



Nocturnal

Scott Sigler

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Note: This edition is for the 2007 original podcast rough draft version, which greatly differs from the re-written 2012 version. It is not the same book as the 2012 edition.

Scott Sigler reinvented the alien-invasion story in his bestselling novels *Infected* and *Contagious*... rebooted the biotech thriller in *Ancestor*...now, in his most ambitious, sweeping novel to date, he works his magic on the paranormal thriller, taking us inside a terrifying underworld of subterranean predators that only his twisted mind could invent.

Homicide detective Bryan Clauser is losing his mind.

How else to explain the dreams he keeps having—dreams that mirror, with impossible accuracy, the gruesome serial murders taking place all over San Francisco? How else to explain the feelings these dreams provoke in him—not disgust, not horror, but excitement?

As Bryan and his longtime partner, Lawrence “Pookie” Chang, investigate the murders, they learn that things are even stranger than they at first seem. For the victims are all enemies of a seemingly ordinary young boy—a boy who is gripped by the same dreams that haunt Bryan. Meanwhile, a shadowy vigilante, seemingly armed with superhuman powers, is out there killing the killers. And Bryan and Pookie’s superiors—from the mayor on down—seem strangely eager to keep the detectives from discovering the truth.

Doubting his own sanity and stripped of his badge, Bryan begins to suspect that he’s stumbled into the crosshairs of a shadow war that has gripped his city for more than a century—a war waged by a race of killers living in San Francisco’s unknown, underground ruins, emerging at night to feed on those who will not be missed.

And as Bryan learns the truth about his own intimate connections to the killings, he discovers that those who matter most to him are in mortal danger...and that he may be the only man gifted—or cursed—with the power to do battle with the nocturnals.

Featuring a dazzlingly plotted mystery and a terrifying descent into a nightmarish underworld—along with some of the most incredible action scenes ever put to paper, and an explosive, gut-wrenching conclusion you won’t soon forget—*Nocturnal* is the most spectacular outing to date from one of the genre’s brightest stars.

Nocturnal Details

Date : Published 2007

ISBN :

Author : Scott Sigler

Format : Podcast Novel 1 page

Genre : Horror, Science Fiction, Fantasy, Audiobook, Thriller

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From Reader Review Nocturnal for online ebook

Γι?τα Παπαδημακοπο?λου says

?να αυθεντικ?, ειλικριν?ς, σ?γχρονο μυθιστ?ρημα τρ?μου που δεν μπορε? να μην σε καθηλ?σει. Μακρ?ν καλ?τερο απ? την αρχικ? του μορφ?, ο Sigler π?ρε μια ?δη πολ? καλ? ιστορ?α και την π?γε σε ?λαο επ?πεδο, κ?νοντ?ς την να φαντ?ζει εντελ?ς διαφορετικ?. Ακ?μα κι αν την ?χεις διαβ?σει στην αρχικ?, πρωτ?τυπη μορφ? της, το πιθαν?τερο ε?ναι να πιστ?ψεις πως το διαβ?ζεις για πρ?τη φορ?. Συγκλονιστικ? υπ?ροχο, απ?λυτα καθηλωτικ?, γεμ?το ?νταση, π?θος, νε?ρο, σασπ?νς, αγων?α, μα και σκην?ς που σε κ?νουν ανατριχι?ζεις και σου κ?βουν την αν?σα, το συγκεκριμ?νο βιβλ?ο ε?ναι ?να απ? εκε?να που αναμφ?βολα θα πρ?τεινα σε κ?θε fan του ε?δους.

Paul says

For centuries, their race has lived beneath the earth, emerging only at night, to feed quietly on the dregs of society and slip back into the shadows. But now their time has come – their time to rise up from their hiding places and take back what is theirs.

San Francisco homicide detective Bryan Klauser is supposed to be hunting a serial killer. But a serial killer couldn't be responsible for the seemingly impossible DNA evidence the crime-scene techs keep finding – or for the gory, strangely prophetic dreams Bryan keeps having. And what about the connections he keeps finding to a century-old cult – and his superiors' sudden reluctance to give him the answers he needs about cases that should be dead and buried?

Ultimately, Klauser's investigations will reveal a race of killers who've long lurked beneath San Francisco's streets – and are preparing to take back the city. Klauser is the only man who can stop them, because . . . he might not be a man at all.

