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Doctor Sleep: A Novel



Synopsis

Audie Award Winner, Fiction, 2014 Audie Award Nominee, Solo Narration - Male, 2014 Stephen King returns to the characters and territory of one of his most popular novels ever, *The Shining*, in this instantly riveting novel about the now middle-aged Dan Torrance (the boy protagonist of *The Shining*) and the very special 12-year-old girl he must save from a tribe of murderous paranormals. On highways across America, a tribe of people called The True Knot travel in search of sustenance. They look harmless - mostly old, lots of polyester, and married to their RVs. But as Dan Torrance knows, and spunky 12-year-old Abra Stone learns, The True Knot are quasi-immortal, living off the "steam" that children with the "shining" produce when they are slowly tortured to death. Haunted by the inhabitants of the Overlook Hotel where he spent one horrific childhood year, Dan has been drifting for decades, desperate to shed his father's legacy of despair, alcoholism, and violence. Finally, he settles in a New Hampshire town, an AA community that sustains him, and a job at a nursing home where his remnant "shining" power provides the crucial final comfort to the dying. Aided by a prescient cat, he becomes "Doctor Sleep." Then Dan meets the evanescent Abra Stone, and it is her spectacular gift, the brightest shining ever seen, that reignites Dan's own demons and summons him to a battle for Abra's soul and survival. This is an epic war between good and evil, a gory, glorious story that will thrill the millions of hyper-devoted fans of *The Shining* and wildly satisfy anyone new to the territory of this icon in the King canon.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Danny is the most sympathetic character I've read in a long time. You like Danny, even at rock bottom, and you want the best for him always. He's a broken man with a curse that threatens to be too much, and despite his chosen coping method, he remains a decent and courageous character at heart, even if his choices sometimes let him down. I would have enjoyed more of an epilogue (to say what I would have liked to see would be a spoiler), but the ending is satisfying nonetheless. Unlike a lot of books I've read recently, I never lost the urge to turn the page - so that in itself is a win :) One of the things I love about King, is that even if by the end you conclude that the events within the story didn't work for you, the writing is so engaging you enjoyed the journey anyway.

As an adult, Dan Torrance becomes an alcoholic like his father - something he swore he'd never be but thinks of himself as being "different" from Jack. He's a drifter, working and living in various places. Dan gets on a bus and ends up in a small town in New Hampshire. He eventually ends up with one of his typical jobs: working at a nursing home. Dan earns the nickname "Doctor Sleep" at the nursing home as he is able to ease elderly patients through their last moments. He's assisted by a cat named Azzie, who seems to know before Danny does when a patient is about to die, visiting them in their rooms to alert the nurses to call Dan. The shining may have diminished since he got older, but it's still with Dan. I won't reveal any details; I'll just say it's not pretty. One interesting vision he has is of a top hat. He doesn't realize it belongs to Rosie the Hat, the leader of a band called the True Knot; vampire-like beings who live on "steam." Steam happens to be the essence of a child's shining. Arriving home one afternoon, Dan he finds the chalkboard in his room above the nursing home has been erased and the word "Hello" written on it. Thus begins his relationship with Abra, a young girl who possesses a very strong shining. She first communicated with Dan when she was just a baby. Abra and Dan develop a close bond; she refers to him as Uncle Dan. Not long after Dan meets Abra he realizes she's in trouble: the True Knot wants her shining to maintain their immortality. Can Dan save Abra from the torture and death the True Knot have planned? I have to admit, I was a bit confused about the True Knot at first and how they fit into the story. Further into the book more about them is revealed, so that helped a lot. There were times I absolutely couldn't put down my Kindle! It's quite an interesting read; I also heard a movie might be made from it; I'd definitely go see it.

Oh, wow. Considering this is a book by Stephen King, it's surprisingly feel good. Now, don't get me wrong. There's a lot of creepy stuff that happens in Doctor Sleep, but compared to its predecessor, it's almost happy. Not

that there's anything wrong with that. It's a great story. But it was a bit different than I was expecting. The beginning of the book consists of a long series of snippets about Dan and Abra's lives over the course of about a decade or so, showing us how Abra grows up with her shining and how Dan becomes the eponymous "Doctor Sleep." That takes up about a third of the book. I imagine that sounds like King gave us a long-winded opening, but it really didn't read that way. It was all interesting stuff, and I can't pick out anything in particular that I thought should have been cut. When we finally get to the meat of the story, it picks up pretty fast, and there are a lot of different forces at work, which I found fascinating. Naturally, there are many, many references to events from *The Shining*, some of which affect the plot in various ways. Some of them are creepy. Some of them are not. One of the best things about this book, and the thing that set it furthest apart from *The Shining*, without a doubt, was the inclusion of the antagonist's point of view. There are three main POVs in the book: Dan's, Abra's, and Rose the Hat's. There are a few others sprinkled about, mostly in the opening third of the book, but the fact that King chose to use the main antagonist's POV just blew my mind. Because it makes the story way more ambiguous in terms of moral tone. Unlike in *The Shining*, where you have what is essentially an evil, semi-sentient hotel full of ghosts, in *Doctor Sleep*, you have people. Bad people. Hurt people. Twisted people. Arrogant people. But people. The humanization of the characters makes the story read very different from its predecessor, and I appreciated that on many levels. It's different. King managed to include elements of *The Shining* without making this book anything like *The Shining*. Of course, I'm not sure why I should expect anything else from King, considering how many books he's written. Overall, I thought this was 1) a fun paranormal/fantasy story with some mild horror, 2) a great piece about personal redemption, and 3) an attention-grabbing read about a deadly showdown between two humanized and equally sympathetic forces. Unsurprisingly, Stephen King has done it again.

If you haven't yet you should read *The Shining* before reading this one. Stephen King is my favorite author. I usually buy it and stare at it for awhile because I know I'm in for a bumpy ride. Danby Torrance finds his way and comes to terms with the past. . Most King fans know nobody is safe in his books but this takes on a whole new meaning. I truly loved this book. It's been many years since I read *The Shining*. So good to see what happened to Danny's future and deal with his ghosts. I loved the characters too.

I waited and waited for King to release this book. What works here best is the continuation of the original story that began in *The Shining*. Admittedly, my interest in that book (it was the first by King that I read) probably colored my experience of this book. I can see how a reader would want to start with *The Shining* for context here. In terms of scare factor, some of the images from this book will be with me for a long while to come. A must for King fans, but I recommend it for any reader.

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