



Into a Dark Frontier

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In the near future, Africa collapses into an enormous failed state, leaving the continent lawless and severely depopulated. For most, the breakdown brings horror, but for others--the outcast, the desperate, the criminals, and the insane--it allows unparalleled opportunity: a new frontier of danger and unlimited possibility. In America, ex-Navy SEAL Slade Crawford, emotionally crippled after twenty years of front line combat, the dissolution of his marriage, and the accidental death of his son, is falsely accused of terrorism. Slade flees to Africa to build a new life and escape his past when he is captured by an enigmatic American colonel, Gary Kraven, and blackmailed into tracking down a blood cult that is rampaging across the sub-Saharan. Struggling to stay alive and to free himself from Kraven's grasp, Slade pursues the cult across the lawless African frontier. He soon learns that nothing is as it seems and that he is standing at the epicenter of a global struggle that will determine the course of history. Slade must decide whether to fight for his life or his honor--he can't have both.

Into a Dark Frontier Details

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Author : John Mangan

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From Reader Review Into a Dark Frontier for online ebook

Cheryl says

Instant action. This is how you start out a book with the main character getting shot down in an aircraft and parachuting to safety on a freighter in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Luckily, from here the story only gets better. Slade is a like Rambo. A badass.

Although, the action and the presence of a strong, main character were bonuses. What I enjoyed the most was the geographical location of Africa. It lends a nice backdrop for this story. As Slade was traveling all over the jungles and other places of Africa, it was like I was there with him. It is safe to say that I became a fan of the author's.

Warning, as this book is not for the faint of heart. There is language and graphic killings. Into a Dark Frontier is a wonderful thriller that packs a powerful punch right in the mouth with a strong protagonist!

Shannon (Mrsreadsbooks) says

3.5 stars. The main character in this story, Slade, is an ex-Navy SEAL who is currently a fugitive and on the run from Homeland Security after he is falsely accused of terrorism. Slade heads to Africa hoping to start a new life, but instead finds himself captured by an American colonel, Gary, who then blackmails Slade into tracking down a religious cult that is terrorizing the area. I did enjoy the author's writing and the story is certainly filled with a lot of action and moves along at a pretty quick pace. I liked the premise to this story and although it is supposed to be taking place in the near future, it's definitely a scenario that seems fairly realistic. This cult is moving around Africa and basically slaughtering communities in a ritualistic way, while Slade has no choice but to do what the colonel asks of him. I could certainly see this book being turned into a movie, as it is filled with action and mystery. Slade is both a strong and interesting character that draws the reader into the story. Overall, I enjoyed the book and I looked forward to reading more from the author in the future.

Thank you to the publisher for sending me a review copy of this book.

Lisa says

Damn. Now that's some good storytelling! Action from beginning to end, with just enough breaks so I could stop and catch my breath...then back on my feet kicking ass and taking names! Pew, pew...yeah that's my gun noise. Seriously, the fact that I could believe in every bad thing that happens in this book is what made it all so terrifying. It was a brutal and graphic read. You only have to watch the news to realize how real this could be, or even pay a little attention to what the U.N. is not doing.....I loved Slade, and those Kiwi's! They were funny and made a dark situation just a little bit lighter. Mr. Mangan has already been put on a post-it note, and stuck to my wall. Well, his name anyway. That way I'll remember to check for his newest books. I can't wait to read more of what I'm hoping will be a continuing series. My thanks to Oceanview

Jamie Barringer (Ravenmount) says

I won my copy of this book through a Goodreads giveaway.

Overall this was a good thriller, well paced and with good characters and setting. The majority of this story takes place in a near-future Africa, when the entire continent has devolved into chaos, except for a small enclave of semi-stability in South Africa. Meanwhile overpopulated, under-resourced countries outside Africa are bleeding refugee/colonists who seek a new life in Africa in a land grab not unlike that of the American West. But, some well-armed militants seem intent on slaughtering all new colonies and Slade, the hero in this book, is tasked with shepherding a group of religious extremists from the US to their New Zion. Everything goes badly wrong, of course, and Slade finds himself working alone to uncover a massive plot behind the collapse of the African governments that is also somehow linked to the annihilation of the colonies.

While the notion of a White American author reducing the continent of Africa to a machete-hacked ruin for the sake of a thriller about American values with a White man as the hero seems a bit 'colonial' and cliché, the story does work well enough for what it is. I do hope if this is a series, that there will be MANY native African good guys worked into the future novels, so that the series is not just about macho White men from the US and New Zealand on a wild adventure through primitive, barbaric Africa in a world where their killing native Africans is even less punishable than it would be today. But, this novel had enough going for it that I am guardedly optimistic about future books set in this book's world. There's enough tech jargon for folks who are into that side of military fiction, while the focus remains on the story, and the macho characters actually have softer sides, though Slade seems like he must have some high-tech bionic implants or something to have survived this book.

