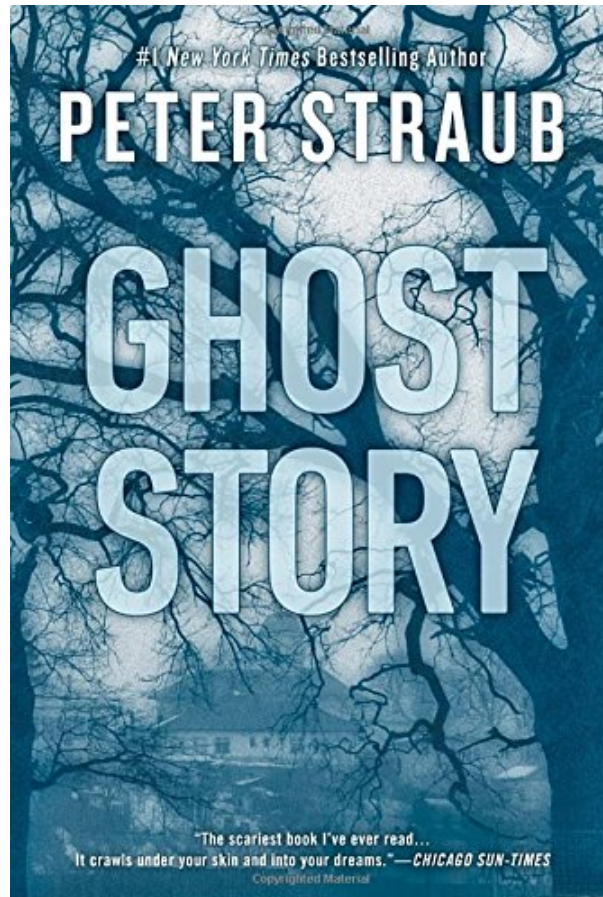
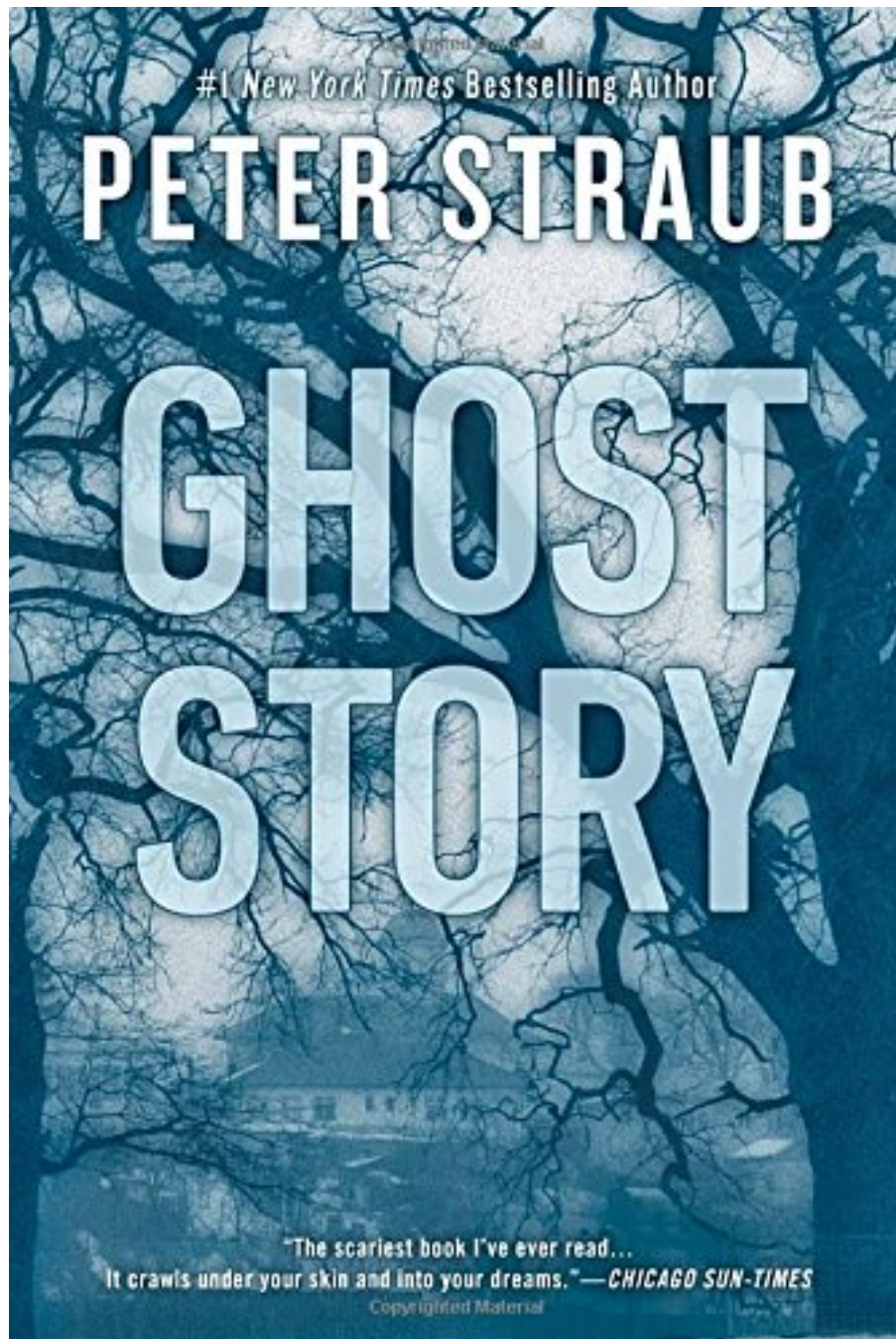


