



Chimera

David Wellington

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A fabulous new talent-the heir to Patrick Lee and James Rollins-delivers his first published novel: a wildly imaginative tale that combines elements of horror and science in the vein of Michael Crichton, in which a circle of unlikely heroes must uncover a nefarious cabal and prevent it from unleashing a diabolical threat that could destroy the world

7 fugitives escape from a secret military facility in upstate New York, leaving a trail of bodies in their wake.

7 super-soldiers gone rogue.

7 innocent citizens targeted for death.

Disabled Army Vet James Chase is drafted for a desperate mission to stop this lethal force. Aided by a mysterious woman named Angel and a courageous, beautiful veterinarian, Chase sets off on a hair-raising cross-country hunt.

But are the killers really rogue soldiers, or are they only the tip of a sinister conspiracy . . . the first piece of a shocking nightmarish plan that will lead to ultimate destruction?

Chimera Details

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Author : David Wellington

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From Reader Review Chimera for online ebook

Zedsdead says

Some mystery person in power uses a drone to break a team of genetically altered killers (chimeras) out of a super-top-secret prison camp in the New York state boonies, then instructs them to track and kill everyone involved in their creation. Jim Chapel, a one-armed desk jockey and former special ops captain, is drafted by the CIA and Department of Defense to kill the chimeras and save their intended victims.

David Wellington has written a romance novel masquerading as an action thriller. The hero spends most of the book distractedly mooning over the requisite beautiful scientist who starts tagging along in Act One--one of many unlikely plot points that Wellington does a piss poor job of justifying. Chapel just respects her strength and passion *so much*, could it be--dare he think it--*true love*? He's a firm believer in secrecy and national security but gosh darn it she just **DESERVES** to be told every high-level secret that he can think of because it's **MORALLY RIGHT**. Ugh.

Internal logic flies out the window over and over again. An example: a psychotic superkiller gleefully and easily takes down entire Seal teams, in public, kills every challenger and enjoys doing so; but when our one-armed hero confronts said superkiller alone in an empty house--affording him plenty of privacy for violence and butchery--he conveniently knocks Chapel down and runs away? This kind of thing keeps happening.

Wellington clumsily attempts a series of shocking twists à la Jeffrey Deaver or Lincoln Child. He is not good at it. I look forward to not reading the next installment.

Amy Rogers says

ScienceThrillers Review: Before I go all reviewer-geeky and dissect this new science-themed thriller novel by David Wellington, I want to say I thoroughly enjoyed reading Chimera. The old saw about a good thriller being one you stay up late to finish held true for me on this one. Chimera is an excellent example of a satisfying, conventional modern thriller.

In fact the more I think about it, the more Chimera looks like a book that successfully follows all the “rules” that make a strong thriller novel. Perhaps the only problem with this approach is the author doesn’t take any real risks or break any fresh ground in the genre. But who cares? This is a terrific book.

Chimera opens with a suitably action-driven scene that shows the escape of a group of mysterious detainees from some secret government facility in New York state. Author David Wellington artfully reveals little about who these detainees are, and the reader is immediately hooked with questions. Next, he introduces our hero, former Army Ranger Jim Chapel, a war hero who lost an arm in Afghanistan and who now has a desk job with a military intelligence agency.

Captain Chapel is the epitome of a sympathetic action thriller hero. He’s morally upright, obviously brave, has overcome tremendous obstacles, and yet he’s vulnerable because he’s an amputee who feels washed up and lonely. Never for a second does the reader think Chapel will do anything except the right thing. You can’t help rooting for this guy.

Chapel is teamed up with two additional hero(ines) who don't steal the show but who definitely shine brightly and are wonderful supporting characters. I fell in love with both Julia and Angel. Julia, a veterinarian by profession, plays the modern role of strong damsel in distress, rescued by Chapel but then becoming a powerful ally. (She's also necessary for the requisite thriller romance subplot, which works fine in *Chimera*. Parent alert: this book has sex scenes described in some detail.) Julia is an appealing blend of vulnerable, strong, resourceful, and clever. Above all, she keeps her head under pressure—no panicky female here.

Angel is equally good in a crisis but she is a more innovative character. A disembodied voice linked to Chapel by cell phone (and more), Angel works for the “higher ups” in this intelligence operation. A master of all things hackable, she seems to be all-knowing and all-powerful. She is deliciously ambiguous—what secrets is she keeping? Whose side is she on? She also is a useful device for the author to deal with mundane practical issues in the plot, such as getting taxis and buying winter coats and handling the local police following one deadly mess after another.

