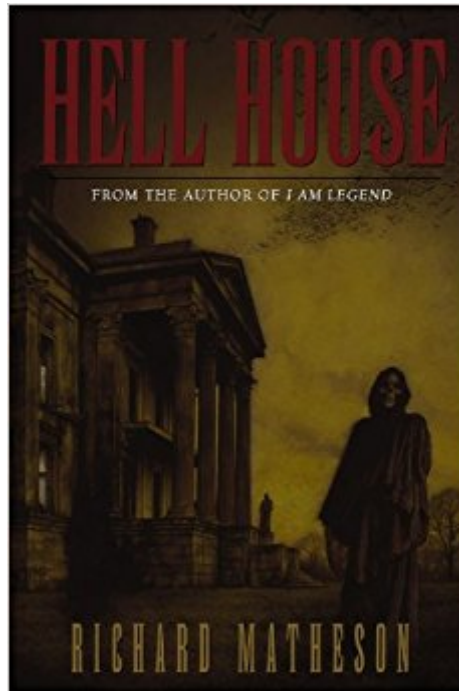




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Hell House



Synopsis

"Hell House is the scariest haunted house novel ever written. It looms over the rest the way the mountains loom over the foothills." -- Stephen King

Rolf Deutsch is going die. But when Deutsch, a wealthy magazine and newspaper publisher, starts thinking seriously about his impending death, he offers to pay a physicist and two mediums, one physical and one mental, \$100,000 each to establish the facts of life after death. Dr. Lionel Barrett, the physicist, accompanied by the mediums, travel to the Belasco House in Maine, which has been abandoned and sealed since 1949 after a decade of drug addiction, alcoholism, and debauchery. For one night, Barrett and his colleagues investigate the Belasco House and learn exactly why the townfolks refer to it as the Hell House.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Hell House is the scariest haunted house novel ever written. It looms over the rest the way the mountains loom over the foothills." --Stephen King

Richard Matheson was The New York Times bestselling author of I Am Legend, Hell House, Somewhere in Time, The Incredible Shrinking Man, A Stir of Echoes, The Beardless Warriors, The Path, Seven Steps to Midnight, Now You See It, and What Dreams May Come, among others. He was named a Grand Master of Horror by the World Horror Convention, and received the Bram Stoker Award for Lifetime Achievement. He has also won the Edgar, the Spur, and the Writer's Guild awards. In 2010, he was inducted into the Science Fiction Hall of Fame. In addition to

his novels Matheson wrote several screenplays for movies and TV, including "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet," based on his short story, along with several other Twilight Zone episodes. He was born in New Jersey and raised in Brooklyn, and fought in the infantry in World War II. He earned his bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri. Matheson died in June, 2013, at the age of eighty-seven.

Always loved the 1970's film starring Roddy McDowell but realized that I had never read the book. Thoroughly enjoyed it. It's a very mature study in horror. It's not over the top but not tame either. A classic horror tale, indeed.

I've read now a 100 pages of this book-but until now, NOTHING justifies Stephen King's verdict written on the back side of the book. If the story continues so boring, I would take a star away. If the story finally starts to "rock" -what I hardly can imagine-3 stars are appropriate. Until now, nothing but: Boring, boring, boring... Man, is that what you call a horror story??? I finished this book today-and as I thought, the whole book was as boring and stupid as the first 100 pages. No intelligent and surprising ending-rather boring and some kind of dumb. So I retired a star. It was not worth reading it.

This has always been one of my favorites. Find a more creepy haunted house book that is scary and creepy as Hell House. I came to this story via the movie. Which is creepy in itself. This is more of a creepy tale about a true haunted house. This is more of an investigation than a haunting.

"Hell House" has its moments where it does scare you but the story and dialogue is lacking. I had to ignore these shortcomings in order to enjoy it. The setup is an interesting one. Four people paid to prove the existence of life after death in a haunted house. The descriptions of the house and the main "villain" got my attention. But the story could not live up to the good premise. The characters repeatedly make stupid decisions, like splitting up constantly. Allowing them to be attacked while alone over and over again. One character is destroyed one attack at a time while the other characters...wander around doing nothing most of the time. They are all terrified of the house yet make one stupid decision after another. It makes it really hard to respect the characters and hurts the plot as you never believe these people will be able to confront the evil of Hell House. Everything repeats this rhythm until the ending...which tries to tie things up with a twist that is entirely disappointing. The final confrontation with the "villain" is anti-climactic. I can say I was interested enough to finish the book but I would never read it again. I'll either put it on the shelf or donate it to

my local library. Oh, one last thing. The dialogue is really bland and boring. I'm not sure there was one phrase in the whole book that is worth remembering. All the characters spoke using short sentences and simple words. The writing is probably at the 4th grade level. Though with all the sex and gore I'd never let a kid near this book.

I have loved the haunted house genre since 4th grade. I guess some of us just enjoy being scared half to death. My all-time favorite of this type of book is "The Haunting of Hill House" which scared the Bejesus out of me, and even though I have read it a number of times, it remains the book against which I compare all other haunts. "Hell House" just didn't do it for me. I didn't object to the language or the sex or the violence---these all have a place in this type of book---but truthfully, I also didn't object to ANYthing nasty that happened to the characters in this book because I just didn't care about them at all. When I found myself cheering for the bad guys to win, I knew that this was not the book for me.

I saw the movie version of this for the very first time just a few months ago. I had liked it so much that it lead me to buying the novel and DVD. This is probably the best Haunted House story I have come across in years. I am a long time fan of the horror genre and I don't know how I had completely over-looked this gem. The plot centers around a group of paranormal researchers sent, during the Christmas Holiday, to investigate an old Gothic mansion that is believed to be haunted. One of the group is a scientist who believes all the supernatural activity is really a subconscious manifestation of will tapping into a well of electromagnetic energy in the house. A female medium is convinced that it's actually a multiple haunting of several ghosts. The actual ghost haunting the house preys on each member's insecurities and beliefs about the haunting. The one character I worried the most for and feared the most for was Ben (Roddy McDowall's character in the movie version). It had a surprisingly satisfying ending. This was the best Haunted House story I came across in a long time. The novel is from Richard Matheson, the same author as I am Legend, What Dreams may come, The (incredible) shrinking man and Stir of Echoes. He is also the writer of at least sixteen classic episodes of The Twilight Zone and almost all the truly great Vincent Price Horror movies. I highly recommend this story to anyone who loves the Gothic Horror genre. Hell House is very under-rated. I am so glad I finally saw this movie which lead to discovering the novel.

I expected more from this title. It's opening scene is brisk and interesting, but it starts to fall apart after a few scenes. The narrative is flat, and the effect is tonally off, stuck somewhere between

things that go bump in the night and Penthouse Confessions. Characterization never seems to go beyond two-dimensional action, just actors saying lines. The horror imagery is a mundane mix of B-movie effects (floating faces, voices, even bedsheets flitting around) and brief graphic sexual titillation that doesn't even fire on all cylinders. This was Matheson's last effort at horror for a long period of time. Like the story itself, he may have just run out of steam at this point.

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