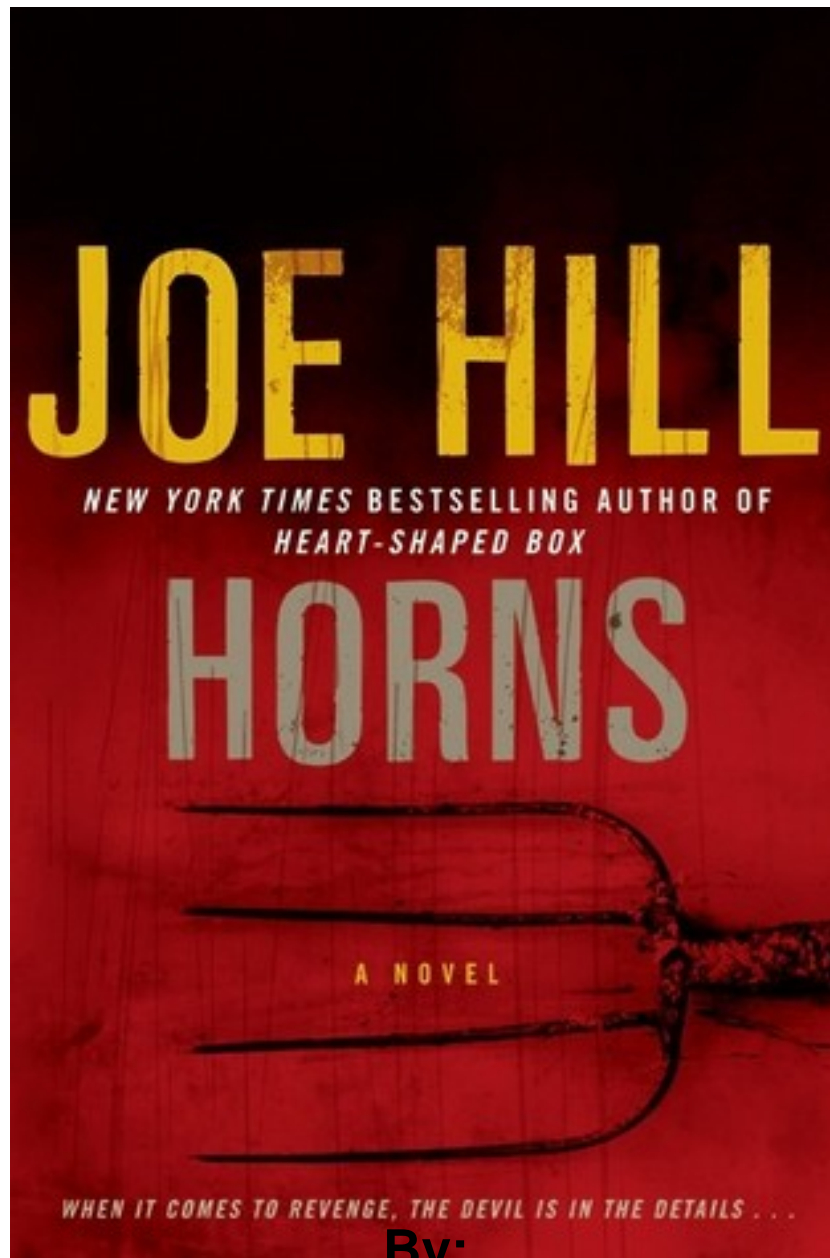


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By:
Joe Hill

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Kemper

Stephen King really messed up his son, Joe. It's not surprising. The children of famous people generally end up as tabloid fodder, and with King as a dad, I'm shocked that one of his brood hasn't gone on an extended murder spree.

King spends all day thinking of the most horrific shit possible to try and scare the collective pants off the reading public, and he had huge substance abuse problems when his kids were young. So you gotta assume that the conversations went something like this:

"Joe, get

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“Joe, get Daddy another beer. And a mirror and a razor blade. First, tell me something. Would you be scared if I told you there was a clown in the storm drain waiting to lure you close and pull your arm off?”

