



# Caller Unknown

*Jennifer Brozek*

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Kendrick is a city alive in more ways than one. Its borders contain a hidden world composed of secret societies, the supernatural, the lost, and the unexplained. It is the world that Karen, a 911 operator, is thrust into. It begins with a phone call. A stranger begs Karen to save a young woman's life, opening Karen's eyes to the world beneath the surface of the city she thought she knew. People are dying. Artifacts are being stolen. The streets are filled with rumors of a city-destroying ritual. Karen is determined to figure out what is really going on and protect her city, whatever the cost... Caller Unknown: Book One of the Karen Wilson Chronicles, is the first of four collections following the trials of Karen Wilson as she delves into the secret side of Kendrick. With enemies on all sides, unknown allies, and a baby gargoyle, what she finds will change her life forever.

## Caller Unknown Details

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Author : Jennifer Brozek

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# From Reader Review Caller Unknown for online ebook

## Steven says

I live in Ohio. Over the last few months, I've been trained to not even pick up the phone if there's not a caller ID number that I recognize, unless I wanted to hear a political party rant about the other candidate.

Now, though, we're back to normal. And there's something slightly exciting about an unknown caller. It's a departure from the normal, the expected, from the everyday mundane existence of our overinformed lives. And unlike answering an unexpected knock at your door, answering a call without knowing who's on the other end isn't really risky.

Unless you listen.

In *Caller Unknown*, the new collection of stories from author and editor Jennifer Brozek, a 911 operator named Karen does listen. That unknown call is not merely an interruption in her mundane day, but a gateway to a whole side of her city that she never realized existed.

This urban fantasy (with a little bit of a dark edge) collection is a series of connected and related short stories, but each one is complete in itself. There are gaps of time between them. Characters allude to events that have taken place in those gaps, without actively spelling any of them out. This is actually a strength of the work - we get to skip to the "good bits" without having to sacrifice the sense that there's a larger world out there where things actually take time to happen. While there's a lot of worldbuilding and some really interesting twists on classic genre themes, it feels like there's even more going on. It feels like there's a world beyond the page.

The way the stories were originally written does expose the book's single (sort of) weakness. Ms. Brozek wrote the stories over a period of time, and the stories get better as you get further into the book. I say this is a "sort of" weakness", though. The even the weakest story in the book is still pretty darn good, and they only get better from there.

Overall, I enjoyed reading this collection of stories and seeing the way the storyline (and author) developed through the book. This is a solid first collection of these stories, and judging by the strength by which it finishes, I'm really looking forward to the rest of the series.

*Caller Unknown* is available from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and directly from the publisher, Apocalypse Ink.

[Full Disclosure: I got a review ARC of this book. I've worked with the author on other projects both as an author and a publisher. That said, I review all books as impartially as I can and I've even panned my friend's books before.]

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## Mitchell says

First book in a series that I read for the Endeavour Award. This author apparently writes primarily for RPG modules and rules sets and in fact I think this book would have made a pretty good module. Unfortunately it

kind of read like a choose-your-own-adventure. Characters and situations were more sketch than story. And I didn't believe Kendrick as a Sunnydale knockoff. Still, the book was readable and short.

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### **Nancie says**

#### **Great book**

I loved the main character of this story. She is a kind soul with great intentions. She comes through in unexpected ways to try to save the city she lives in from a group of magical people with not so good intentions. I have already bought the second and third books and will be reading them today!

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### **Jennifer Brozek says**

I wrote this collection and am very pleased with it.

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### **Dani says**

\*review originally posted on A Bibliophile's Reverie\*

I found this story to be a bit simple, not much description and mainly dialogue. I wasn't able to concentrate on what was going on, getting lost in who was talking and where exactly they were. I felt like it could have been fleshed out more so that the story felt more complete.

Although I wasn't able to connect too much with the story, I found the character to be interesting as she was a 911 operator and got dragged into this mess. I liked her reason as to why she became one, but other than that I wasn't too interested.

If you enjoy urban fantasy and it tying to jobs like 911 operators and the real world, this story could be for you. I give it a 3/5, as I was having trouble connecting with the story but it was still a very interesting concept. It's a short read and would recommend it for people wanting to read something a little different.

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### **J.L. says**

I purchased this book at the Context convention (Columbus OH, September 2014) because my vendor table was next to the author's and we had some great conversations over the course of the weekend. It seemed like typical urban fantasy fare, but I was sold on the promise of a baby gargoyle on the back cover blurb.

This was not typical urban fantasy fare. Karen is an average woman thrust into extraordinary circumstances, but she manages to make the best of them. The story does have a love triangle, but its refreshingly nonstandard.

The "serial novel" aspect of the storytelling took a bit of getting used to, but it was fun to follow a tale more

in the style of a television season's meta arch.

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## **Sarah says**

I had heard of this series before, but hadn't read it until now. I wish I had picked it up sooner.

Unlike many Urban Fantasies the main character, Karen Wilson, is a completely normal person until she receives a strange phone call asking for her help. From there she's led down the rabbit hole into a shadowy world that lives along side the one she knows. Because she doesn't have abilities or powers, she's at a disadvantage from the start, but she gains allies quickly and finds a way to save the city.

Karen Wilson is very unusual in the UF genre. She's thrown into a world with gargoyles, magic and a variety of other creatures that have lived side by side with regular humans for decades. But this doesn't phase her. Of course she's resistant and wary at first, but her sense of duty pulls her through.

Caller Unknown is a bit different than many UF novels. Each chapter is a separate short story that ties into a much larger story arc. In a few spots there's a gap of information, between one chapter and the next but it gets filled in quickly. The chapters build more tension because the reader knows that there's other things going on but not quite sure what. But the ending is very clear, no one is left guessing.

For me this was a great read. I'll be looking forward to reading the next ones.

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