



House of Echoes

Barbara Erskine

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The past isn't always dead or buried...

When Joss Grant, adopted at birth, inherits Belhaddon Hall – a beautiful old house on the East Anglian coast – it is like a dream come true. Eager to begin a new life there with Luke, her husband, and Tom, her small son, she is also impatient to find out about her newly discovered family who lived there for generations.

But not long after they move in, Tom wakes screaming at night. Joss hears echoing voices and senses an invisible presence, watching her from the shadows. Are they spirits from the past? Or is she imagining them? As she learns, with mounting horror, of Belhaddon's tragic and dramatic history, her fear grows very real, for she realises that both her family and her own sanity are at the mercy of a violent and powerful energy which seems beyond anyone's control.

House of Echoes Details

Date : Published November 11th 1996 by HarperCollins Publishers Ltd (first published 1996)

ISBN : 9780006479277

Author : Barbara Erskine

Format : Paperback 528 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Mystery, Fantasy, Paranormal



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From Reader Review House of Echoes for online ebook

Heather King says

Spooky, but a very good read.

Cat says

I LOVED "Midnight is a lonely place" as it was the first one i read but i think all the books by this author are the same and i have read 3 so far. here is the plot for all:

- 1) Old house
- 2) Middle Aged Heroine
- 3) Ghost trying to fuck her up
- 4) everyone thinks she is mental until there is a storm.
- 5) The storm reveals all.

yawwwnnn

Hannah says

I do admit that this book goes on for about 100 pages longer than it should. And the female protagonist, Joss, too often lets her husband and sister walk all over her. Lyn, the sister, is one of the most annoying secondary characters I've ever read. And there is a repetitiveness that comes into play about 3/4 of the way through...

With that being said....

Still one of the creepiest books I've ever read. Erskine manages to create a subtle feeling of spooky, building tension that makes it very hard to read this book in a house alone. I've read this book at least 5 times, and while some parts irritate the heck out of me, I still get goose bumps over other parts, and that makes it worth my time.

I can only speak for myself, but I'm willing to forgive the flaws of this book since overall it makes me feel so deliciously creeped out time and time again!

F. says

Bookclub read choice. Very well written, quite creepy. The tension was there the whole time especially when

either the children or the adults couldn't find each other.

4.5 stars

Linda says

In the mood for a ghost story? Put your overworked sense of reality into a state of suspended animation, and read about a haunted house in Essex, England. Jocelyn Grant's husband has lost his business due to his underhanded partner, when, serendipitously, Joss goes on a search for her birth mother, finding not only her roots but an inheritance in the shape of her ancestral home. Of course it's haunted - there'd be no story otherwise - and some of this novel is rather overdone. As other reviews have already noted, it's also long, dragging in some places. But other parts are well done, and it's unclear until the end exactly what is going on, so *House of Echoes* makes for a fun summer read, spectral roses, lovesick kings, and all.

~?~Autumn♥♥ says

This would be an excellent ghost story to read at Halloween! I got a little confused at the end but overall enjoyed it immensely. It reminded me of *The Haunting of Gad's Hall*.

Sean says

'House of Echoes' by Barbara Erskine for me was one of the best reads I have had in a long time.

If you love historical mysteries that surround an ancient house from a distant family full of sheer terror on every page this is the book for you.

I was given this book by my mother, who usually reads those supermarket sagas about girls who grow up poor in liverpool or some other shitty town in England in the 1800's who have been raped and left for dead then meet rich men blah blah more tragedy blah blah but this is nothing like that in the slightest.

Do not be put off by the sheer size of this novel as all of the chapters are small and it is not full of long winded descriptions.

I do not care for romance in novels and I was happy to find the protagonist was already married and I did not have to suffer from the start her falling in love.

Joss has a small boy and a husband named Luke and a step sister named Lynn, she inherits Bellheddon Hall from her estranged mother who gave her up for adoption but a clause in the will says she has to live there for a certain amount of time before she can sell, Joss doesn't want to sell anyway - trust me I have given nothing away.

Strange things start to happen that are not your usual haunted house gash but they make you wonder is it ghosts, is Joss going mad, is it Lynn or another family member or friend ?