GHOST STORY BY PETER STRAUB



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Review

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GHOST STORY BY PETER STRAUB PDF

#1 New York Times bestselling author Peter Straub's classic tale of horror, secrets, and the dangerous ghosts of the past...

What was the worst thing you've ever done?

In the sleepy town of Milburn, New York, four old men gather to tell each other stories—some true, some made-up, all of them frightening. A simple pastime to divert themselves from their quiet lives.

But one story is coming back to haunt them and their small town. A tale of something they did long ago. A wicked mistake. A horrifying accident. And they are about to learn that no one can bury the past forever...

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- 528 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

87 of 95 people found the following review helpful.

Simply the best horror novel of our time

By Steven L. Kent

I lived on horror novels when I was in college--and I acquired a good collection of my favorite horror novels in hardback.

When I finished school, I sold my *The Shining*, my *The Stand*, all of my horror books except one. There was one novel with which I could not part--Peter Straub's "Ghost Story."

Ghost Story, set in upstate New York, unwinds brilliantly. It begins with the frigid voices of old men swapping ghostly stories, then settles back and unwinds as the demons of these old men's stories come to possess the world of the present.

This is a book that starts slow, wrapping itself around the reader. You, like the characters in the book, think that you can easily escape for the first hundred pages. But the narrative tightens and you soon learn that escape was always an illusion.

This is a book that combines the chill of the New York winter with the arthritic helplessness of old man nightmares. It plays shamelessly with reality. The devices Straub incorporated in this book are so subtle that they had to be corrupted or ignored entirely when a movie was made based on this book.

I have read this book several times now, and I firmly believe it is the *The Brothers Karamazov* of the horror book world.

If you want to read some of the best writing that horror has to offer, read *Ghost Story*.

171 of 192 people found the following review helpful.

A classic!

By Amazon Customer

SPOILER ALERT: Contains in depth discussion of key plot points!

"...your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions..." Joel, 3:3

In 1979, I discovered the novels of a guy named Stephen King and began reading more extensively in the horror genre. On the prowl for something similar, I happened on Straub's book in the library. I checked it out, little realizing that I had begun a decades long love affair with his work. It's now been almost twenty years since I read it the first time--I've read hundreds of books since then, but few thrilled me like *Ghost Story*.

Rereading it now, I realize the depth of Straub's accomplishment. Like the legendary storytellers to whom he pays homage, Straub has created a timeless tale of terror, an enduring classic. Reduced to its essentials, *Ghost Story* is a tale of supernatural revenge. As young men, Ricky Hawthorne, Sears James, Edward Wanderly, Lewis Benedikt and John Jaffrey accidentally kill a woman named Eva Galli. They panic, and

decide to cover up her death. Placing her body in a borrowed car, they push the vehicle into a nearby lake. As the car sinks into the muck, they see a sight that haunts them for the rest of their lives: for a moment, it appears as if Eva is still alive, as they catch a glimpse of her face through the rear window. Shaken, they vow to keep her death a secret, and go on with their lives.

Fifty years later, the group still lives in their hometown of Milburn, NY, prosperous and content. Now known as The Chowder Society, they meet on a regular basis to swap ghost stories, but they never speak of Eva. Then, Edward Wanderly dies during a party given in the honor of an actress named Anne-Veronica Moore, apparently of fright. The remaining members experience a series of prophetic dreams in which several of them die. Unable to admit to themselves that Eva Galli has returned to haunt them, they send for Don Wanderley, Ed's nephew. A writer by trade, Don has penned a horror novel called *The Nightwatcher*, based, we later learn, on his own experiences with Eva, known to him as Alma Mobley.

Don's arrival in Milburn seems to send a signal to the evil which threatens the group, resulting in the deaths of two more of their number. The survivors band with Don and Peter Barnes, a young man whose mother has been killed by Eva and her minions. Together they struggle to locate and destroy their nemesis.