No surprise then that King's son has grown up to write a couple of very disturbing horror novels. (And I also like that Joe uses an alias to avoid cashing in on the family name even if the secret is out.)

Ignatius Perrish's girlfriend, Merrin, was raped and murdered, and he was the prime suspect. An accident destroyed most of the evidence against him so he was never tried. The entire New England town he lives in thinks he did it, and so does most of his family except for his brother, a famous talk-show host. Grief has completely derailed Ig's life, and he spends most of his time drunk.

One night, Ig goes out and gets more wasted than usual. When he wakes, he doesn't just have a hangover. He's got a pair of horns coming out of his forehead and some surprising new abilities to go with them.

I loved the early chapters of this and thought that it was going to be a book laced with dark humor about the nature of people and the hypocrisies of small towns. But the book shifts into outright tragedy and zeroes in on Ig's past with Merrin and how her death has destroyed his life.

Kelly

In order to enjoy this book for the disappointment it is, I suggest the following for the over 21 crowd:

Take one sip every time...:

Someone exclaims any one of: "No!"; "Oh my God!"; "What ARE you?"

A character or location from a Stephen King novel is mentioned.

You want to slap the main character and tell him to man up.

Merrin's hair is described.

The pace becomes inert.

The word devil appears. (*Warning* you may get intoxicated from this action alone)

The setting is either at the evil knieval tra

In order to enjoy this book for the disappointment it is, I suggest the following for the over 21 crowd:

Becky

Remember, way back at the beginning of the year, when I said that I wanted to hump Hugh Laurie's leg for writing

? After reading

, and just the

- not even the finished, shiny and perfect masterpiece - I want to hump Joe Hill's leg for writing it.

Not too long ago, I read Hill's short story collection,

, and in the intro, Christopher Golden says that Hill is subtle writer, that his stories are "promises fulfilled". I think that Golden's words about Joe Hi

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- not even the finished, shiny and perfect masterpiece - I want to hump Joe Hill's leg for writing it.

The Holy Terror

It's hard for me to rate this book. On one hand I was hooked within the first 20 pages. On the other hand though I found it emotionally draining and painful to read. There's a quote that Ig reads to himself that I think sums up my feelings as well:

"It goes against the American storytelling grain to have someone in a situation he can't get out of, but I think this is very usual in life."

I often read fantasy and paranormal books to escape the harsh realities of life. It's the same reason I don't w

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"It goes against the American storytelling grain to have someone in a situation he can't get out of, but I think this is very usual in life."

I often read fantasy and paranormal books to escape the harsh realities of life. It's the same reason I don't watch the news or read it often on the internet. The most I normally expose myself to is the Daily Show and the Colbert Report because most of the time the news is full of death and horrible things. That's not to say that I'm completely ignorant of what's going on in the world, but seriously, turn on your local news and I bet most of the stories are about rape, death, and murder.

I think this is sort of the reason I tend to steer away from horror novels and movies. I saw the first Saw movie and thought to myself, who would find something like this enjoyable? I just can't see the appeal of watching people suffer.

I picked it up because of a recommendation from a friend at work. She enjoyed it and it sounded like it had just enough of a paranormal bent for me to be intrigued. I was literally hooked within the first few chapters but then when the story started taking place in the past things moved a little bit slower and I wasn't as enthralled as I initially was.

Like I said, this was tough to read. Ig was blamed for the death of his girlfriend even though there wasn't any evidence to link him to the crime. He was a permanent person of interest though and he and his family suffered because of it. The things that Ig learns made me flinch as I read them. They're heartbreaking and terribly sad and they make you hate just about every character. As you learn more and more and realize the truth of what happened the night his girlfriend was killed you really just feel sorry for Ig. It's really a sad ending for a sad tale. I also thought the villain should have suffered more, but do they ever suffer enough for their crimes?

I guess I can say I liked this book but I didn't like the way it made me feel. I want to read Hill's other books though because I think he's a good writer. I'm just hoping his other stories aren't as tragic.