Clarion Review

General

Summer's Distant Echoes
James
Urban Touch Entertainment
978-0-9771484-1-7
One Star (out of Five)

Urban street lit like most genres has its own formula. *Summer's Distant Echoes* fits the bill with its sex violence revenge gang loyalty treachery constant action name-dropping of fashion and entertainment stars and murder.

Author James "I-God" Morris knows the Brooklyn streets well and has served time for dealing crack cocaine. His novel reflects his knowledge of "Da Game" and his one-dimensional characters play Da Game until their violent deaths.

Morris explains "The only way it seemed for the young cats in these housing complexes to achieve these dreams was through the cut-throat life of the streets. Living in these conditions made a boy's heart cold so when they grew into manhood they were conditioned to love and trust no one. The only God to most of these lost souls in these concentration camps was the code of 'DA GAME.'"

The story begins when Summer and Destiny's parents are murdered and the girls are raised by their grandmother. They are close but as teenagers Summer is the "good girl" and Destiny flirts with "the street." On a brutal night Summer's boyfriend Brian Destiny (a witness to a murder) and the girls' grandmother are all killed. In shock Summer is nursed back to health by a cop Justin. Ironically he is the brother of a gang leader Butter Bean who was involved with the deaths of the girls' parents.

Summer's ongoing dreams of her family are the distant echoes leading her to identify the killers. Seeking revenge Summer is transformed from a young woman headed for college to a killer of anyone rumored to have been involved with the deaths of her loved ones.

Morris makes it clear that no one can be trusted: Best friends are enemies; good cops are bad cops; infidelity is rampant; cell phone calls are taken in the heat of sex.

A thorough editing would give polish to the story and eliminate grammatical errors and

the use of words such as “escape goat” and “foreclosure” instead of “closure.” At times the story is hard to follow as new characters pop in without much initial identification.

The cover art gets high marks for fitting the genre and character names are fitting. One character named Justice receives justice through his murder and another is aptly named Passion.

In the end all the characters have bloody hands or sticky fingers. Summer with several murders to her credit—some warranted and one not—survives the mayhem after listening to the distant echoes of her family calling out for vindication.

Morris also the author of *Tainted Loyalty* admits there are no happy endings. Although he himself is a success story it’s easy to see that for some the streets of Brooklyn are no better than the streets of Baghdad. Nobody wins Da Game.

The graphic nature and fast action of the book will appeal to readers of urban street novels and those familiar with the realities of Da Game.