Straub sets the tone for the novel from its first sentences, which express a thought repeated throughout the book. Readers are immediately confronted with the question, "What's the worst thing you've ever done?," followed by the response, "I won't tell you that, but I'll tell you the worst thing that ever happened to me...the most dreadful thing..." Readers are filled with anticipation, wondering what the dreadful thing could be. Straub then proceeds to explore what Stephen King called "a very Jamesian theme...the idea that ghosts, in the end, adopt the motivations and perhaps the very souls of those who behold them." Straub leaves it unclear whether Eva/Alma/Anne Veronica could exist without her victims' belief to sustain her--we never know whether her existence is independent, symbiotic, or totally dependent on those she is out to destroy. Straub's clues muddy the waters, as when Eva and another shapeshifter are asked, "Who are you?" Their answer, "I am you," is maddening and ambiguous.

Numerous readings reveal how much the book owes to Salem's Lot. Straub has publicly acknowledged this debt, stating that "I wanted to work on a large canvas. Salem's Lot showed me how to do this without getting lost among a lot of minor characters. Besides the large canvas I also wanted a certain largeness of effect. I had been imbued with the notion that horror stories are best when they are ambiguous and low key and restrained. Reading Salem's Lot, I realized that the idea was self defeating."

On reflection, the debt to Salem's Lot is obvious. Both feature small towns under siege from the supernatural. In both, the terror escalates until the towns are threatened with destruction--Jerusalem's Lot is consumed by purifying fire, while Milburn is decimated. In each, a writer's arrival in town seems to trigger disaster. Both writers strike up alliances with young teenagers whose lives are ruined by the terror, Ben Mears with Mark Petrie and Don Wanderly with Peter Barnes. Both forge an almost parental bond with their young allies, replacing those lost parents. In both, the evil lives on--Ben and Mark end up on the run, while Don, after ending the threat of Eva, presumably goes off to face her evil aunt.

In the end, however, Salem's Lot was merely a template, a guide which opened Straub's eyes more fully to the possibilities of horror. *Ghost Story* is a marriage of two sensibilities: King's, from which it derives its more operatic moments, and Straub's, in that it thoroughly fulfills his literary ambition to expand the boundaries of the traditional ghost story. It also stands as perhaps the first example of Straub's trademark exploration of the power of stories, of the capacity of stories to uncover the truth. Much as King's book stands as a tribute to writers like Bram Stoker and Richard Matheson, Straub's stands as a tribute to writers specifically referenced in the book (Hawthorne, Henry James) and those not (like Poe, Irving, Lovecraft,

Bierce and M. R. James) but whose influence is there nonetheless.

Recently, I had the vicarious pleasure of watching my thirteen year old daughter Leigh read this wonderful book for the first time. I took her enthusiastic reaction as validation of my long held opinion that Ghost Story is one of the finest horror novels of the past half century.

49 of 58 people found the following review helpful.

Supremely Elegant Horror!

By Bragan Thomas

GHOST STORY is one of the most beloved novels of my adolescence. I read the book at white heat when I was ten, stunned by the power of the imagery and the subtle brilliance of the storytelling. Straub's characters are original and memorable. I visualized them all so strongly that I was deeply affected by all their fates. Fortunately, I have come to regard this book even more highly as time has gone by - I reread it at least once each February and the pacing, elegant language and dazzling images never cease to amaze me. Unlike Stephen King, Straub never goes for the "gross-out" factor in his writing, and as a result, GHOST STORY might seem a little tame in comparison to other horror novels. This is really a book of spine-chilling suspense and slow terror rather than out-and-out horror and gore (although the book does have its bloody parts!). The tale is carefully woven, moving seamlessly from the present to the past to utter fantasy and back again. The plot concerns the fates of four well-to-do men, pillars of their small community of Millburn, New York. Their lives are comfortable, prosperous and settled. But Ricky, Sears, Lewis and John all share a dreadful secret that has come back to haunt them after fifty years. A "Nightwatcher" - a shape-shifting supernatural predator arrives in town and takes revenge on the four men one by one. She has many names (Anna/Alma/Ann-Veronica) and many lives, and seems to take great pleasure in destroying and manipulating ordinary humans, along with her strange undead henchman, the werewolf Gregory. Straub's immortal ghost is one of the great horror villains in recent literature. With the help of young writer Don Wanderley, the group must confront the sins of their past to comprehend what is happening to their town and to them. Anyone familiar with the weather in upstate New York will recognize the isolation that comes with the heavy, unrelenting snows of each winter. Straub's minor characters are expertly drawn, and the town itself, like King's SALEM'S LOT is really a major character too. This is a marvelous work of fantasy-horror which you really should not read alone at night! P.S. The movie GHOST STORY is simply awful - don't bother with it!

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Be the very first that are reviewing this **Ghost Story By Peter Straub** Based upon some reasons, reading this publication will certainly offer even more perks. Also you have to review it tip by step, page by web page, you can complete it whenever and also wherever you have time. Once again, this on the internet publication Ghost Story By Peter Straub will offer you easy of checking out time and also task. It also supplies the experience that is affordable to get to and also acquire substantially for better life.

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