If you're sensitive about the whole issue of ongoing colonialism in Africa, you might be annoyed by this book. And the last quarter of the book occasionally launches into preachy IR theory editorializing, which I found rather clumsy. But many people will probably enjoy this book as what it is- a near-future adventure/thriller.

Breakaway Reviewers says

A non-stop action thriller packed with adventure and danger

In the near future, the continent of Africa has collapsed into chaos, with criminals and rogue security agents ruling over a greatly diminished, poverty- and disease-stricken population. Over in America, ex-Navy SEAL Slade Crawford has been falsely accused of terrorism by the government he spent 20 years serving. Emotionally broken by the death of his son in a terrible accident and the resultant falling apart of his marriage, Slade decides to take up the offer of being professional Security Advisor to a group of fundamentalist Christians called the Judeans, who hope to resettle in the decimated Africa.

Escaping from the country that betrayed him, he arrives in Cape Town and sets out across the wilderness with his newly trained associates. However, they soon discover that the situation is more desperate than they suspected, with evidence of brutal organised attacks being carried out on foreign settlements. As Slade struggles to keep the group alive, he finds himself captured by a US colonel Gary Kraven who agrees to let him go free but blackmails him into investigating a sinister blood cult that seems to be responsible for the attacks. Torn between doing what he must survive and maintain his honour, Slade attempts to pursue the cult but finds himself fighting for his life and the lives of the Judeans and having to ultimately decide where his loyalties truly lie.

This book begins with Slade fleeing the US in a stolen truck, eventually escaping by stealing a plane and flying off over New York Harbour before parachuting down to the boat that will take him to Africa. This adrenaline-thrilled sequence sets the pace for the rest of *Into a Dark Frontier*, which rarely lets up on the level of action from that point on. The gripping writing moves at a lightning-fast pace with constant twists and turns and the reader finds him/herself rapidly turning pages, desperate to find out what will happen next. The momentum slows down a little during the second half but picks up rapidly towards the end of the thrilling finale, which leaves the story open for a potential sequel – something I would definitely want to get my hands on if it were to be written.

I found the background plot of this story to be highly imaginative and quite unusual. The concept of an entire continent devoid of civilisation is a frightening one, and the way that the author describes how the lawless state of Africa came to be is unsettlingly plausible. With the state of the world as it is at the moment, the thought of some dramatic act of war leading to a drastic re-organisation of the way that civilisations are run is not too inconceivable, and reading fiction about one possible outcome of such an event is both entertaining and chilling.

Slade, whilst initially coming across as a little bit clichéd, is a likeable and understandable hero who I felt empathy for throughout the story. His backstory is suitably tragic and, despite his many obvious flaws, he is evidently a good man who has suffered a lot at the hands of those who he was loyal to. The supporting characters were also interesting and likeable, especially the kind-hearted Judean leader Abe and Elizabeth, the feisty daughter of one of the Judean refugees. My one criticism of the characterisation was that the villains of the story felt a little two-dimensional and at times it seemed like Slade was almost too skilled and too much of a stereotypical action hero in his encounters with them.

Overall, I enjoyed this book immensely and would definitely be keen to read more by this author, either in the form of a sequel or a new story.

Daenerys

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review

Leslynn says

Copy courtesy of NetGalley

The description makes this book sound like an exciting read -- I really tried, but gave in at 33%. The storylines, characters and writing-style are so dull that this novel seems like a non-fiction book. I'm just done.....

InD'tale Magazine says

A techno-thriller set in a distant, yet highly possible future, “*Into the Dark Frontier*” draws the reader into an adventure that starts with a bang...and ends with another.

Phillip III says

INTO A DARK FRONTIER is a the debut thriller from John Mangan. Hard to believe this is his first novel. The writing is crisp, the dialogue authentic, and the pacing non-stop.

While the book boosts that the story takes place in the near future, I am convinced it is not a future so far away. There is economic turmoil across the globe, and a land-snatch is underway. Africa is among the hardest hit. The entire continent is a mess. Escaping trumped up charges, ex-SEAL, Slade Crawford is on the run from authorities in the U.S. Slade finds himself on a boat with three-hundred pilgrims. The problem is that the pilgrims have no idea what they are walking into once they reach Africa.

Taking it on himself to guide these people, Slade realizes they are all in over their heads. Drowning, really. An organized group is moving across Africa and slaughtering colonies. The attacks are ritualistic, vicious, and bloody. There is no way Slade can keep everyone safe. Including himself.

