



Out of the Darkness

Heather Graham

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A love rekindled...or a deadly reunion?

Even after a decade, Sarah Hampton is haunted by the night that nearly ended in a bloody massacre and destroyed her high school romance with handsome Tyler Grant. Now the horror has returned. It's a reckoning from the events of that terrifying night—and a love they never let go. Only this time Tyler must protect Sarah from the killer hiding in the darkness...or lose her forever.

From *New York Times* bestselling author Heather Graham!

Out of the Darkness Details

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From Reader Review Out of the Darkness for online ebook

Kira says

A free physical copy from Bookish First in exchange for an honest review.

Out of the Darkness was my second Heather Graham book, and it might just be my last. Though it was the third book in The Finnegan Connection series I do not feel like I missed out on anything, it can be read as a standalone.

Out of the Darkness is about a group of kids that are faced with the most horrifying Halloween house in history. A serial killer has his fun but they manage to escape. Then a decade later (why is it always a decade later...) one of them is brutally murdered and the terrifying Halloween night is becoming their daily nightmare again.

I really enjoyed the overall murder/mystery/serial killer plot of this story. The twists were great. It is Heather Graham's writing style that just killed this book for me. I felt like she couldn't trust me as a reader to remember anything that happened, even if it was only a couple paragraphs ago. It is hard to explain... almost like she was summarizing and paraphrasing the plot as she went to fill space before she could get back to the action again.

Overall the book was entertaining, it was an easy and super quick read. For romance fans its pretty dark and gruesome but there are "romantic" scenes peppered throughout.

Carol says

Halloween night turns into a night of terror for a group visiting haunted houses. All was fun until Cemetery Mansion were the killings turned real thanks to escaped prisoners.

Ten years later, the group stills is haunted by that night, so much so they have never stayed in touch. The story tells how that night changed each character.

Now one of that group is murder in the same fashion that happened that night ten years later.

How is this possible after the prisoners were dead??

Sarah Hampton and Tyler Grant, once the love of each other's lives were broken up that bloody, horrific night and haven't seen each other in ten years. Neither one has ever stopped loving the other but that night divided them. Now they must work together with the authorities to solve the brutal death of this member of the group that night and to keep the remaining members of the group alive.

The story takes off quickly and keeps an invigorating pace right up to its dramatic conclusion. There was suspense, intrigue, mystery, vivid characters, murder, combined with a flawlessly plot. There were sub plots within the main plot and lots of twists and turns.

This is book # 3 in The Finnegan Connection. It can be read as a stand alone which I did.
A good romantic suspense book!!!
I volunteered to read Out of Darkness. Thanks to Bookish First for the opportunity. My opinion is my own.

Tracy says

This murder mystery starts out by bringing out a very traumatic tragedy that several teens somehow survived and were able to move forward from. Each of them forced themselves to continue forward with their lives without looking back until they could no longer continue to ignore the past that continued to haunt them. As tragic strikes again, they were forced together again, each a decade older and living completely different than the plans from that time long ago.

Throughout the clever and unexpected twists, it was very easy to love the characters who displayed courage, faith, respect, and bravery. This book will keep you hooked until the end, and even when you think you've got it figured out, think again!

Sharon says

After a night at a haunted house ends in brutal murder, Sarah Hampton has not been able to let go of the terror she felt. Years later, when one of her friends from that night is murdered, Sarah returns to her hometown. Seeing her ex-boyfriend, Tyler Grant, has Sarah reminded of all that she lost because of the cold blooded killer. When it becomes all too clear that the group of friends are targets, will Sarah and Tyler be able to help the authorities put together the pieces? Will their tangled past directly affect their future?

The beginning of Out of the Darkness promises an otherworldly twist to this novel, but the rest of the book does not deliver. Sarah's cousin Davey has a prominent role at the outset, but really just fades away as the book progresses. The dialogue does not flow easily, as it seems forced in places. Great suspense novels provide readers with a roller coaster ride, as the book hits peaks and valleys to amp up the thrilling moments. Out of the Darkness is a little too flat, resulting in a novel that does not shock or dismay. Overall, the book had good characterization, resulting in a group of people that readers can cheer for. Readers who like suspense, especially with romantic aspects, may enjoy Out of the Darkness.

Janet Robel says

Woot woot! Love a good book that starts with Halloween and haunted houses. The gruesome details are on par with excellent storytelling. Sarah Hampton and Tyler Grant are at the start of it all. Now, ten years later, they still have feelings for each other. A killer has struck close to home. Did the killer come back from the grave? Are all the friends who entered the haunted house years ago in danger?

This is gripping right from the prologue. Ms. Graham does one heck of a job with this page-turner. I've been a long time reader of her work. The spooky, chilling ones are my favorite. You'll never figure this one out,

but you'll love trying.

Linda Strong says

Ten years ago Sarah, her cousin Davey, her boyfriend Tyler and 2 other friends almost lost their lives the night they were visiting haunted houses. Davey was adamant that there was something evil in that house and no one should go in. Being teenagers, all but Sarah and Davey entered anyway.

