



The Devil's Evidence

Simon Kurt Unsworth

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A new case of unsolvable murders brings Hell to Heaven in the explosive sequel to The Devil's Detective.

Hell is burning out of control. Thomas Fool, Hell's first Information Man tasked with investigating the endless stream of violence in Hell, has been promoted to the head of the newly expanded Information Office. Now in command of a legion of Information Men, his new position finds him hated by demons and almost revered by humans. He alone has survived the wrath of demon and angel alike, but he stands alone and at the center of a brewing crisis. New on the scene is the Evidence, a shadowy department whose officers do not investigate; they punish and spread fear. And its leader, Mr. Tap, is gunning for Fool.

Fool is ordered to accompany a political delegation to Heaven, and his arrival coincides with an impossible—and sinister—discovery. A dead body. Murder in Heaven. Violence, corruption, and fear are the currency of Hell, and how does one investigate a crime where these concepts are paradoxes? As the bodies pile up, Fool sees disturbing connections between Heaven and Hell. He must follow clues in a strange land where nothing is as it seems and danger can present itself in any form.

What follows is a phantasmagoric, mind-bending thriller as exciting and unsettling as anything in recent fiction. The Devil's Evidence is an electrifying, provocative novel filled with stunning set pieces and characters who will live on in your deepest nightmares.

The Devil's Evidence Details

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Author : Simon Kurt Unsworth

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Minx -The Genre Minx Book Reviews says

This review is based on an ARC I received from NetGalley. It is an honest review and the advanced receipt of it in no way affected my review or rating.

Interested in reading an urban fantasy novel about a detective in Hell? Then look no further. Which also begs the question: Hell has police? Who knew?! The world building that the author created is complex, dark, savage, and filled with horrendous demons. If you could imagine Hell, the characters that the Author created would give you pause. It would also cause you to despair because there is no happy ending here.

Thomas Fool is back and has been promoted to Commander of the Information Office of Hell. He is taking orders from the Bureaucracy of Hell, who are charging him with investigating why fires are happening in Hell. Which is funny because is that not how we “typically” envision hell? Well I guess as long as it is Hell’s fire it is ok but these fires are not “sanctioned.” Another addition to this story is the newly created office of the Evidence. The head of this office is Mr. Tap and oh how he hates Fool. This department’s role is to dish out carte blanche punishment for “guilty” parties, essentially undermining Fool’s authority.

Fool’s team of investigators consists of both humans and demons. The humans treat him with deference and the demons view him with disgust, neither party are truly willing to partner with him and help him investigate. With one exception, Marianne, she is a newly made information man and the only team member that Fool can count on. She is not a replacement for his previous partners, Summer and Gordie who we find out were slaughtered in the previous novel, but she is a welcome presence and helps him not to feel so alone. She does not add a strong presence in the novel but she is the connecting piece when Thomas Fool goes to...wait for it....Heaven.

That’s right, a damned soul is going to Heaven as a part of a delegation consisting of some of the most grotesque demons in order make deals between Heaven and Hell. Fool’s presence on this political delegation is due to a request from the Bureaucracy of Heaven and he is also to be the liaison between the demons and Mr. Tap. Considering the imaginative depictions of Hell and the resident demons, the imagery of Heaven is not at all what I would have expected. The conception of Heaven and the angels is intriguing but not what I find satisfying. I will say that the Author does find a way to show the angels in an angelically disturbing light.

Why does Heaven need the Information Man? He is there to uncover the most disturbing of events to happen in Heaven, murder! The residents of Heaven are being murdered and he must follow the clues so that he can discover the mystery to this paradox. Making the task challenging are the angels assigned to chaperone Fool. Serious case of wearing rose colored glasses there. They are less of an assistance and more of a hindrance to Fool’s investigation.

The investigation that follows is disturbing; conjures visually striking images that are not for the faint of heart. The Author does a good job at keeping the events that happen in each realm separate until it is time to show the union between events. Even then, the Author manages to throw you some plot twists that keep you on your toes. Also, try to remember this is a book based in Hell; it is chaotic, ferocious, full of despair and perfect for the story as written. If you enjoy blending the genres of horror and mystery then this is the perfect book for you.