Problems? Sure. *Chimera* suffers from some of the maladies common to this genre. Characters occasionally do things that don't make sense or border on stupid (e.g., Julia entering the house in Atlanta); the villains are thin bad-guy stereotypes; the hero exhibits unrealistic physical stamina after injury; etc. As I read, a lot of questions came to mind related to the internal logic of the plot. Most of them were answered later, almost as if an early reader of the book told the author it was important to resolve this or that illogical bit. Not terribly satisfying, but Wellington writes well enough that readers who like thrillers shouldn't have trouble with suspension of disbelief.

You may be saying yes, yes, Amy, but what about the science? Two biohazards (out of 5) on that. Don't be fooled by the science-y title. *Chimera* is a traditional action thriller with a little science sprinkled in. It's no spoiler to say that the escaped detainees were the subject of some kind of military science shenanigans. This science is “explained” late in the book but it's SciFi bunk. That's fine. I was more bothered by the preposterous medical bits related to injuries (especially a blood transfusion scene) and the infection subplot. Also, I didn't like the way scientists are portrayed with two of the most pernicious scientist stereotypes: mad/unethical and socially deficient.

Note on structure: *Chimera* has no chapters, only an overall four-part structure and many tiny breaks defined by location/time stamps that are happily set in the format T+hr/min. (Date stamps with an actual time and date make me crazy as I can never remember how they relate to other dates in the story without looking back.) I liked this structure and wish more authors would use it.

Overall: *Chimera* is more than the sum of its parts. It follows genre conventions without feeling too formulaic and maintains a high level of curiosity in the reader. The themes of government secrecy and “black” intelligence operations feel timely in light of the recent Snowden affair. All in all, a highly satisfying read.

An advance reader copy was given to me for review.

Oleksandr Zholud says

I really liked the *Positive*, the post-apocalypse zombie novel of the same author, David Wellington. Therefore I decided to read his other books even despite the fact they are in genres I usually avoid (I avoided

zombie novels too, presupposing they are primitive trash). This one is weaker but still enjoyable.

This is I guess a techno-thriller. Seven subjects escape a high-security detention facility and are free in the USA. They are superhumanly fast, strong and resilient. They have a kill-list and are virus carriers, they have to be stopped. This is the job of army veteran Jim Chapel. He is 40 years old, he lost his arm in Afghanistan – hardly a gung-ho warrior to match the escapees. He has to fail. Will he?

The story is fast paced; a nice page turner and sometimes it can surprise the reader. To some extent it is a kind of anti-levelup mentality of similar books, where, as the plot progresses, the protagonist becomes better and better.

There two minor flaws for me

1. A mystery unfolds a bit slow, I guessed some answers much earlier than they were revealed. I don't like books with protagonists playing dumb and not seeing all the evidence
2. The super-prosthetic arm could be much simpler and closer to reality – as described it is unnecessary [for the plot] too high tech. I guess it creates wrong impressions about what real amputees get and will get in near future as well.

A small quote that surprised me:

“Sir, with all due respect—I’m the one running out of time,” Chapel told him. “There’s one other thing I have to say, though. One thing I need to make clear. You have the wrong man because I am not a hit man. I don’t kill people for money.”

“You know how to use a gun, don’t you?” Banks demanded.

“The army taught me that, yes,” Chapel agreed. “But I know you’re a civilian, sir, and you may be operating under a common misconception about soldiers. We aren’t in the business of killing random people. The mission of the armed forces is to extend U.S. policy through force only when necessary, and to use other means whenever it is humanly possible.”

CJ says

Wow! The government sends a one armed, semi-retired veteran to hunt down single handedly (literally) a group of genetically modified superhumans who are stronger, faster and more durable than regular human beings which comes in handy for them because they cannot control their rage and aggressive, violent tendencies either. The one perk is that the superhumans don't seem to have any superhuman intelligence. Plus that various departmental groups within the government are running a sideline game to see who wins control of the whole project. Then add in a virus that could wipe out human civilization as we know it.

However, if you believe that just because a person is disabled, that they are incapable, think again. Jim Chapel is the ultimate soldier and hero who believes that his country, and perhaps world, is worth fighting for. And he can definitely fight with a passion.