They were spooked by the costumes, the realistic mutilated victims, the bodies at the table with their heads 'on' the table. By the time they realized this was real, Sarah and Davey had entered and got everybody out. The escaped convict who was really good with a knife lay dead and his partner in crime was assumed dead.

All the friends suffering from one form or another of PTSD all went their own separate ways and rarely spoke to each other again.

Today one of Sarah's friends who shared the haunted house experience was found murdered..her body in several pieces. A reunion of the remaining friends who shared a horrific night are afraid that they are all being targeted.

A copycat? The partner has come back to exact revenge?

It's a sorry reunion for Sarah and Tyler. Neither of them stopped loving the other. Tyler must do whatever he can to protect Sarah from the evil that is stalking them all.

Heather Graham does a bang up job with her Romantic Suspense books. I have never been disappointed in the blend of suspense and romance.

The characters lend an air of credibility and I enjoy how they all relate to each other, especially after a very long estrangement. There are twists and turns and a few surprises before getting to the exciting ending.

Many thanks to the author / HarperCollins for the ARC of Out Of The Darkness. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

The Romance Book Disciple (Samantha) says

Out of the Darkness starts off with a truly horrifying experience. Sarah and her friends are visiting haunted houses on Halloween-such a typical teenage event. But what happens at the haunted house changes all their lives. As teenagers, they did not know how to handle the trauma. They pulled away from each other, became closed off, made poor life choices, etc. This leads to Tyler and Sarah breaking up and going in different directions. 10 years later they are reunited by another tragedy. Both are still upset that the other never reached out to them. They feel like the feelings must be gone because neither ever called. I understood their reactions as teenagers, but after 10 years they should have been more mature.

The murder mystery was interesting (even though its pretty obvious who the killer is) and overall, its a well woven plot line. I found the dialogue to be really cheesy though and it was distracting from the story. Honestly, the dialogue made me not really care about any of the characters. If the killer had managed to kill them all, I would have been like "Meh. Whatever" and that is NOT how you want to feel about the main characters in a story!

If you like mysteries, suspense stories, and Law and Order type reads, I think you would find Out of the Darkness a fine read. It was a good story, but I didn't care for the character development (or lack there of).

POV: 3rd

Tears: no

Trope: serial killer, second chance romance

Triggers: none

Series/Standalone: stand alone

Cliffhanger: (view spoiler)

HEA: (view spoiler)

books by Christina Dodd, Nora Roberts, Janie Crouch...then you will probably like Out of the Darkness!

Out of the Darkness

See full review on The Book Disciple

Monnie says

Reading this book - which I thoroughly enjoyed, BTW - marks a couple of firsts for me. It's the first time I've "won" the right to read and review a book, accomplished at Bookish First after writing an initial impressions paragraph by reading just one chapter. It's also the first time in probably 10 years that I've read a real book; that's how long I've been a confirmed ebook reader. As for the latter, it's likely to be the last for another decade; the paperback had such tiny print that it was tough for my aging eyes to read even with relatively powerful bifocals.

That said, my annoyance with the fine print had no bearing on content; in fact, I've read at least one other book by this author and, because it was good, I expected this one to be the same. And quite honestly, it is.

I've read elsewhere that this is the third in the author's *Finnegan Connection* series; if that's true, I didn't notice any glitches that kept it from being a standalone. It's also billed as "romantic suspense" - and I'm happy to say that the romance part really didn't take center stage (I'm *so* not into romance novels). What's there is a bit on the sappy side, to be sure, but for the most part it didn't get in the way of the good parts. As for the suspense, there's plenty to go around, especially as the end nears.

A decade ago, a group of high school friends had a pre-Halloween adventure that would forever change their lives. When they visited one of the New York haunted houses to which they'd scored free tickets, they were greeted with horror. One of the "actors" hired to scare the wits out of guests isn't an actor at all; but for the grace of God (and one heavy duty fake sword), the teens narrowly escaped being massacred by him on the spot (others weren't so lucky). The killer, who turned out to be an escaped convict, was killed - but even though they weren't physically harmed, all the teens were left with enough mental scars to trigger a lifetime of nightmares.

Since then, the friends have scattered a bit. Most notably, Sarah Hampton and the love of her life, Tyler Grant, went their separate ways. She's back in New York now, writing science fiction novels. He's in Boston, working as a private investigator after stints in the military and the FBI. Also hanging around is Sarah's nephew Davey Cray, who has Down Syndrome and was the sword-wielding hero of that awful night 10 years earlier.

Suddenly, the past comes roaring back: One of their friends back then, Hannah Levine, is found murdered. Actually, she wasn't just murdered; rather, she was decapitated, thoroughly chopped up into parts and strewn thither and yon. Scared out of her wits because the murder style mimics those at the haunted house, Sarah contacts Tyler for the first time in 10 years, begging him to come back home and help with the investigation. He does, of course - and also, of course, they quickly realize they're still madly in love with each other.

But alas, they and their other old friends once again have targets on their backs. For sure, the haunted house killer is dead; so who is responsible now? When he escaped prison, the killer had an equally evil partner, who supposedly is long dead as well. Or is he? Has someone else - a copycat, perhaps - taken over where those two left off? More to the point, can the culprit be captured before he (or she) wipes out all the haunted house friends, thus preventing Sarah and Tyler from living happily ever after?