It's a constant surprise how much external forces influence the enjoyment of my reading. Nocturnal is a perfect example of this. I recently started watching The Wire (I know, I know, I'm late to the party as usual) and one of the things I love about it is the portrayal of the men and women who make up Baltimore's police force. The initial chapters of Nocturnal feel exactly the same as watching an episode. Nocturnal's two main characters, police detectives Bryan Klauser and Pookie Chang, share an easy camaraderie that makes every conversation they have an effortlessly realistic feel.

Differing location and ethnicities aside, Pookie Chang could be Bunk Moreland and Bryan Klauser could be Jimmy McNulty. These are two men that live for the job, they are experts at what they do. Like their televisual counterparts however, neither are particularly successfully as human beings, they're both flawed. Pookie is overweight and doesn't know when to keep his mouth shut while Bryan has problems with his emotions. I always appreciate when a writer takes the time and effort to make his characters as human as possible. There is a realism that surrounds Bryan and Pookie, in fact all the characters in the novel, that really makes it easy for a reader to get caught in the narrative.

The novel is split into two books. The first, entitled People, seems initially to be a straightforward police procedural but as the plot unfolds subtle signs start appearing that things are a bit more complicated than a simple murder. In the alternate reality of Nocturnal, appearances can be deceptive and Sigler delights in

throwing the reader the occasion red herring just to keep them on their toes. The second book, titled Monsters, is the point where Mr. Sigler really starts to ramp up the horrific elements of the story. I wouldn't dream of delivering any spoilers all I'm going to say is that things get particularly icky. The backstory of the novel's villains is revealed in all its glory and the lines are drawn for a spectacular climactic face off.

I've come to realize that a Scott Sigler novel just isn't a Scott Sigler novel unless you have a handful of moments where you think to yourself 'I can't believe he just did that' or 'he's never going to do that to that poor character is he?....yup, he has'.

I have to admit a pleased smile crossed my face when I read the final chapter of Nocturnal. Sigler has written an attention grabbing crime/horror/action thriller that doesn't put a foot wrong and the ending hints that there are further stories to tell. Sign me up now, I am so there.

Scott Sigler is the rarest of beasts in the world of books, a self-published author who has achieved a New York Times bestseller status under his own steam. In the UK however he is published by Hodder and Nocturnal is available now.

A final note, if any further were needed, any author who can sneak a 'Romancing the Stone' reference into a novel needs to be celebrated and is entirely deserving of your time.

Bobby says

This story ranks right up there with "Infected" and I loved that one. The character development is over the top. Pookie Chang is top-notch and his constant diatribe does not become stale or overdone. The one-liners are perfectly timed and original. Bryan is an unexpected protagonist that shows terrific good and bad sides. Now maybe I can catch up on some sleep!!

Guillermo says

Not the best, but entertaining.

John says

I listened to an old copy of Nocturnal, previously downloaded from <http://www.podiobooks.com>, on my iPhone. At present, it is not available as it was being re-written for hardcover release in Spring, 2012, from Crown Publishing. They have removed it from podcast circulation until they can re-record.

If you like horror, if blood and guts and gore don't bother you, if you don't mind less than happy endings, if coarse language does not put you 'off' and if you want reading that you don't want to put down, 'Nocturnal' is the book for you!

Something is under the streets of San Francisco. Something old and forgotten, that comes out at night and kills. Somebody else in San Francisco seems to be killing too. Then, there's the police. Join our protagonists, Bryan Clauser and "Pookie" Chang, SFPD Homicide Detectives, as they try to figure out what's going on,

who's doing what to who and what they intend to do about it. Sounds simple, doesn't it? There are more twists, turns and surprises that there are on San Franciscos famous Lombard Street!

You will enjoy the depth of Sigler's characters, the story line will keep you going and the end is well done. Plus it leaves the book open for MORE.

And good news for Sigler fans, there are two sequels to Nocturnal on the horizon.

Stephanie Ward says

This is the first book by Scott Sigler that I have read. I am a big fan of horror novels and thrillers, so this sounded right up my alley when I found it. Needless to say, I wasn't disappointed. This was quite a long book - well over 550 pages long. The chapters were short, which keeps the reader actively engaged in the story. The narrative is very well-written and the characters are deep; it was easy to get sucked into the freakish world that Sigler had created. The novel is fast-paced; so even though it was long, it didn't take very long to read. I couldn't put it down. The plot had so many twists and interesting ideas that it truly keeps the reader on their toes and trying to figure out what is going on - right up to the very last chapter. I highly recommend this book to anyone who likes horror novels, thrillers, and things that go bump in the night.

