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Books of the Month

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Norman Jetmundsen, Jr. is an attorney with Vulcan Materials Company in Birmingham. He studied law at the University of Alabama and at Magdalen College, Oxford, England. C.S. Lewis taught at Magdalen College, where he wrote *The Screwtape Letters*, the inspiration for Jetmundsen's first and second novels.

The Soulbane Illusion

Birmingham attorney Norman Jetmundsen's second book, *The Soulbane Illusion* (John Hunt Publishing, \$12.95), is a fast-paced, mystery novel. The characters are well developed. The story moves at a rapid pace, and I completed the book in no time, much faster than other books of a similar length. It truly is hard to put down.

Jetmundsen's first novel, *The Soulbane Stratagem*, was published in 2000 to very strong reviews. The book made the regional bestseller list and was crowned by an English bookstore as one of the "ten...very best Christian fiction titles around." In fact, the English bookstore places Jetmundsen's book among the top ten Christian books, right up there with his literary muse, C.S. Lewis.

I initially reviewed *The Soulbane Stratagem* for the March 2000 issue of *The Alabama Lawyer*. I concluded my review by encouraging Jetmundsen to write another book. However, I had no idea that this second book would be such a great read.

The Soulbane Illusion picks up ten years after the point at which *The Soulbane Stratagem* story ended. The hero of *The Soulbane Stratagem* was an American student, Cade Bryson, who was studying at Magdalen College in Oxford, England. He uncovers strange letters hidden in the college library. As it turns out, the letters were written between modern minor devils who were communicating about the recent successes of the devil in encouraging decay and godlessness in modern society. Bryson and his girlfriend go in search of certain reports which are going to be prepared by a junior devil, Soulbane. In the end, Bryson manages to capture the reports. He promises a close friend and his girlfriend he will publish the reports and, in doing so, expose the evil forces.

It is here that *The Soulbane Illusion* picks up the story. It has been ten years since Bryson came into possession of the reports. He failed to keep his promise to expose the devil. Instead, he has moved on with his life. He is now married to his college girlfriend, Rachael, and they have a daughter. Bryson finds himself very successful in his law practice and on the verge of becoming a partner with a large Atlanta law firm. Work is the center of his life. In fact, it becomes a god of sorts. Bryson captures the attention of one of the firm's most prominent clients. The client appears to find Bryson's legal abilities invaluable. However, something more sinister is going on. Those devils from his Oxford days have caught up with him and they are intent on capturing back the reports Bryson secreted away ten years before.

Complicating matters, wife Rachael tires of the inattention and mourns the loss of her best friend and lover. She takes her daughter back to England to be with her mother. Bryson is left behind to deal with his failing marriage, his blossoming legal career, and the inevitable encounter with the devil's foot soldiers. In the end, Bryson's struggle culminates in an unexpected encounter. *Soulbane Illusion* and *Soulbane Stratagem* are both available from local bookstores or via the Internet. You can also read more about them at www.soulbane.com.

— Charles A. Stewart, III