*Thank you to Doubleday Books & NetGalley for this ARC of *The Devil's Evidence**

Find this review and more at The Genre Minx Book Reviews

Karl says

Simon Kurt Unsworth book "The Devil's Evidence" is a cunning yet misleading title. In this the second volume of the adventures and punishments of Thomas Fool, Hell's first investigating detective, here given the title "Information Man" has a new set of challenges. Someone is setting buildings on fire and murdering all the inhabitants inside. To make matters worse, Hell has created a new department, known as "The Evidence", which is manned by demons and supersedes Thomas Fool's authority.

As Fool begins his investigations, his superiors re-assign him to a team of diplomats to take a trip to Heaven. It seems Heaven is in need of his services due to the fact that murders of "saved" humans are taking place and Heaven never having encountered this situation has the need of an Information Man.

Mr. Unsworth has created a fine sequel to "The Devil's Detective" (Thomas Fool #1), well written, yet slightly less powerful than the original.

This is a Bound Galley marked Tentative on-sale date 7/5/16. Note: I purchased this book.

Bob says

This is not my usual type of read, but having read *The Devil's Detective* I wanted to see how Thomas Fool was faring in his role as Hell's Information Man. I fell in love with Fool's character in the first book and *The Devil's Evidence* did not disappoint in this respect. The insight and conflict we see between Fool's actions and inner thoughts exposes a fragility that many readers could probably relate to.

Simon Unsworth has such a fantastic (and frightening) imagination!! The descriptions and metaphors throughout the story are so detailed and feel so real that at times I actually did cringe and feel a bit sick! At times I actually felt spent for Thomas Fool.

The story moved along at a good pace and I nearly cried with happiness at the return of Geordie and Summer and again at the loss of them both and I may have actually cried at the loss of Marianne.

I wanted more for Thomas Fool at the end of the novel, but I guess if I wanted 'happy ever after' I was reading the wrong book!!

I enjoyed this read and hope this series continues.

Slmstanley says

I received an ARC of this book through Netgalley (which is where I originally posted this review).

It's rare that I like a sequel as much as the first book - in fact, I like this one **more** than its predecessor ("The Devil's Detective"). Fool is once again trying his best to do his job and walk the fine line between rebellion and collusion. In this story, as the Chief Information Man in an ever-increasingly fascistic hell, Fool knows that he has a lot less power than it appears, and even less room to investigate. A series of fires are raging out of control in hell, making Hell's Bureaucracy **very** nervous - and to make matters worse, there are unexplained occurrences in Heaven, too.

Fool is a creature of doubt and questions, and the reader keenly feels his despair and his desperate attempts to carve out some sort of meaning to his existence. The plot is interesting and engrossing, but it's Fool's struggles with himself that captured my heart.

Tobin Elliott says

This one took me a lot longer to read than normal, but I'm not sure why. I was engaged in it, I enjoyed it, but it just took awhile. My point is, it sure as hell wasn't due to the quality.

This is—and I say this rarely—a much better story than the first novel. It's one of the few times I've seen an author absolutely fearless in doing everything bad to their hero, and Unsworth does it with a mad glint in his eye.

This series takes place in Hell...so it should be hellish. And Unsworth delivers. But the real shocker here, is when the action moves to Heaven. I won't spoil anything, but let's just say it's a completely unique and fascinating look at that world, too.

But in the last third of the book, it just *shines*. The action, the pathos, the twists and turns....honestly, this book couldn't really have delivered more.

In fact, I just talked myself into a 5-star review.

Chip says

I thought the first book in the series was very good. This one was better - 4.5 stars, nearly five. Really, really good. Perhaps a bit too much sleight of hand in the denouement (and that's probably all holding me back from a flat five) but nonetheless, really excellent. A great new author I am thrilled to have been introduced to.

Emma says

As in Unsworth's first book (The Devil's Detective), the protagonist, Thomas Fool, is attracting too much attention in Hell... and in this instance, Heaven too. The author's depiction of his main character is masterful; the painful, halting, uncertain progression, the growing boundaries of his psychological and moral self is incredible. You can feel it and see each and every time he comes to a new understanding, his process of figuring out the next step of his investigation matches his ever broadening understanding of who he is, how the system around him works, and his fluctuating role within it. I've read works of literary fiction that aspire

to this kind of character development.

Unsworth's powers of description and imagination are further revealed by the intricacies of Heaven and Hell. He avoids the cliches; within the hierarchies and rule bound realms, horror is not only born from those who physically look like monsters but in the behaviour of all the players. It's this that makes it clever, and surprising.

