

# 13 DAYS OF MIDNIGHT

## A NOTE *from* AUTHOR LEO HUNT



AUTHOR PHOTO BY ABBY THOMAS

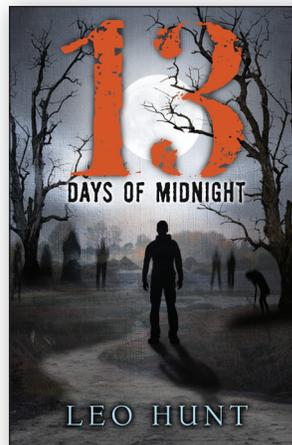
*Thirteen Days of Midnight* arose from the desire to write something that I would have read as a teenager. I was only nineteen when I began the novel, and I still remembered vividly what I responded to when I was fourteen or so: YA fantasy books, Stephen

King novels, and H. P. Lovecraft's short fiction. Horror seemed an obvious fit for me. At the same time, I've always appreciated humor in a novel, so I knew early on that my book would wear the horror cowl lightly and hopefully include some laughter in the dark.

I wanted to write a ghost story that didn't fit into the usual haunted-house mold, something that used the ghost figure in a different way. Most YA novels are coming-of-age stories, and I was interested in the realization, as you grow older, that your parents are uniquely flawed individuals rather than the alpha and omega they seemed to be when you were a young child. In particular, I was interested in writing about a character who doesn't know his father very well and comes to find out more than he might have wanted to know — who essentially comes to see his father as a weak and evil person.

From here I thought of Faust and wondered what his children might have thought of their dad's deal. I also considered *Hamlet*, with its vengeful and morally ambiguous paternal ghost. I liked the idea of a protagonist who finds himself in trouble because of his father's choices. We're familiar with the fantasy trope of the commoner who turns out to be the heir of a king, but what if you're the wicked magician's son instead?

**LEO HUNT** wrote *Thirteen Days of Midnight* in his first year of college and signed with an agent the following year. When he was younger he wanted to be either an archaeologist or an author, and when he learned that archaeologists didn't unearth piles of perfectly preserved dinosaur bones every time they put a spade in the ground, he decided to write books instead. He lives in northeast England.



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