

# ForeWord Clarion review

Mark G. McLaughlin



(Four out of Five)

Stories centered on an immortal—someone who cannot die yet longs for death—are common in science fiction, yet Will Dresser chooses to jump genres by fitting this plot device into a political thriller. Oddly enough, he succeeds. Jared Kennan Cain may be as old as Ramses the Great, but in Dresser’s *The Methuselah Man*, it is modern presidents, not ancient pharaohs, whose machinations draw this unkillable title character into the action.

With coups, counterintelligence operations, black market smuggling, terrorists, genetic engineering, and nuclear disarmament, Dresser crams a lot into this book. [Wes] Franklin is an important character in *The Methuselah Man*, but he is not the only hero. He is part of a large and vibrant ensemble that includes a brave Marine general, a wily psychiatrist and his gorgeous assistant, and a mostly silent but intriguing bodyguard referred to repeatedly as “Aryana, The Persian Strongman.”

No political thriller would be worth much without a good villain, and Dresser dishes one up in the personage of George Austin, a war hero, career politician, and very angry vice president of the United States. Chafed by playing second fiddle to [a] president [who] attempts to bring about nuclear disarmament...Austin does what any good villain would do: he plots to kill the president and take over the White House.

Dresser could have written a standard political thriller without resorting to introducing Jared Kennan Cain’s immortality...but this also would have made it more common. *The Methuselah Man* is both the best character and plot device in the book, and together they are what set this novel apart from a host of similar yet far less memorable works.