Ed [Redacted] says

This is a pretty good story overall. Interesting concepts but I think this was an earlier Sigler novel. He has written better novels than this one. A good concept and a good story but a bit undermined by inexperience I think. I would recommend this but I would recommend you read "Infected" first. Infected is a far, far better novel in its execution. You can see, even in this unpolished form, that Sigler is an author with a wealth of talent. That talent truly shines in "Infected".

Sara says

I really like this author - but prefer to listen to the podcast - Sigler adds a lot by performing the stories himself.

Chibineko says

Since you can easily find a synopsis elsewhere for any of Sigler's books, I'm going to go straight to the fangirl gushing.

This has to be one of my favorite books of Sigler's, ranking up there with Infected & Contagious. I absolutely loved the idea of this book, with all of the various Marie's Children as well as what all of it might mean for the future books in this series. Bryan is an interesting hero & his best friend (and partner) Pookie has to be my favorite character in the book.

This also has to be one of the best narrations Sigler has done to date. After this one it'll be really, REALLY hard to listen to some of the other podiobooks out there. Sigler's a professional & it shows. As with all of his other books, you can check this out for free on Podiobooks.

EDIT:

I'm currently reading this in book format and to be honest, it's so different of a read from the rough draft podcast that the hardback should be listed as separate from the book. Entire character designs are re-done and there are HUGE changes to the story. If you're hoping for this to be like the podcast, then you're in for a whole new story. I'll warn you- the ending is very different from the podcast's ending!

EDIT 2:

The two versions are separated now, but I just have to say... the rewrite is pretty freaking sweet.

M Tat says

An interesting idea, to start, that leads to a 'suspend your disbelief at what Sigler didn't bother to address' which ultimately ruins this work.

Sigler clearly overlooks several 'natural' character flows: Bryan's 'transformation' into Savior (and the aberrance of archetype the Sigler wields); Robin's discovery of the Zed chromosome; any character reflecting on the struggle for interspecies competition between hominids.

This novel would be far stronger had Bryan's character development actually proceeded within the realm of 'the hunter'. It doesn't make any sense that he becomes a hunter of the hunted, especially after all the emphasis on his shining nobility as a strict law enforcer. Why the sudden role reversal into someone who plays around the rules and is encouraged to do so? The character, Bryan, bears no self-reflection on his choice to hunt down his own relatives (spoiler!). What the shock? Robin, meanwhile, is amazed at discovering this new chromosome. This is science that would make her infamously influential and well-recognized throughout the world . . .but this character doesn't even fathom this. . .even though she's a shoe-in for Chief Medical Examiner OF SAN FRANCISCO?? She's well educated in science and she doesn't even consider what kind of impact such a discovery OF A NEW SPECIES much less A NEW CHROMOSOME will have upon even THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD? Gods, what a major fuck-up on Sigler's part.

Suffice to say, his characters are vapid, have minimal substance, and the story telling is winded. There's poignancy missing here, and apparently Sigler's work is best sold as 'shlock for the uneducated masses.'

Christine Kayser says

I love Scott Sigler. I've never read something from him I didn't like, and Nocturnal is no exception. A concise description of the book would be a buddy cop mystery with an infusion of the supernatural. You'll find cop drama, buddy cop comedy, monsters, cults, hidden societies, corruption, science, and even a little romance.

The book is fast-paced, and a surprisingly fast read for the length. Dialogue is, as it usually is with Sigler's books, the highlight. The characters speak as you'd expect them to speak, and it reads very naturally. Sigler writes captivating characters and stories that flow effortlessly. I love the Pookie & Bryan cop duo - I'd read a whole series with them. The story itself is a crazy journey through the mysteries around a secret society and monsters and murderers and how the cops fit in. I'm having a difficult time describing it without giving away anything, but I really, really liked the book. Much like I felt when I finished Infected, the first Sigler book I read, I instantly wanted to read it again.

If you like mysteries, thrillers, cop dramas, or just plain good stories, I'd definitely recommend Nocturnal.

