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Haunted



Synopsis

Haunted by Chuck Palahniuk is a novel made up of stories: Twenty-three of them, to be precise. Twenty-three of the most horrifying, hilarious, mind-blowing, stomach-churning tales youâ™ll ever encounterâ”sometimes all at once. They are told by people who have answered an ad headlined âœWritersâ™ Retreat: Abandon Your Life for Three Months,â• and who are led to believe that here they will leave behind all the distractions of âœreal lifeâ• that are keeping them from creating the masterpiece that is in them. But âœhereâ• turns out to be a cavernous and ornate old theater where they are utterly isolated from the outside worldâ”and where heat and power and, most important, food are in increasingly short supply. And the more desperate the circumstances become, the more extreme the stories they tellâ”and the more devious their machinations become to make themselves the hero of the inevitable play/movie/nonfiction blockbuster that will surely be made from their plight. Haunted is on one level a satire of reality televisionâ”The Real World meets Alive. It draws from a great literary traditionâ”The Canterbury Tales, The Decameron, the English storytellers in the Villa Diodati who produced, among other works, Frankensteinâ”to tell an utterly contemporary tale of people desperate that their story be told at any cost. Appallingly entertaining, Haunted is Chuck Palahniuk at his finestâ”which means his most extreme and his most provocative. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have enjoyed all of Palahniuk's past books in varying degrees. A few are worth 5 stars, the rest 4 stars, but all of them have been consistently enjoyable. Unfortunately, his new book is not

consistently good. I read somewhere in an interview that Palahniuk has originally planned this book as a novella and then would release the short stories separately. While a book of just these short stories would have been worth 5 stars, the novella about the writer's retreat could have damaged his career. I hate to say it, but it is just not very good, and not even close to what he can write. The main story about the writers who go on the retreat is just not believable to me. In a normal Palahniuk book you meet some really weird people who do some crazy stuff but it manages to barely stay within reality. Not this book. I just can't picture people hacking off body parts, ruining their food supply, eating each other, and intentionally sabotaging their escape just to be able to cash in on the book and movie royalties about their experiences when they finally "get" out. It has some classic Palahniuk moments, but the plot is just too unreal. Also, I never found myself caring even the slightest bit for any of the characters. They could have all died or all lived and I would not have cared. However, the book is not without merit. The characters who attend this retreat write some stories and it is these short stories that are the shining light of this book and the reason that I rated it a 4 instead of a 3. Almost all of them are good and some of them are just plain great. The now infamous story "Guts" is included, along with others that are almost as nuts.

I wanted to write a review of how great this book was. How Palahniuk wrote another amazing novel. It looks like I'm not going to get the chance. I got this book fairly late, maybe a couple months after it had come out. I had heard the hype, most of which centered around the opening short story, "Guts." I was a little unsure about it, because so much hype tends to let me down in the end, but I gave it my best shot. Eventually, I came to the same conclusion as most of the other reviewers on . Good stories, bad frame story. Now, I'm not complaining that the short stories inserted into the main story just rely on shock value to entertain you, because most of them don't. "Guts" is actually an amazing story, and it shows some real sophistication on Palahniuk's part. It's far from just being an opening shocker, like the first quick death in a horror movie. It's a story worth everyone's time and money. The problem with the book as a whole, I finally decided, is that it simply doesn't go anywhere. It comes up with a few interesting metaphors, and displays a couple interesting themes, but there's just not anything very deep or thought-provoking here. For the first time in my life, reading a book by Palahniuk made me bored. One of the more interesting metaphors was alright the first time it was stated, but with the third explicit description of it around page 150, even that had been run into the ground. Yes, the book is partly an examination of our obsession with reality shows and our own 15-minutes-of-fame-at-any-price mentality - but in that vein, it doesn't bother to say anything that a TV audience tired of reality shows hasn't already said on its own. There's a line in

Palahniuk's Fight Club: "Deliver us from clever art.

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