This is well worth the read.

Steven says

Not my typical read but I became from the publisher as a goodreads giveaway and I thoroughly enjoyed it and found the main characters to be very sympathetic for what I initially conceived of to be militaristic novel. I will definitely try some more of Wellington's works and I look forward to the sequel.

OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/ch...>

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Sammy

Beware of possible Spoilers

By page seven I was hooked.

On page ten I was confused, but perhaps I shouldn't be. There was a flirty woman and then she sees the hero has a prosthetic and can't deal with it. So she totally backs away. Can we say shallow? No matter she wasn't in the book long anyway. However, this was actually brought home fairly regularly throughout the book. It's a pity that our society really has that mindset so much so that it is added in a book with all the negative connotations that are in the real world.

Spider-goats, goodness they are real, yes I looked it up amazing! It made the whole story more believable. The laughing boy is super creepy, I found what he had interesting and looked it up, too. I would have liked a bit more information on the super soldiers and what went wrong with them. I was sad about Ian.

There are some pacing issues, it would be very slow and then the author would put in something that I couldn't wait to find out about and where things were going. That aside, this is an awesome story and I hope there will be more stories with these characters. I want to find out how our hero and heroine wind up. They made a wonderful team and fit together very well.

I highly recommend this book for young adults 16+ because of some of the sexual content. Which was well written and flowed well with the story. And of course I also recommend this for adults who enjoy mystery with cutting edge scientific ideas. Great book.

Samuel says

This book stretches one's limit of logic. An one armed ex-spec forces soldier manages to kill these Chimeras where groups of active Spec forces soldiers can't? Chimeras are strong and move so fast as to be able to dodge bullets sprayed from multiple machine guns but yet cannot dodge being batted by this one armed ex soldier?

A story is a story but I feel that there should be some foundation of plausibility.....Sorry to say that instead of trying to enjoy this book, I started looking for faults because of the way its written.

Randy says

Take a desk job former Army Ranger with one arm, throw in some genetically altered humans with super strength and wicked tempers and you have the potential for an interesting read.

Jim Chapel lost an arm while serving in Afghanistan. He is called back into action to help hunt down 6 subjects who escaped from a high security Department of Defense facility. Unsure as to why he has been called in for the job, he none-the-less begins to track down the subjects in his usual thorough manner. Along the way he digs up more information than he is supposed to, and a scandal erupts as long buried secrets are brought to light.

I picked up this book because I enjoyed Wellington's other novels. They are often fast paced and full of excitement. This book did not disappoint in that respect.

I finished the book because the story was really good. I like the plausibility implied by the chimeras. The mix of science fiction and thriller made for a good read.

I would recommend this to Steve. I think he would like the fast pace and the character of Jim Chapel.

Mike (the Paladin) says

Excellent book. I considered going to the 5 star rating on this one. I can't really because it doesn't quite hit me the same as the best books I've read, but it's a great thriller.

I suppose most of us know what a Chimera is. Most (since you're readers) know that there are a couple of applications/definitions for the word. First the mythological beast but also "now" a biological entity with more than one type of DNA..a "hybrid" at the genetic level.

From there you can springboard into this story. Throw in some action, some intrigue, some double dealing a dash of science fiction (that's probably only barely fiction) and you get the plot.

I like the book, don't hate the characters, was absorbed by the story and didn't have too much of a problem with the "eye roll" factor.

So, if you like science fiction and/or action this could be your read. Give it a shot.

Recommended.

Bob Milne says

David Wellington is one of those authors who have been on my radar for a while. I've picked up copies of *Monster Island*, *13 Bullets*, and *Frostbite*, and I remain excited about all of them, but they've yet to make their way to the top of my TBR pile.

When I saw *Chimera: A Jim Chapel Mission* come available for review, I knew I had to seize the opportunity to finally make David a priority read . . . and I'm glad I did. Less of a straight-forward monster tale than his others, this is a sci-fi tinged thriller that could sit comfortably on the shelf next to the likes of Michael Crichton, Douglas Preston, and James Rollins.

Chimera was a very well-paced thriller, with some nice dramatic tension, suspense, and a deeper mystery that kept the plot moving, but which never overshadowed the immediate story. David's style of writing here is perfect for the genre, tailored slightly for a character who is just a little uncertain about whether he's the right man for the job. There are a few moments of dark humor, as well as a typical will-they-won't-they romance that actually worked better, and was developed far more naturally, than I expected.

