurking Man is heartbreaking, evoking deep thought.

"Some beg for a moment of their life back to try and complete the things they feel have been left undone. Others are happy to see me and express their appreciation for relieving their pain. But most of the people are truly angry, lost souls with no chance at redemption. But you?"



The Lurking Man is a brilliantly constructed and emotional tale that will linger in your thoughts for days, weeks. Once you begin reading, you will not be able to put it down. I highly recommend reading Rommel's Thanatology series as it is brilliant, enthralling and unforgettable. I'm dying to find out what Keith will come up with next!

– Review by Jennifer ~ [www.fictitiousmusings.com](http://www.fictitiousmusings.com)

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The Lurking Man is the second book in the Thanatology series (Study of Death and Dying) by Keith Rommel (the first was The Cursed Man). The series does not need to be read in order. After I read The Cursed Man I couldn't wait to see what was next. I was not disappointed. The Lurking Man started as a sit on the edge of your seat and leave the lights on type of story but quickly evolved into an unpredictable story of judgement of one woman's life. Keith Rommel is one of the few writers that can keep me off balance by leading me down a familiar path and yet I end up somewhere completely unexpected.

Some people's worst nightmare: being forced to take an honest and brutal look at who and what they are and how their actions have affected those around them. This is the story of The Lurking Man. The protagonist, Cailean, is sitting at a table facing death, a reaper named Sariel. She must relive moments of her past and face her demons.

Keith Rommel takes you on a perplexing ride where you go from despising Cailean and being disgusted with the things she has done to feeling sympathy for her and hoping there is some type of redemption for her. The Lurking Man is a masterpiece of one woman's judgement day.

Keith Rommel is quickly becoming one of my favorite authors. Two books, five stars each. Now waiting for Book 3

– Review by Felonious Monk ~ <http://monkspoint.wordpress.com>

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So what happens to us when we die (or get close to death)? Well Cailean is about to find out in Keith Rommel's new book the Lurking Man the second book in his Thanatology series. This book like the Cursed Man takes us deep into dark reaches of the human mind. The book starts with Cailean finding herself standing inside a circle of light surrounded by darkness. Then from that impenetrable darkness a voice calls to her. The voice she hears is the voice of Sariel who is there to guide her through her past and to pluck out the demons within.

The Lurking Man does a great job at keeping you turning the pages and following Cailean down the path of her life. And just when you think you know about this woman and her life you find yourself off the path and deep within the forest of her mind and wishing you had never left the path. Sariel also has his own agenda that is well hidden in the darkness in which he lurks. And it's with this great dynamic between these two and the character development that you really are drawn into this story. The book is well balanced and has a nice flow between the past and present state of Cailean. I also found the readability easier than the first book in the series, as in the first book I found myself flipping back and forth as things got confusing between reality and non-reality, whereas in The Lurking Man I always knew where I was and where the characters were in the story. Even with this, Keith Rommel has the great ability to lead you down one path only to find out you are on the wrong path and what you think is happening is not that at all and that is what makes this book so enjoyable to read is its



unpredictability. I always hate reading a book and know what is going to happen ten or fifteen pages from now.

Keith Rommel does a great job of melding reality with the fantastical. He draws you in with the human drama and real life situations while monsters from our nightmares dance around ready to attack as soon as our guard is let down. *The Lurking Man* is what I picture if Edgar Allan Poe and Clive Barker wrote a book together. I recommend picking up this book just beware what is lurking just outside your ring of light and staring back at you from within the darkness.

– Reviewed By Andrew Moller ~ [www.HorrorNews.net](http://www.HorrorNews.net)

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I started this novel thinking it would be fantasy-since it deals with “Death” personified-and so it is, but it is also much more than that. “*The Lurking Man*” is the story of a woman who has allowed her childhood to shadow her entire life, who uses it as an excuse when she hurts others-including her own child, and her estranged husband; a woman whose victim mentality is so entrenched that she “is” that childhood-rather than an adult survivor who can seek options to overcome.

This is a very thought-provoking novel. The premise, that “Sariel” (Death) can choose one individual at will, and give her a choice, an opportunity to redress wrongs that she has committed and to “make it right” as she might have chosen to do in the first place, is captivating. The reader will find herself racing to discover what choices Cailean makes, what options she follows, and whether she can put right what has been put wrong. So I call this fantasy with suspense, plus excellent deeply-drawn characterization; a story well worth reading. This is the second novel in author Keith Rommel’s “Thanatology Series,” and I intend to read the first as well because I am a convert.

– Review by Great Minds Think Aloud Literary Community

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This novel is about a woman who is forced to take a hard look at her life, and the choices that she made to get her to this point. Cailean will never be nominated for Mother of the Year. She has taken to alcohol to ease the memory of a terrible thing that happened when she was a child (it’s not what you think). She doesn’t drink simply to get drunk; she drinks to pass out. She and Wilson, her husband, are separated; he can no longer deal with her alcoholism. Her record for visiting her son, Beau, who simply wants his mother to love him, is not good. One day, Cailean shows up at Wilson’s door, sober, and convinces him to let her take Beau to her condo for just a few hours. The intention for Cailean is to show Beau and Wilson that she really can change. Things do not end well.

Existing somewhere between life and death, Cailean finds herself trapped in a cone of bright light in a snowstorm. She is being held by a humanoid being named Sariel, who forces her to take a hard look at her life, reliving parts of it. She finds out just what it was that turned her into such a mean and rotten person, filled with self-hatred (again, it’s not what you think). Cailean also sees what happened to the “good” part of her. At the end, does Cailean have an Ebenezer Scrooge-like epiphany, and work to regain the confidence of Beau and Wilson? Does she even survive the encounter with Sariel?

This book will certainly get the reader to look inside themselves, to make sure that any self-destructive behavior is kept under control. It’s recommended for everyone, but especially those in the grip of alcoholism. Does the main character sound familiar?

– Review by Paul Lappen, Dead Trees Review



Having read the authors first book and found it confusing I was expecting something similar to occur with the Lurking Man. However I am glad to say this book exceeded my expectations. Not only was it easy to follow along with the plot, which like the last book followed a non-linear progression but in a much clearer way, but the very writing itself has improved since the first story, making this book a much more interesting read and one I could not put down.

Essentially this book is a thriller or suspense novel, teasing you by revealing little segments of Cailen's past at a time while skipping around the answers to the questions the reader is beginning to get. Just what are those 3 events in Caileen's path that brought her to this place? How has her past shaped her? The answers to these questions are teased and hinted at from the start but it is not until towards the end, once the suspense has built, that you begin to truly unravel the answers in the most satisfying way.

While some of the characters are still two dimensional, this book is a fantastic read. Read it if you enjoy suspense and twists. I certainly enjoyed the novel and am looking forward to seeing Rommel only further improve in his writing as his career progresses. I give this book a well deserved 4 out of 5 stars.

– Review by Bec C. ~ [www.masqueradecrew.blogspot.com](http://www.masqueradecrew.blogspot.com)

