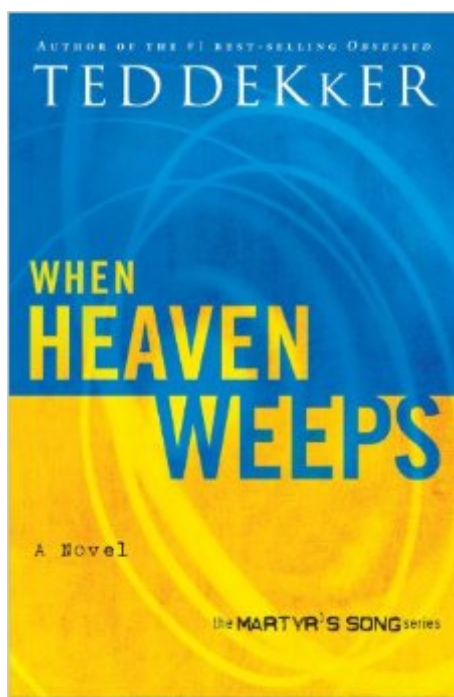


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When Heaven Weeps (Martyr's Song, Book 2)



Synopsis

A thriller unlike any you have ever read. A love strong enough to bring a tremor to your bones. A sacrifice powerful enough to make heaven weep. At the close of World War II, a shell-shocked soldier, Jan Jovic, was forced to inflict a game of life and death on a peaceful Bosnian community. In a few short hours, this young man was confronted by more love--and hate--than most experience in a lifetime. Years later, Jan has become a world-renown writer with widespread influence in the United States. His past buried deep in his memory. Until at the most inopportune times, the game witnessed by Jan haunts him...and unwittingly leads him to a beautiful but broken woman caught in an underworld of crime. He now must defeat an evil rarely seen. But there is a price. One that even this war-scarred soldier can't imagine.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

WHEN HEAVEN WEEPS is one of the more powerful novels that I've read in the past few years. The second book of The Martyr's Song series, it is basically a 20th century re-telling of the Biblical story of Hosea. Jan Jovic was a Bosnian soldier in World War II. His troop happened upon a small village where the people were led by a godly man named Father Michael. A confrontation between Michael and Karadzic, Jan's commanding officer, escalated into a terrible tragedy where Michael and a small child named Nadia show Jan the true meaning of the love of Christ in the sacrifices that they make. Jan's eyes are opened and his life will never be the same. Flash forward to the sixties and Atlanta, Georgia. Jan has written a story retelling the story of Nadia and Father Michael entitled

THE DANCE OF THE DEAD. The book became a best seller and Jan has turned his life into a ministry, desiring to show the world what the love of Christ truly means. About to be engaged to his manager, Karen, his life is turned directly upside down one day when he happens upon a junkie named Helen, who is fleeing from her lover (who also happens to be a very dangerous underworld figure). What ensues basically follows the plot of Hosea. Jan unavoidably falls for Helen and Helen responds in kind but she continues to be drawn to her past, and thus becomes unfaithful to Jan multiple times over. In Hosea, God commanded Hosea to take a prostitute as his wife and to love her. The prostitute's unfaithfulness to Hosea was a graphic example of Israel's unfaithfulness to their lover, God. In WHEN HEAVEN WEEPS, the character of Helen represents each of us -- and therein lies the power of the story. WHEN HEAVEN WEEPS is remarkable in that it is quite graphic in its description of sin. All of Helen's dirty laundry is laid out before us, and as we read we wonder how anyone can be so callous in their regard for the love shown to them. But the detail is necessary, because when we realize that Helen is us the effect is ten times more powerful than if her sins had been glossed over (Ivena's explanation on page 263 is the key). As the story plays out Jan and Helen engage in a conflict that will demonstrate again what the ultimate love of Christ is, but also show that true love demands true sacrifice. WHEN HEAVEN WEEPS, then, stands as a triumphant work. It is not a perfectly written book (and that is why I cannot give it a full five stars). But it is very readable, and any literary criticisms that I have can easily be laid aside in light of the power of the message contained here. This is a rare thriller that will have you turning the pages like mad but also challenge your faith walk with God at the deepest levels, if you choose to let it. A solid FOUR STARS.

When Heaven Weeps, is a love story dually set in a Balkan village near the end of World War II and America in the late 60's. The story of ex-Serbian soldier Jan Jovic and his courage to learn why loving is dying. The story of Helen, a drug and sex addicted prisoner of her needs and the struggle to receive unconditional love. Finally, it is also the unforgettable story of Ivena, who as a young mother watched her child and most of her village die simply to fulfill a twisted soldier's game. This very game of death and love played expertly first by Ivena's daughter, then by Helen and Jan, knits this novel into a masterpiece of Christian fiction. I picked up this book to read because of three things. One was this sentence on the back, "dive into a romantic thriller like none you've ever read. Drink deeply of a love that will bring a tremor to your bones. Go ahead, it's your turn to play the game. But remember... There is a price. And no one could possibly prepare you for that price." I love books based on relationships and I am absolutely fascinated by thrillers. I had no idea what I

had begun. This book not only fulfilled my thirst for a relationship based book with a thrill aspect but it delivered. It changed my thinking. It tightened my belief system. It left me asking months after I read this book "Do I believe and live what I say I believe." Secondly the author's note at the beginning of the book shared a very critical letter written by someone regarding this author's first book in the Martyr's Song series. The criticism was based on bringing an experience from the bible into present day perspective. I had not read the book but was intrigued by the idea of the author being satisfied with this criticism. And finally, I had gotten a little bored with standard formula Christian romantic fiction. I wanted something new. I wanted something that affected me like Perretti's "This Present Darkness." I received more than I bargained for and found myself changed with a closer walk with Christ as a direct result of the questions this book of fiction posed. This is not a book for teens, this is not a book you can read for a few minutes and lay aside. Prepare yourself time because you will not want to put it down, unless it is to catch your breath.

I enjoyed Dekker's first book, but felt he was pushing a little, still stretching his wings. Boy, this book takes flight and never comes down. Dekker tells a gripping story and populates it with characters we love or hate. On top of the captivating tale, he manages to weave in a powerful symbol of God's love and sacrifice for His Bride, the Church. Usually, this type of symbolism becomes heavy-handed and overpowers the use of a real plot and believable dialogue. Here, Dekker pulls it all off with masterful ease and entertains us just long enough for us to let our guard down...then he slams his point home. I've read few novels this well-written. Some minor glitches: one character pulls on Nikes years before they were developed (I grew up in Eugene, OR...I should know). Big deal, right? But it did remind me it was all a story right in the middle of getting hooked. Dekker also loves to say "spiked." As in "his heart spiked." This started to jump out at me after a while. Last complaint...my copy was missing pages 313-344! A printing error, I guess. And right in the middle of the last quarter of the book...aggh. Once I found a complete book, I was greatly relieved. Don't miss this book. Don't miss this author's writing. And don't miss the point. "When Heaven Weeps" it's because God loves His people and will do whatever it takes to prove that love. Ted Dekker does his best to weave a beautiful and suspenseful tale. I'll have to read this one again.

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