The *Chimeras* themselves are interesting, and the slow unveiling of their origins adds a nice layer of sympathy atop the horror. Often, there's a danger in humanizing the monsters, but here it works, largely because of the way in which David balances that with the moral ugliness of their creators. In terms of the overall story arc, I don't think it's any great spoiler to say that there's a critical betrayal that precedes the final act, but even if I saw something coming, I must say I was pleasantly surprised to find the truth of the situation was deeper than I suspected.

If I were to have one concern with the book, it's that Jim Chapel himself comes across a little flat. Maybe it's because this is first adventure, and David is just laying the groundwork, but he could definitely be developed a little better. Outside of his job, the rehab that landed him the position, and the war injury that landed him in rehab, we really know very little about him. He never opens up about favorite foods, hobbies, friends, or anything that might help to humanize him. It's not a huge issue, and certainly doesn't stand in the way of enjoying *Chimera*, but that kind of development is needed if Chapel is to reserve some space on the shelf for future adventures.

If you're looking for a quick, action-packed, sci-fi tinged thriller to take to the beach or the cottage for the weekend, you could certainly do a lot worse than *Chimera*. Give it a shot, and you won't be disappointed.

Originally reviewed at Beauty in Ruins

David Lucchesi says

kinda predictable but it has really good characters and a cool writing style. i liked the plot but it was nothing i haven't seen before so it was really easy to know what was coming next. that spoiled the suspense. i still enjoyed it though and would voluntarily read it again if i had no other choices. i am giving 4stars 'cause i related 2 the characters and think they where written good.

oh yea! got this bk on first reads for free. think it was a advance copy. maybe they'll mk some plot changes b4 it goes 2 final print!

Angela says

I must say I love David Wellington. I was totally hooked on his vampire series, (13 bullets) and now I can

say I will need to read all of this series as well. Chapel is a great character. Smart, strong and determined. This book is full of action and suspense. I was hooked right away. I lost a lot sleep reading this book. I thought it was great and I loved the story line.

Thea says

i really liked this new series and am looking forward to reading more about Jim Chapel.

Jessica says

I've read some great books recently but this one seriously stands out. Its a smart, entertaining read that delivers. Its my first book by David Wellington and while I've wanted to read his others the TBR mountains has somehow prevented me from doing so. I ignored it this time and am delighted I did because I've discovered an author who's other books I will make sure now I do get to.

The blurb interested me and Harper Collins was so generous I couldn't say no. Chimera starts out with an event at a military facility and everything has gone to shit. Mega. Fence down, perimeter compromised and the detainees free.

Who are the detainees? I'm not telling because that would give all the fun away, suffice it to say oh so interesting and scary because you know someone is attempting something like it.

Jim Chapel is a war veteran, an amputee and now an office grunt who is called in to go on a mission to recover the detainees.

It's a great story that had me hooked. The characters were well written, relatable and you stood behind the protagonist Jim Chapel the whole way cheering him on and saying to yourself wow how did he do that. The baddies and they are there, Laughing Boy who I hated the most and wanted to gut like a fish you hated just as the author wanted you to.

Your feelings for characters changes along the way so the reader is well played by David, those you think are baddies you come to sympathies with. You have a well written and interesting story. Great characters that keep your interest and emotions tied to. I read and enjoyed and read some more.

If I had to find a gripe it would be to say that in some way it was a little formulaic, having said that its one that works and works well.

Finding an author who's work you enjoy, a character you want to read more about and a story that entertained you and had you in its grips well that to me is a great read. I'd recommend this one to thriller fans, it also has some sci fi and military elements that work very well for those who enjoy that in their reading. Chimera check it out its one hell of a good read.

Steve says

I've been following David Wellington from the days when he posted his novels in serial format on the Internet, and his writing is solid and well-crafted.

This book, his first published by a major publisher, is of a different genre than he has written in the past, almost a Ludlum style. Interesting premise and back stories with a very satisfying ending. I wonder if Mary Shelley (Frankenstein) and Philip K. Dick (Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep/Blade Runner) are his influences; there's a lot of existential concepts especially from the viewpoint of the Chimeras and geneticists. Still, it was a fun read and I'm looking forward to more of the Jim Chapel Missions.