Chris Bauer says

Simply put, I was pretty blown away by "Nocturnal" the latest work by Scott Sigler. I've read his previous works and thought they were good, but not great. Somebody sprinkled something in his Cheerios on a daily basis while he wrote this book.

The plot starts off fairly simple, but then winds up at a breakneck pace and spins off into the stratosphere. Seriously. If one graphs the action, pace and other dramatic devices embedded in the novel the final 200 pages spike off the chart. Very cool structure.

The characters, for the most part, are very well defined. There is a hint of 2D shallowness in a couple of the primaries, including the protag. But the ensemble is written very well. Minor details add to create an interesting mosaic of secondaries as well.

And one of the primaries actually starts to overshadow the protagonist in terms of characterization, action descriptors and above all else, dialogue. Frankly I can't ever recall reading a book in which I was 10x more interested in what the "sidekick" had to say/do than the protag. Just fricking hilarious dialogue.

Pseudo-science, rogue genetics, shadow races, cult mythology and vast conspiracies all converge in an exciting paroxysm of action and pace.

Another aspect I respected was the decision on Sigler's part to make "bad things happen to good people" across the board. Gutsy in many of the pivotal scenes.

I thought there were a couple of weak points in the work, though. The romantic interest of the protag is well-written but the author never really conveyed effectively the sense of tragedy/loss/pain/hope/redemption in the relationship. Sort of ended up not really caring about the love story.

A few scenes were repetitive in nature and got a little boring. One or two scenes of "spontaneous exposition" but I couldn't think of any better ways to educate the reader about genetic science principles either.

There were also a handful of scenes which crashed through the ceiling of suspension of disbelief. Didn't go through the roof, but definitely the ceiling.

If you're looking for a frantically paced thriller with shades of Crichton, Robin Cook and doses of Clive Barker's "Nightbreed" you won't be disappointed.

Terez says

Before I start my review, let me say that Mr. Sigler is a charismatic author who takes precious time to engage his fans via podcasting and social media. I've never heard any of his podiobooks before, including the one for this novel.

However, his appearance on the new **Sword and Laser** show on the Geek and Sundry YouTube channel really piqued my interest.

I actually read the recently published Kindle edition of *Nocturnal*. I was very excited to read my first novel from this dynamic author. Sadly this book was just not my cup of tea.

The Positives

1. The book's pacing. Despite the book's 500-plus page length, Mr. Sigler is skilled at keeping the plot moving. Also, the novel's short chapters help keep the narrative moving at a brisk pace - almost a necessity due to its length.
2. The setting. The juxtaposition of San Francisco's urban life with the underworld of the book's monster society is truly weird and horrifying.
3. The supporting character of Inspector Lawrence "Pookie" Chang. Pookie Chang is irreverent at all of the most inappropriate times, yet a competent, insightful and loyal friend to the main character. Now a book centered around his exploits would be a must-read on my list!

The Negatives

1. The protagonist. The (anti) hero Bryan Clauser seems to be based on the style of the dark, brooding, 80's action hero archetype. Personally, I found him to be insufferable and almost completely unsympathetic. Throughout the book, he often treats those closest to him with a disdainful, self-pitying, ungrateful attitude that grows tiresome fast. I especially had difficulty with the way his relationship with his father is handled.
2. Love interest. The main love interest is a multi-dimensional, intelligent career woman. I really liked her character, but just couldn't buy into the romance between her and the hero. Her motivations for remaining involved with him just didn't ring convincing to me.
3. The gore. Yes, it's a personal preference, but the levels of gore and depravity in this novel turned me completely off. Again, this is a matter of personal taste, but the splatter levels of this story kept me from becoming fully engrossed.

Despite my not loving this novel, I still plan on reading Mr. Sigler's other books. I just don't plan on making any return visits to the world of *Nocturnal*.

Linda Branham Greenwell says

Just finished ...

The story begins as a police procedural, developing the characters of Bryan and Pookie - homicide detective partners. The characters are very well developed with lots of quirks and personality that remain consistent throughout the story -- consistent even when things begin to "change" :)

Bryan and Pookie are best friends, as well as detectives that are investigating a string of serial murders. The murders are gruesome and surrounded by unusual circumstances including peculiar symbols that have been strangely drawn. As more murders happen they begin to uncover the seemingly unimaginable. They soon find themselves kicked off the case and isolated from the police force.