Their is a mixing pot of all the supernatural under the sun and it written most beautifully and I must add

Erskine herself is a historian so it is all accurate bar the plot.

I loved how Erskine when one character had something happen to them when it came to the character to explain to another it was just, 'joss explained to Lynn about the night before's event' and the story continued, none of this basically re-reading what just happened crap.

It took me a while to get back into this due to ill health and other reasons but I read over 180 pages in just two days the story is that twisting and thick with enticement to keep you going.

This will not be my last Barbara Erskine novel let me tell you that !

9/10

Cynthia says

****3.5/5****

This was definitely one of the creepiest books i've read this year and i would recommend it to anyone who needs a spooky on the edge type of a book.

This is the first book am reading by Erskine and i have to say i enjoyed her writing. I liked most the characters but i most definitely did not like Lyn and how she just wanted to stir up trouble when it came to Joss. It was so annoying how no one believed Joss and how she let her husband and sister walk all over her. This book had its ups and downs, some parts just dragged on but other than that i found it really interesting.

Hayley says

I read this as a small child (despite being told it's too grown up for me) but I remembered it vaguely since then and wanted to read it again!

I think a lot went over my head as a kid!

My now impressions:

I still enjoyed it, the suspense and spookiness builds nicely, but not in a lose-sleep kind of way. The characters were diverse (hated Lyn, liked Jimbo).

The style of writing is a little dated now, but still holds up.

Ending felt a little rushed, and one really odd random thing that happened midway kind of didn't need to, but aside from that, I liked it.

Clare says

My first novel by her and after this I have read every book of hers. Her storytelling has you gripped with every sentence, this was no different. This will hold a special place in my heart and would recommend this book to everyone I know!

badfae says

I've read two of this author's books, and, quite frankly, that was enough to make me avoid the rest of her work. It's not terrible...just...eh. Two different novels by the same author using the presumed-to-be-hysterical-woman-whom-the-men-don't-take-seriously-despite-clear-evidence premise may just be unfortunate sampling on my part, but, why take the risk?

Again, she started with a good idea, but the execution is lacking. I once saw a review for this where the person said it was just well-written enough to keep you reading, but just poorly-written enough to make you wish it was better (or something along those lines), and I agree. Potential unfulfilled.

Reindert Van Zwaal says

A very nice ghost story with a sublime build up unraveling just a bit more of the mystery every now and then. From halfway on I was completely lost in the story and could feel all the tension present in the book itself.

I think you must have at least some connection or fancy with ghosts or supernatural things in order to fully enjoy the story.

Gemma says

Nothing like a good old ghost story...! Lots of tension here so don't read this if you're wanting a 'light read'; it's not and it may play on your mind once you turn out the lights! Chilling and atmospheric, this manages to get beneath your skin in the most subtle ways. Involving children in the tale is always going to add that unnerving edge to the story and that is certainly achieved here. I'm deducting a star from the ratings merely because of the ancestry; there's a lot to remember and it's only now upon completing the book that I have flicked back through and rediscovered the family tree at the beginning of the novel. Completely useless placement there as it was forgotten about within seconds as the reader has not yet received any other information to tie it to!

If this were placed within the context of the story as part of the research that is discovered, then it would be more suitably placed and likely to be used as the reference tool it is intended to be.

⌘?RoryReads?⌘ says

A satisfying haunted house mystery.

Sarah Mac says

The angry, horny ghost of Edward IV haunts a specific family in a specific house & boffs the female descendants through hundreds of years because some avaricious witchcraft-practicing mama bound her daughter to become his lover via the black arts. And all the boy children die young because he kills them. I

think. Hell, I'm not sure. SOMEBODY keeps killing the boys, anyway.

...Yup. That's the backstory.

The contemp characters are an assortment of mind-numbingly drab people with no page presence, as is usually the case with these timeslip/bookclub gothics. Yawn. Eventually some New Age wiccan arrives to undo the evul through the perpetuation of *lurve* & breaking the black magic spell & pushing ghosts along to the hereafter. I dunno. I don't GAF because it's beyond dumb. The end.

This was my third attempt to read Erskine, & it's clear we don't jive. Never again will I bother. -____-
