



Darkness, Tell Us

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'If you've missed Laymon, you've missed a treat' Stephen King At a party, six college kids play with a Ouija board - that same one that Professor Dalton swore never to touch again - not after Jake's death. And now a spirit is telling the students about a vast fortune, hidden in the mountains. But surely they won't be stupid enough to head off into the wilderness on the say-so of a 'toy' ... would they?

Darkness, Tell Us Details

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Author : Richard Laymon

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From Reader Review Darkness, Tell Us for online ebook

Cody | codysbookshelf says

I only finished this book because I thought it would turn itself around. Richard Laymon loved brutal twists, unexpected forays into shock horror. None of that occurs in this, a novel I am not totally convinced Laymon even wrote. I would almost put money on a ghostwriter being involved.

One would think a horror novel about six college kids traveling deep into the woods on the advice of a spirit contacted via ouija board would be . . . ya know, scary. Especially one written by this author, who knew no boundary. This is not scary *at all*. I was bored speechless. The “spookiest” moment is the spirit — named “Butler” — making one of the kids take her top off at a party. And the other characters act like this is the worst, most brutal thing they’ve ever seen . . . Ooo-Kay.

And don’t even get me started on the identity of Butler. Laymon (or whoever wrote this steaming pile) must have pulled *that* revelation straight out of his ass, and I almost couldn’t stop laughing at the absurdity. Shameless. This novel is shameless.

This is, without a doubt, one of the worst books I’ve read this year. Stay far away.

Benjamin Thomas says

I always like to compare Richard Laymon novels with watching a train wreck. It's not necessarily something you want to see but it's hard to look away.

This one was fairly typical of his books: lots of teenage-style titillating sexual innuendos and teasing among a group of young people; bad guys that are just about as clichéd as you can find; and lots of delaying tactics so that the narrative leads you down a path that could have been reached in about half the number of pages. The plot this time concerns a group of six college students who visit their attractive female English professor at her home where an end-of-summer-semester party is happening. The students find a Ouija board and use it to contact a spirit who directs them to a treasure horde in the mountains. There are no thoughts by any of the characters, including the professor, about the Ouija board process or the spirit being nonsense...it's all real to them and they all expect treasure at the end of the adventure. But that's not what is important about a Laymon novel. It's all about the character interaction and how many adolescent sexual thoughts he can get on a single page.

His books are definitely not for everyone but I would rank this one among his top quarter percentile. His pacing drives me crazy and I always want him to get on with the story but his climactic scenes always pay off. Laymon is a good specimen of the “splatterpunk” style of horror author and this novel is a fair representation of his body of work.

Gary says

This book was amazing. It is everything I love about Laymon. Yes, the dialogue can get clunky. Yes, you have seen scenes like this before. But no one tells a story like this like Laymon does. He is an absolute master at controlling the pace of the story. He increases the speed mercilessly as the novel nears the end. Predictable is irrelevant in Laymon's hands, and I didn't find the novel entirely predictable by any means. He knows when to reveal details of the plot and when to keep the reader guessing. Character revelations add shock value to the plot development and keep the plot tangled like a web.

The twists and turns are typical of Laymon. If you like him you have probably seen some of them before but if you are like me, they don't diminish; rather, they become more valuable each time I read them. Maybe it is because he is gone now and each Laymon novel I read is one novel closer to the last time I will experience one of his stories for the first time.

A. R. says

This is really a terrible book.

I was looking for a horror/thriller that had a Ouija board for a plot device and this was recommended to me. Sadly, while this had a Ouija board in it, there was not much else for me to like about it. I will say this before I get into why this was just awful: the author does a decent job with dialogue, even if some of the slang seems more suited to the 1960s than the 1990s.

So, what's wrong with the book? Imagine a ghost story being told by a horny 15 year-old male and in addition to the tale itself, you have to listen to the perverted thoughts from that 15 year-old as he checks out every woman within a half-mile radius.