Things get worse when Slade is captured by an American Colonel running a covert, and maybe not exactly sanctioned mission in Africa. The colonel knows all about Slade. His past, and what family the ex-SEAL has left. Using all he can as leverage, this colonel enlists Slade to do impossible recon.

The colonel wants to know what's what in Africa. Who is behind the slaughters, dealing arms, and grabbing up the unsettled lands. The U.N. is everywhere. They might be more of a problem than a solution. Working with his hands tied behind his back, Slade has no choice but to do the colonel's bidding.

And then things go from bad to worse when the crazy cult attacks Slade's caravan of peaceful pilgrims. Maintaining an alley relationship might be Slade's only chance to make right so many of the things that went wrong! In a race against time, Slade must get to the bottom of Africa's problem or else risk losing himself to the world forever.

INTO A DARK FRONTIER is kind of like a Jack Reacher novel set in Africa. I hate comparing authors, or characters. This time it seems worth the comparison. It is a compliment. Mangan's writing is taut, and compelling. The chapters are short, and engaging. I flew through the book in a few sittings. I only hope there are more, and the Mangan turns Slade into a recurring character. I am most definitely a fan!

Phillip Tomasso

Author of the Severed Empire series,
and the Vaccination Trilogy

Ed says

Outstanding military thriller and an incredibly auspicious debut novel. This very talented author creates a diabolical and quite credible geopolitical crises in the context of a dynamic, page turning thriller. Very highly recommended.

Kevin says

An excellent freshman novel. John Mangan tells a story rooted in drawn-from-the-headlines fears. On the run from the US government, Slade Crawford goes into hiding in famine ravaged Africa. Once there, he witnesses the horrors of war that remind him too much of his time fighting ISIS in Syria. His journey brings him to the realization that a sinister cabal is at work on the continent, with the whole world at stake. With realistic characters drawn from the author's real-world combat experience, Into a Dark Frontier presents a convincing picture of what can happen when the powerful elite go too far. The plot is reminiscent of Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six, while the protagonist is cut from the same cloth as the late Vince Flynn's Mitch Rapp. I look forward to seeing where Slade Crawford ends up next.

Zohar - ManOfLaBook.com says

Into a Dark Frontier by John Mangan is a novel about an ex-soldier, now a mercenary based in the near future on Africa. Mr. Mangan is a retired Lt. Col. From the US Air Force, this is his debut novel.

Slade Crawford, an ex-Navy SEAL now a government fugitive, has been hired by a religious group to take them to Africa, a continent falling apart at the seams. In the near future, African countries have fallen and it's a free-for-all, dog eat dog, continent, a perfect place it seems to start a religious colony.

Unbeknownst to Slade, Colonel Gary Kraven is tracking him and blackmails him into working for him as an asset. But why does Col. Kraven, with the might of the US Army behind him, needs Slade?

Some novels have great concepts and poor executions. Some novels have poor concepts but great execution. Some have poor concepts and are written poorly. But every now and then you find a novel with a great concept and great execution.

Into a Dark Frontier by John Mangan is one of those novels.

I have to admit that at first I thought this book had a religious agenda, which almost made me put it down. I'm glad I kept reading though, about half way through the book I realized that this isn't the case. Mr. Mangan really gets into a character's mind and when he tells the story through their lens he lends them credibility and authenticity.

I enjoyed reading about military equipment and tactics. The author certainly knows them well and can describe them with certainty and authority.

While I thought the overall concept was the book was somewhat outlandish, I can certainly believe that there are powers that would like to see nothing less than what the author describes. He obviously put a lot of thought into it and makes ties where they might seem improbable, but makes them work into a believable concept.

After reading Daniel Levin's excellent book Nothing but a Circus it might not seem that bad that there are many incompetent people running things.

For more reviews and bookish posts please visit: <http://www.ManOfLaBook.com>

Lena♥Ribka says

2.5 stars

Even if I actually enjoyed the first half of the book - in spite of too much actions for my taste - the second part of this book didn't work for me at all.

I think the main reason is the disappearance of an intriguing mystery effect in the story-line and a sudden replacement of the characters, in addition to even more action.

I have an impression that the author is a big fan of computer shooting games, and in some scenes (actually in the entire second part) he got too inspired by one (or more) scenarios in his recent games and lost the healthy balance between many actions, compelling dialogues (oh, well, they were totally non-present) and quiet emotional moments (not that much either).

It is why- I have to be honest-I skimmed through the final third of the book.

The ending is a bit abrupt, but those who enjoyed *Into a Dark Frontier* could look forward to the further sequel. I, most likely, let it go.