Fool has been to Heaven and Hell now, so I wonder what comes next...

Many thanks to Simon Kurt Unsworth, Random House/Ebury, and Netgalley for this copy in exchange for an honest review.

Nannette says

I recently reviewed The Devil's Detective (Thomas Fool #1) by Simon Kurt Unsworth. I found the book was stunning in its originality and descriptions. The Devil's Evidence, the second book in the series maintains the high level of originality while introducing new characters and concepts. As with the first book, the characters are a wide range in creation. There are new individuals and new species. There was also new information that contributes to the world building. And Mr. Unsworth has built an amazing world.

It is hard to discuss the plot of either book without spoilers. The basic premise is that heaven and hell do exist. They are not your grandparent's concept of heaven or hell. The humans (yes humans because there are so very nasty non-humans lurking in these pages) do not know why they have been sent to hell. They cannot remember their lives. They only know that they committed sin(s) so heinous to sentence them to an eternity in hell.

So we have hell and we have Thomas Fool whose job is to investigate crimes in hell. Let that one sink in for a moment. Investigating crimes in a major city would be quite a job but in hell, where every human there because he deserves to be and demons just add to the chaos, it is close to impossible. In the second book, Thomas Fool takes a trip and becomes involved in investigating crimes in heaven. You know, perfection, harmony, all peace and fluffy clouds. You would not think there would be a lot of crime but heaven is out of balance and pulling hell out of whack to.

My descriptions do not even begin to do justice to this incredible book. Let me just quote one small section: "fire had a voice, it talked in a constant bitter mutter, the sound of something chewing its own teeth, a one-sided conversation that babbled as the flames burrowed deep into wooden frames around now-glassless windows and ate warping doors buckling in their mounts. And as the fire talked and drew itself on, it cleaned, leaving no spore or trail"

Every time I read that section it takes my breath away. The prose, the characters, the descriptions, everything is done well in this book. I recommend you read The Devil's Evidence as soon as you read The Devil's Detective. The books are just fantastic.

I received my copy from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Char says

Whether it be in the eternal fires of hell or in the eternal joys of Heaven, Thomas Fool, Information Man, conducts his investigation and nothing, be it angel or demon better get in his way.

I loved the creativity of this book! Building upon the hell he established so well in The Devil's Detective, this time Simon Kurt Unsworth turns his imagination to building a heaven. Turns out, his heaven is just as warped as his hell; maybe even more so. There are angels, the Malakim, (the messengers of heaven) and the Estedea, ("Pray their sadness never reaches you.") Lastly, there's Mayall, (not of the Bluesbreakers variety), heaven's own version of a clown. Or is he more than that?

While conducting his investigation of several mysterious fires in hell, (I know, mysterious fires in hell? It sounds crazy, but I'm telling you, it works), Thomas is called for and sent to heaven to investigate....something. The angels don't want him there, the demons and the Evidence back in hell don't want him there, but someone does. Why? You'll have to read this to find out.

I believe that it would be difficult to pick up this book and understand everything that's going on without having read The Devil's Detective first. There are terms and people, (the Man of Plants and Flowers, for instance), that are introduced in the first book and without any knowledge of them, I think much of the impact of this story would be diluted.

I enjoy the way Unsworth writes. For instance, as Thomas leaves Heaven to return to hell:

"His last view of Heaven was of a motionless rank of beautiful, somber angels surrounded by falling snow and, behind them, the chapel of all faiths standing alone and mute in the storm light."

I love that quote because I can picture it perfectly in my mind.

I did have an issue with the self-deprecating Thomas Fool beating up on himself every 5 minutes. (*Stupid little Fool! Know nothing Fool!*) It became irritating but after about halfway, it occurred less often.

With fascinating world building, highly imaginative and creative ideas, it's difficult for me to find any other faults with this book. I've never read anything like these Fool books before. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that I will meet Thomas Fool once again.

If you liked the first book I HIGHLY recommend you pick up The Devil's Evidence.

Thanks to Edelweiss and the publisher for providing an e-ARC of this book in exchange for my honest review. This is it.

Find this review and others like it at Horrorafterdark.com.

