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Echoes of Trauma – Editorial Review

About the author

DBharo is an aspiring cinematographer. At its inception, *Echoes of Trauma* was labeled a “script,” since Mr. DBharo saw the manuscript as a stepping stone to making a movie. Perhaps this novella will become a movie someday, who knows.

DBharo is probably a man of the road – someone whose work causes him to travel a lot. He could be canvassing South Africa at this time, but may also get to his native Zimbabwe from time to time. We know him to be tech-savvy, and working for a living will not keep him from writing stories.

The theme

Echoes of Trauma begins and ends on an emotional note. At the beginning, a heartfelt prologue; at the end, a “coronach,” which is something we do not often see in fictional manuscripts.

The prologue makes sense – Jai Sky got a new friend named Troy while in college, just as he was in low spirits, lacking confidence in his future prospects. The coronach is funny and moving; funny in the sense that Jai Sky exhibits no shame in crying his heart out. As a result of this “frame,” we see the novella as one man's declaration of love for his best friend.

Key characters

Jai and Troy each became husbands and fathers. They traveled together across South Africa, perhaps beyond, in search of any job that would help them survive and provide for their families back home. Doing so, they sometimes traveled by foot, enduring dangers and experiencing setbacks. When times were good, they and their families celebrated big events together. Even after they went separate ways and lost touch, they remained close friends of the spirit, and eventually reconnected.

Jai Sky is a complex, mysterious character. He has traveled to various countries under different identities. Compared with Troy, he is more of a settled family man – the novella opens with him

coming home from work to enjoy his wife's cooking. But he is also a hardened individual. When informed that Troy has died, he promptly travels to East London with the intention to repatriate Troy's body for a proper funeral at home.

Troy, we soon learn, did well in the casino business until he and some associates become long-fingered. The ensuing scandal somehow brought him to his current location: a cooled room inside the coroner's offices in East London, South Africa.

The storyline

The location is exotic but plagued by gang violence, so that Jai immediately understands that he needs to look over his shoulder. Someone may be out to get him already! The police detective frowns upon Jai's intrusion, and lets him know that Troy's body cannot yet be released, as the cause of death remains unknown. The manner of death has already been established, and Jai gets to see for himself that the corpse is not a pretty sight.

The detective is friendly with the town's gangsters, and Jai Sky soon finds himself at the center of a turf battle and attempts at covering up the crime that lead to Troy's death. Oh, does he grow with the challenge! Indeed, he proves that he is a tough guy, who has no scruples turning to violence and ethically questionable means of interrogation.

Jai Sky, a multi-talented individual, does not need to face the dangers all alone. He soon finds a lady friend, unconcerned about his family and children back home. This lady is an interesting character: full of positive energy, and with a few tricks up her sleeve. She is well familiar with the bad characters, making her the ideal companion for Jai.

The police detective is calculating and unpredictable. The gangsters are busy doing his bidding, but will he let them live? Bullets fly, people drop dead, and the race is on for a game of survival of the fittest.

Conclusion

Echoes of Trauma is a hybrid between literary fiction and genre fiction. Characters tend to be archetypes, and the plot is consistent with a traditional crime story. On top of this, there is a solid narrative and classic dramatic theme – a story of big dreams, deep loyalty, fearlessness, and bottomless nostalgia. It leaves an impression.