The novel then develops into something else entirely - even though it manages to still maintain it's police procedural theme. Determined to find answers the two enter a world of horror and the unthinkable.

If you like weird cults that are made up unusual monsters, science, dogs, and gory action then this is a book you will enjoy. I happen to be one that likes that kind of thing - in novels, not in real life. It was fun to read and had a great mythology behind the characters.

I gave it a 4 instead of a 5 (wanted to give it a 4.5) because near the end it did get a little far out - kind of like a Stephen King or Neil Gaiman novel. When it gets that far out it loses me sometimes. But being compared to Stephen King and Neil Gaiman can't be all bad - and I also love Stephen King and Neil Gaiman - but they also gets a little too far out for me near the end of their books sometimes. But the actual ending itself is pulled together nicely with all the loose ends tied up.

Justin Diehl says

Horror is a genre I love but don't often take a stroll in. A few horror podcasts here, an occasional audio book, but rarely do I pick up a novel or short story. There's one dark force that can draw me in every time his presence goes out in a new beacon of darkness and terror, and that's Scott Sigler. His ability to bring a certain slant of hard sci-fi into the modern world creates a dread terror for the events, places, and creatures that lurk in those pages. His latest official release, *Nocturnal*, is no exception to this rule.

Bryan Clauser is our point man in the still bloody face mask *Nocturnal* wears of a buddy cop story. His nightmare journey over the pages that follow peel back this façade and make us yearn for more of the positive outlook of his partner Pookie Chang. Brutal murders, strange occult symbols, terrible nightmares, and a conspiracy that stretches through the decades from the bowels under the city up to the mayor's office lace this book with more excitement at each cut. The cop drama mask fades rips away and horror, monster hunting, and revelations of power and ancestry leaves us with a cold pit in our stomach. The ending leaves us with a sense of things to come and this chapter in the *Nocturnal* universe comes to a satisfying conclusion while leaving you wanting for another hit.

The book keeps one foot near science and social possible and isn't afraid to take things to certain extremes. There are a number of bizarre examples of biology, yet things aren't taken too far that they would stretch into disbelief. The monsters are terrifying, but they aren't impossible killing machines. They kill for a reason, have a good motivation for what they do (regardless of how misguided), and have more emotions than rage, hate, and murderous intent. By the time you get to the climax, you can believe the culture of the creatures and can see their world is more complex than the butchered bodies they leave behind. How our protagonists and antagonists fit into the culture and history of the conspiracy fits snuggly and awkwardly comfortable.

Regardless of setting or plot characters are king, and *Nocturnal* provides ample people for us to fall in love with and hate. Bryan "The Terminator" Clauser is an emotional wall at times, a brutal killer at other points,

and starts off seemed like a two dimensional wall until you crack the surface. Once his emotional walls are torn down brick by brick he reveals just how strong and deep his emotions go, without forgetting that he is still The Terminator. He doesn't flip flop to a completely different beings even though his barriers are exposed. Partner Pookie and ex-girlfriend Robin serve as great supporting characters, with complex personalities and wants. Their lives, while related to Bryan, don't completely orbit just him. The world doesn't stop at the behest of the protagonist and I love it. The same can be said for one of our antagonist, Rex. He starts off as a weak and abused loner. The sudden gift of incredible power and authority twists him along a logical path he's always had inside. He just needed the right path to walk down.

Nocturnal has quickly shot up to my favorite published Sigler book so far. I've loved his other works but the dark urban sci-fi of the book becomes mixed with the creepy culture of the children make me want so much more from this setting. There are still things left unanswered from the book, and a large number of deaths to avenge by the time the dust settles. There's also a back story to the beasts, who has fought them, and what role certain people played in the conspiracy to deal with.

I recommend the book to anyone wanting the fun of a good horror/adventuresque combo breaker. The characters are great and the science isn't heavy handed and comes off with a taste of possible realism. The mystery itself is revealed rather quickly but you're left satisfied as the plot deals with the revelations. The final scenes are just as Scott indicates in his interviews of the book: a very Hollywood action packed spectacle of fire, explosions, gunfire, monsters, and questions of who will and will not die. It's worth the great story to get to that point, and you'll keep your eyes peeled to the page for the back quarter of the book, resistant to talk to family and friends, work, or another else that could risk diminishing the value of finishing this book.