The action is fast-paced and picks up speed (with a few sharp turns, only one of which I correctly guessed) all the way to the end. All in all, a solid effort and a fun read.

Audrey Adamson says

Chilling premise but the book just makes up whatever it wants to without any rhyme or reason.

As a teen, Sarah and her friends are caught in the middle of a massacre at a local haunted house. They escape with their lives but not without permanent damage. But years later, when one of the group of friends is murdered, they must deal once again with the events of their past.

I didn't realize this was a romantic intrigue novel when I received a free copy. I had read the first chapter and really enjoyed it. But I never like how these books end up: rekindled romance, no deep emotions around the crime at hand and very little research into crimes. The book throws out words like psychopath without truly understanding what these people are like and what kind of people commit these crimes.

This was a short read, but it took me forever to read. I wasn't invested in any of the characters but Davey and

I could pretty much tell what would happen next because the book goes for what would be a shock but when you have read many books, these shocks are not shocks any more.
This book wasn't for me.

i fall in love book blog says

Out of the Darkness was my first *Finnegan Connection* book AND my first Heather Graham. As far as it being the first book I've read in the series, I didn't feel like I missed anything, which is always a great feeling. I also liked Heather Graham's writing, so that was a definite plus.

The basis of this story is creepy, so when I started reading it that first night I immediately put it back down and picked up something fluffier. Once I got into the story though, I was much more comfortable with it and enjoyed the plot quite a bit. My only complaint would be that the last plot twist felt too forced and ended up annoying me more than enhancing the story. Other than that minor hiccup, I read this pretty quickly. I liked the main characters and wished that we could have seen more of Davey. I was impressed by my first reading of Heather Graham and if I see another book by her I won't hesitate to pick it up.

I received an advance reader copy of this book that I have chosen to review.

Marcia says

I read the first part of the Prologue of this book on www.bookishfirst.com and was hooked. Many years ago, I read the author's Florida historical romance novel series. Years later, I found that she was writing paranormal romances. This book is totally different, a thriller romance. The Prologue introduces the main characters, 6 high school students. Davey has Down's Syndrome and his cousin Sarah is overly protective of him. The rest of the group, are her boyfriend, football player Tyler and their 3 friends, Hannah, Sean and Suzie. They talk Davey into dialing in to a radio station to win VIP tickets to a Halloween fun park, and he did. They were all having fun until Davey refused to enter one of the haunted houses, Cemetery Mansion, because his deceased marine father had taught him to recognize bad people and he saw something evil there. Sarah stayed behind with him, while the others went in. But he was right about the Mansion and at the last minute he found a toy weapon in one of the sales booths, went inside with Sarah and managed to save their friends- but a number of other teens were massacred. After this trauma, the teens all went their separate ways and except for Davey and Sarah, lost touch with each other, until the murder of one of them, brings it all back and they must reunite to keep alive. I'm not going to give anything away, but the story did not go where I thought it would. The characters are well developed and the plot has lots of twists. I didn't read the previous book, but this worked for me as a stand alone, though I now plan to read *A Dangerous Game*, which came before.

Carolyn says

Andrew says

I can't say that this book did much for me. I don't read romance anything but was hoping that my first impression would be wrong. It didn't live up to my first impression. The characters were flat. Everyone is good looking, kind, generous, loving. Except of course the killer(s)? The horrific halloween night that the 6 friends survived has resurfaced. Small problem, more than 6 people lived through that night. That doesn't seem to matter. And no matter how stressed people are, there is always time for sex.

When I read I don't focus on the plot if the characters are written well. Great characters can sell a bad plot. Even a great plot is ruined by bad character development. This had characters with no flesh and a plot that seems terribly flawed.

I can chalk up my review to not liking romance novels. I can also say that I did a poor job of editing my selection. Heather Graham has written more than a few novels. It means she has a loyal following. So I truly hope this meets their expectations.

I wish to thank the publisher, Heather Graham, and Bookishfirst for my free copy in exchange for my honest review.

CD {Boulder Blvd} says

I skimmed read starting at about 50% just to get through the book without DNFing. So many elements didn't work. I think I need a plot with stronger police procedures.

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

I loved the beginning of the book when a bunch of friends were going to Haunted Houses. But when they got to the Cemetery Mansion, Sarah's little brother Davey wouldn't go inside. He kept saying the house was evil. And in fact, it was, or rather the person inside the house. Davey ran in with Sarah and saved the day by killed a serial killer per say. There were mutilated bodies everywhere. Davey ended up saving all of Sarah's friends, including her boyfriend, Tyler.

But things were not the same for everyone after this ordeal and they stopped talking to each other and some even moved away, including Tyler.

It's been a decade and someone is killing the victims that survived. Sarah contacts Tyler who is a PI and he comes back to help with the case. Then another person is found dead and mutilated but it isn't the right friend. Who could this person be if Davey killed the real killer years ago?

They all band together with the police and help track down the killer. Another nutcase in wonderful world of psycho's.

*Thank you to BookishFirst for a print copy of this book.

