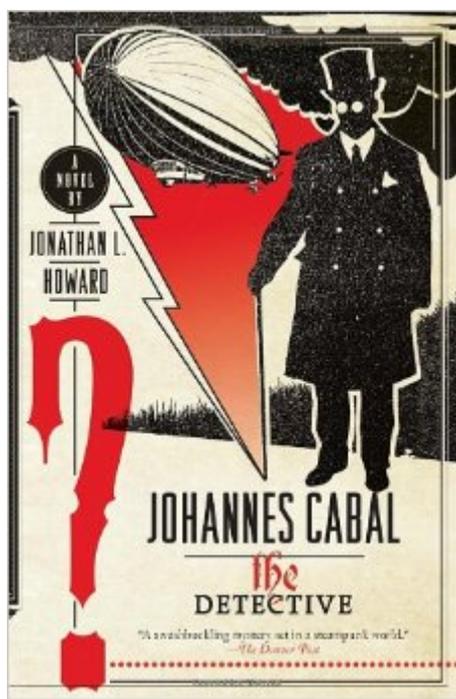


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Johannes Cabal The Detective



Synopsis

Johannes Cabal returns in this fearfully funny and terrifically twisted tale of murder and international intrigue . . . five thousand feet off the ground. When an attempt to steal a rare book turns sour, Johannes Cabal, a necromancer of some little infamy, finds himself in a foreign prison awaiting execution. A crafty plan -- as horrific as it is cunning -- allows him to steal the identity of a government official and make his escape aboard a luxurious aeroship heading out of the country. But what should be a perfect getaway rapidly becomes complicated by the bizarre disappearance of a passenger, an attempt on Cabal's life, and an unwelcome face from the past. Trapped aboard with a killer, can even Cabal's open-razor of a mind save him? Full of twists, turns, sword fights, archenemies, newfangled flying machines, narrow escapes, and, of course, resurrected dead, Johannes Cabal's latest eldritch escapade is a Ruritanian romp from first to last.

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Customer Reviews

Johannes Cabal the Necromancer was an amazing novel, and this one is a fantastic second in the series. Everything that is good about Necromancer is better in Detective. The plot is tighter (with no dangling Chekov's Gun like the first book). The characters stay true. The world is richly detailed. And best of all, the pacing is perfect. You may read this book in a single sitting just because it never gets slow and never gets rushed. Johannes Cabal, a necromancer of some infamy, is attempting to return home with some ill-gotten goods when he becomes entangled in a murder-mystery aboard an airship. Somewhat unwillingly, he turns his sharply analytical mind to unraveling the plot, so long as

it doesn't endanger his escape. And because life is never simple, his pseudo-nemesis from his past train adventure, Leonie Barrow, happens to be on that same ship. Hilarity, hijinks, and murder ensue. The one marked divergence from the first book is that Detective has a bit of steampunk in it. This is not a steampunk-centered book, to revel in the mystical technology, but the descriptions of some of the machines are quite interesting. Beyond the contrived replacement countries to fill out Eastern Europe, this addition sets Cabal's world as clearly different from our own (ignoring, of course, the necromancy). Reading the first book is not necessary for reading this one, as the relevant bits of plot are quickly and efficiently rehashed as necessary, but I don't know why anyone would deprive themselves of the pleasure of watching these characters develop.

"Johannes Cabal the Necromancer" was without a doubt my favorite book I read last year. The humor, the characters, the wonderful writing... rarely do I find a book that I enjoyed as much as it. The mixture of horror and comedy tropes blended so well together by Mr. Howard that I couldn't put the book down until I finished it. It is with some regret that I have to say that this sequel, while keeping the comedy firmly intact, disregards the horror tropes almost entirely. In this novel, Johannes Cabal (a necromancer of some little infamy) finds himself in a bit of a predicament. He's stolen a book that could be quite useful for one in his trade and is on the run from a government that is, to put it lightly, not entirely pleased with his recent actions. He takes the identity of a civil servant and boards an aership the Princess Hortense so as to make a quick, and more importantly, unobserved getaway. Unfortunately for Cabal, not a night goes by without him running into someone who is well aware of his true identity and guarantees that he will be exposed once their destination is reached. As if matters couldn't get any worse, someone decides to make a nuisance of his or herself and commit a murder in an extremely puzzling way so that it catches Cabal's sense of curiosity. What follows afterwards can only be described as a comedic steam punk detective story. Now, I'm a fan of both the detective and the steam punk genres, and a combination of the two is something I'm utterly delighted to see... but it still wasn't what I was looking for here. I didn't expect to see Cabal's carnival again, but I was expecting a little more necromancy and horror in the continuation of a story about a necromancer. After I got over this disappointment though, I must say I did enjoy myself. Cabal is still snide, sarcastic and a joy to read. The humor of the first book is steady throughout this novel and the interactions of the characters is a delightful. While not as good as the first book, I can still honestly say that I enjoyed it and look forward to Cabal's return in a third novel.

I adored Johannes Cabal: Necromancer. The first of the series, it was a wonderful read; creative, funny, and intelligent by turns. This book, the sequel, is all three of these things - but in tiny doses. It's just a shade of the first novel, and I was greatly saddened, having hoped that the first would begin a long tale with the same wry humor & rich storytelling. While I remember clearly so much of the first novel, one that I read perhaps two years ago, and only once, I remember very little of this, read a few months ago. It simply failed to make much impression. Frankly, I'd save my money (and more importantly, my time) for something else.

Just recently read and really enjoyed it. If you like modern science fiction/fantasy humorists and have a dark sense of humor it is a good read. This one is like an Agatha Christiish train mystery except on a Zeppelin, so kinda steampunky with a necromancer just trying to blend and survive the voyage. The plot is not so much about the plot, but more about great writing and good scenes along the way. If so inclined read the books in any order. Anyhow too dark for some, but if you like Lovecraft you will feel right at home..

I am completely in love with this author. His vocabulary is extraordinary. His humor is deliriously funny. The characters are so flawed and yet loveable. The plot is great and original. The whole thing was a joy to read. I cannot get enough of him. I sincerely hope this is a long series with TV shows, movies and the works. Genius.

Okay, so really I just cannot get enough of Johannes Cabal. Darkly humorous, witty, excellent writing, terrific plotting. My only complaint is there are but four novels! But on to the short stories, many of which carries! Be sure to buy them all and then read them through again 1-4 for all the clues you missed the first time around.

By now, I've finished the fourth book in the Johannes Cabal series (plus some short stories) and want to recommend Jonathan L. Howard's work to everyone. His work is unique, but fits so well into other fantasy/horror worlds that it just all made sense immediately...and yet was consistently surprising. I'm a lousy review writer, so I'll just say that Howard is the first author I've written a fan letter to in around 35 years.

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