And_it_spoke says

An even better follow up to an already fantastic opener (The Devil's Detective)! This time, Thomas Fool, Information Man of Hell, deals with the repurcussions of the events of the previous novel. Both an new

status quo and new view of his existence keep him off balance. But when he is instructed to investigate a murder in Heaven, is when everything really takes off. Dark and bleakly humourous at times, there is a lot to like here. Great characters, well done action scenes, horrific and heavenly imagery. The only flaw was the mystery itself. Like with the previous novel, I had the 'killer' pegged very early on. It was still facinating to see the 'how' of the 'who'.

If Simon Kurt Unsworth decides to keep on with this series, I'm more than willing to follow him back into Hell.

Raven says

Disclaimer: I received this book free of charge for a honest and unbiased review.

This story is about Thomas Fool the Commander of the Information Office of Hell. Horrible fires and murders are happening in Hell which leads to Thomas Fool being ordered to investigate. While in the midst of the investigation in Hell. Thomas Fool is sent to Heaven as part of a political delegation. While in Heaven Thomas's help is needed to investigate an unexplained mystery that is taking place in Heaven. There is murder in Heaven. As Thomas tries to investigate he is met with opposition and troubles. While in the middle of finding the truth Thomas tries to stop a war between Heaven and Hell from happening.

Simon Kurt Unsworth has a very interesting writing style. Having said that I'll explain why it took my over a month to listen to this audio book. The first part of this book just seemed to drag for me and then closer to the end it jumped pace. I came into this series blind. In fact I'd never even heard of the author Simon Kurt Unsworth. This was an interesting book and David Rintoul did a great job narrating but on a personal note I think it would have made more sense to me to have read the first book in the series before I listen to this one. I look forward to the next book in the series and have high hopes to not be disappointed.

Would I recommend this book? Yes, but I would like to say that The Devil's Evidence is not a good book for a commute if you're the one driving. I found it was a book you really had to pay attention to and could be distracting at times.

Frank Errington says

Review copy

Thomas Fool, The Devil's Detective, is an Information Man and a human among demons. Fool is now the Commander of the Information Office, a position in Hell for which he gets little respect.

Now there's a new department in Hell, The Evidence, headed by Mr. Tap. All they seem to do is get in the way of the Information Men. "They didn't investigate, they simply tore things apart and reached conclusions that made little or no sense, and then executed justice on the spot."

As Fool and his team are investigating a series of arsons and murders, he is called away to be part of a special delegation to Heaven. While in Heaven, he learns of some mysterious deaths there. Heaven blames Hell. Hell blames Heaven. Can Thomas Fool uncover the truth before there's an all out war?

The Devil's Evidence turned out to be a worthy sequel to The Devil's Detective, and was slightly better than book one. More fantasy than horror, but it does get rather gruesome at times. Pure escapism requiring a total suspension of disbelief. This is not an easy read, but it is an interesting and entertaining foray into a completely different world and the final twist is pure gold.

From Doubleday, The Devil's Evidence: A Novel, is available in hardback, e-book and audio formats.

Simon Kurt Unsworth was born in Manchester and lives in a farmhouse in Cumbria, in the United Kingdom. He is the author of The Devil's Detective and many short stories, including the collections Lost Places, Quiet Houses, and Strange Gateways.

Theo says

This is really a 4.5 - I love his ideas and prose and where the end *looks* like it's going, but he feels the need to undercut his theme in a way I didn't feel was necessary.

Richard Howard says

'The Devil's Detective', the first in the Thomas Fool series, was, I thought, a daringly original novel: infernal noir. This, the second, is less original being yet another foray into the apocalypse. It's constant descriptions of the outrages that can be done to flesh become wearying, as do the internal reproaches of its chief protagonist: 'Silly fool'; 'pathetic fool' etc. Heaven, as David Byrne memorably sang is a place where 'nothing ever happens' but the book spends an awful lot of time there. After the conclusion to the first book I hoped the second would examine the new regime in Hell, perhaps using it as a way to explore fear and punishment in totalitarian societies. Instead we have a full CGI spectacular with viscera and fire-bolts everywhere, which I found disappointing.

Kristine says

The Devil's Evidence by Simon Kurt Unsworth is a free NetGalley ebook that I read mid-June, just before the start of the summer semester.

This book is full to the gills with murky gravitas and deep, dark, theomythic imagery. Just as you would with a meal of beef, claret, and chocolate, pace yourself and understand both purpose and the aftermath of this story.