I have to admit though, this book could make a good action movie. It is why I'd prefer *to watch* this book than to read it.

If you are a fan of action packed thrillers, it is probably a book for you.

Copy provided by Oceanview Publishing via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

Jay Williams says

This is one of the best books in the black ops genre. When you are betrayed by the government you have faithfully served, have lost your family, and are being hunted by everyone, life becomes a nightmare attempt to survive. The story is based in current events, and makes sense politically. The action includes a strange sect that uses violence, torture and death for its rituals. When Slade becomes a guide and protector for a group of religious pioneers in Africa, a Christian nut becomes an enemy, fighting Slade on every turn until his beliefs lead to disaster. Despite his tenuous existence, Slade tries to do the right thing, and that makes his problems worse. The writing creates great mental images, and the many characters are unique and developed in depth. The realism and nature of the plot ring very true, causing concern for the reader beyond the action in the book. The very end suggests we may see more of Slade, and I am ready.

William Bentrin says

Into A Dark Frontier by John Mangan

Whew! The author has action and adventure nailed! This was a hard book to put down. In many places it was hard to read due to the brutality of the story but it was also very thought provoking. Africa is depicted as a new frontier after a series of events leads to a dramatic depopulation. The protagonist is a former Seal who has been identified falsely as a terrorist. The story is his fight against a corrupt system.

Mangan postulates some potential issues with the United Nations and with the “military and industrial” clique. The “fat cats” are dictating what is being done by the “one world” attitude and the U.S. military. (the quotation marks are my interpretation and not necessarily what the author intended).

The idea of political correctness running amuck and big brother rearing his ugly head is certainly alive in today’s headlines. The best magicians focus your attention on their right hand while their left hand is lifting your wallet. Focusing attention on professional athletes kneeling or not is clearly distracting attention from health care, national disasters and North Korea. All of this taking place after Mangan paints similar behavior in his novel.

The author grabs you by the throat, shakes you around and then pushes your nose to the page. I look forward to seeing more from John Mangan. A little polish, a nudge here and there and you are looking at mega best sellers.

I highly recommend but don’t expect to like a possible future.

Web: <http://johnmanganbooks.com/>

John W. says

John Mangan’s debut novel, INTO A DARK FRONTIER, is an intense mystery thriller that grips readers from the beginning and doesn’t let go until the last page. The momentum of the storyline moves at lightning speed giving readers a feeling they are watching a feature film. The storyline focuses on the turmoil throughout the world from the shores of the United States across thousands of miles to Africa. The author gives readers an inside look at the real life struggles immigrants face as they attempt to leave their troubles behind to establish a new settlement in Africa.

The storyline follows protagonist Slade Crawford, an ex-marine Seal on the run from prosecution of trump up charges of Homeland Security. Slade’s backstory details his experiences and knowledge of life in Africa. His reputation comes to the attention of a religious group who need a guide to train and prepare them for colonizing in Africa. The momentum of Mangan’s storyline increases rapidly as the group travels towards their destination. Unfolding events turn deadly when Slade discovers burnt out building in settlements and evidence of death and destruction. The author places readers close Slade as he uncovers proof the attacks are well-organized and meant to discourage colonization of the area.

Slade’s past catches up with him in the middle of Africa with the arrival of an army colonel threatening

Slade's sister and her family if he refuses to work with the colonel. Mangan introduces several support characters providing details of the role of the character when they enter the storyline. The author adds twists and turns creating sub plots to change directions adding to the building crisis. Mangan places his readers inside Slade's head given the insight to the human side of Slade. They see and feel what Slade is experiencing as Slade's concern for the settlers surfaces. Slade shares his concerns with the leaders of the group that the mercenaries will attack and destroy the settlers. Regardless seeing proof of burnt out building and mutilated bodies, Slade is unable to convince the group of the dangers ahead.

Readers feel the settlers' tension as Mangan describes the immigrants' feelings. The author keeps his reader on the edge of their seats as they try to understand Slade's actions. Mangan places them in Slade's shadow so they can see Slade's turmoil when he realizes the extent of his feelings for a few of the settlers. Mangan gives readers an inside look at the severity of the mercenaries attacks including the heart-wrenching story of attack and capture of the settlers. Slade's plans to save his friends using the data he has found to leverage getting help from the colonel to save his friends and stop those responsible for the slaughtering of innocents. Mangan adds intensity to his complex storyline describing Slade's plan using his ex-military experience to implement a dramatic solution to his problem. Mangan's *INTO A DARK FRONTIER*'s ending can be considered heart wrenching and at the same time heartwarming. Mangan's debut novel easily earns a five-star ranking.
