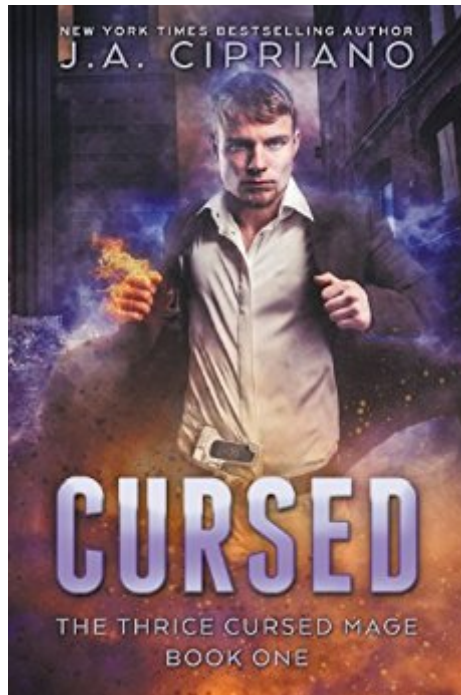


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Cursed: An Urban Fantasy Novel (The Thrice Cursed Mage Book 1)



Synopsis

My name is Mac Brennan and that's the only thing I can remember about myself. Not why I woke up in a dumpster. Not why my right arm is as black as pitch and covered in glowing red tattoos, and certainly not why a vicious death cult is after me. Actually, that last part isn't true. I know why the death cult is after me. It's because I saved that damned girl from them. I didn't know who she was at the time, but I'd have done it anyway. I just don't like it when girls get beat up, call me old fashioned. Still, I can tell she's hiding something behind those devilish eyes, and if I want to find out what it is, I'll have to help her. My name is Mac Brennan. I have no memory, and I'm a werewolf-hunting, hellfire-flinging version of Faust himself. *Book 2: Marked (ASIN: B01D04ULFQ) is on sale for only \$3.99!*

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a good book for some fast, gory action. In fact, it's non-stop action, no character or story development. We don't know Mac Brennan, but we learn he never gets hungry, thirsty or tired, never has to use a bathroom or sleep, never goes into shock, never gets seriously injured. We know he expresses his thoughts almost entirely in similes. "They flew at me like dive bombers." "The door was like the lair of a dragon." "I was like a dog with a bone." And so on. And so on. We know Mac Brennan (for that's how he refers to himself) thinks and talks in wacky one liners ("them's the

breaks") that probably sounded funnier in the author's head. And that's about it. Any wizard book inevitably is going to be compared to either Harry Potter or Harry Dresden, and this one falls in the latter category. Overwhelmed hero with a lot of gold underneath it all. Magical protective overcoat. Nonsense words shouted out to make wizard stuff happen. Chivalrous toward the ladies. But unlike Harry Dresden, Mac Brennan never suffers, never has a moment of introspection, never questions his purpose or impulses. Mac senses he's almost out of time to finish something vitally important but instead goes chasing after some stranger he met so he can save her, why? What the hell? Also annoying are the ultra convenient powers Mac suddenly uses as different needs come up. It makes it hard to care if he's in peril because, what the hell, he'll just produce another magic ability he didn't know he had. Three stars if you want non-stop mindless action and blood splattering gore with no real plot or depth. Two stars if you like an actual story with actual developed characters. One star if you're looking for something original and not another superficial take on a disheveled, wisecracking, rune-wielding reluctant hero of a wizard.

This one started out with a good idea, the main character wakes up in an odd place, in danger, and amnesia. But it's at 24% and I'm putting this in my Did Not Finish list. But the writing is a little awkward. Some sentences didn't read well, and should have been caught in an edit. The fights were okay, but there was just something about them that didn't feel real. A woman gets savagely beaten, enough to leave a trail of blood on the floor as she's tossed around, yet when she's saved her first reaction isn't to get to safety and nurse her wounds, but to continue about her business as if she was fine. Then she takes a strange guy home with her. This just hit me at the time to not be the way a normal person would act in that situation, so it didn't feel real. It was more like a comic book reaction than a real one. And to make it feeling less real, she's just called Brunette in the main character's mind because she never actually tells the main character her name, even though he ends up knowing where she lives. And he never asks. The cover is kick-ass. The beginning just didn't work enough to keep me going.

Snarky main character, werewolves, demons, a druid, a vampire...yep. Cursed by J.A. Cipriano has got everything you'd want in an urban fantasy novel and then some. I really dug the fast paced plot and the relentlessness of the characters. Nothing was nerfed. It was about as real and gritty as a fantasy novel can get. This is the first book I've read from J.A. Cipriano, but if he keeps writing stories like Cursed then it won't be my last. The only gripe I had with the book was some of the writing. There would be times when the writing was very good and times where things got a bit stuffy

and could've been trimmed down a bit. But it never got to the point to where I was distracted from the story. Or annoyed enough to put the book down. Five stars for Cursed.

There are many great urban fantasy series. Unfortunately this one falls short and will not be particularly memorable. Here's why: Our main character, Mac, wakes up with amnesia in a Dumpster. So far so good, but we fall almost immediately into classic urban fantasy cliches such as rescuing the damsel in distress (who then of course wants to help him and is mysteriously in the "know" and can tell Mac more about what is going on). In fact, this damsel ends up being the driving force for the rest of the book and what remains inexplicable is Mac's desire to rescue her for no greater reason than "because she's a woman with a kid." We are never told why certain supernatural factions want her, which is very annoying for all this trouble. Her kid is also used as a prop who spouts superhero cliches to no particular effect. All the characters are cardboard thin in terms of background and motivations--the author seems to think that putting in actions scenes will make up for this deficiency. Mac takes wayyyy too much physical punishment (even with a magic arm) to be realistic. The high paced action scenes are entertaining enough, but their thin setup makes them hollow and somewhat meaningless. The pacing, our protagonist's seemingly indestructable-ness, the sketch of a plot, and the wanton violence sort of reminds me of the movie Crank. But Crank may be more plausible than what's going on in this book.

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