Seriously, I don't think you can go 5 consecutive pages without sex coming up in some fashion, usually either in a pervy voyeuristic way or just flat-out twisted (Skerrit, WTF?). I've been in the mind of a 15 year-old male and while he captures that pretty well, it really has nothing to do with the story and is not interesting in any way.

And it has the single worst line in the history of intercourse scenes in books: "Welcome home."

The use of the Ouija board is stupid. They could have found a treasure map and gotten the same mileage out of it. I wouldn't be surprised if Laymon just wrote the Ouija board in later to give it some kind of gimmick.

And the ending--dear God, the ending. I've grown used to the rapid wrap-up endings from most mass market thrillers, but this one takes the cake. 350 pages of build-up only to get a quick and unsatisfying ending. Now, there's a more artful sexual allusion than anything you'll find in this book.

Not only do I not recommend this, I would tell you to avoid this at all costs. Terrible, terrible book.

Chris says

I'm shocked I even finished this book. Almost as much that it was published in the first place. Unconvincing

to say the least. Not a believable character(much less likable) in the whole novel. Filled with gaping plot holes. Seems like it was written by a horny virgin obsessed with the word "rump". I literally exclaimed "What the fuck" aloud after he used it for perhaps the 70th time.

Matt says

Laymon isn't known for being able to write believable stories. However, even as one accustomed to his style, this is probably one of the most ridiculous books I've read in a while. ridiculous events/conversations keep occurring again and again. Does a woman REALLY lose her husband, have a thing for his brother, lose contact with her brother for several years, and then when they finally see each other again, they proclaim their love for each other, have sex, and feel no remorse about it? Hell, not even have a remnant of a thought about your dead husband? There are plenty more of these "what the hell is happening here" moments, but I'd hate to ruin the fun of finding them yourself! First you'll wonder, what are these people doing? Then you'll realize that the whole book has been that way and read along. Its ridiculousness was magnified by the fact that it was trying to take itself seriously.

The part where they were using the ouija board and trying to decipher it was the most hilarious, unintentionally of course. "H-E-L-L-O" "he... L.L.O? What does L.L.O stand for? Hmm.. If you reverse the order, and change the O to an A, those are my grandfather's best friend's initials! We gotta go visit him!" These strokes of genius are all coming from a group of supposed English majors too. The ouija board wasn't used very often, sadly, so you didn't get to see these geniuses at work as often as would be desired. You'd think that if these people drove all the way up a mountain and hiked for 10 miles just at the whim of this board, that they'd consult it more. Laymon apparently had something else in mind.

There's the typical sex and violence theme that Laymon lived and died by. None of his characters hesitate to get it on at any point in the story. While I've heard many people refer to him as misogynistic, I think that's mincing the truth quite a bit. It's not just that his female characters needlessly whore themselves around. It's prevalent among males in the books too. So to call him misogynistic is a bit of a warped, one-sided perspective. The violence, taking place predominantly towards the end of the book, is about typical for Laymon standards, although it does come in a very quick burst and doesn't last long. The end seemed really rushed. Almost as if he was told his deadline was the next day and he had to crank out the last fifty pages in an hour.

I haven't really said anything nice about this book. Well, that's because there really isn't much that's nice about it. It's predictable, ridiculous, choppy and there were elements that should have been wrapped up, but never were. One of things he did semi-well were on the characters themselves. They had individual personalities and kept things somewhat interesting. The book kinda played out like watching a movie with great actors given a horrid script. You liked the characters variation of traits but felt like their dialogue hindered most everything. The storyline wasn't a bad one. If you had put the storyline into the hands of a different author, that would be able to make a cohesive book, it could have been great.

So why does this get three stars if it sucked so bad? Well, I review based on the quality of the book. I rate based off of enjoyment. And Laymon's novels have always been a source of enjoyment for me, no matter how absurd. It's just relatively brain free, campy fun. If you're into that, you're gonna get it from practically any book by Laymon. But literary excellence is something Laymon never quite achieved (although some books, like *A Night in Lonesome October*, were very well-written.) But even with the three stars it gets, it's pretty low in comparison to my typical ratings.

This has to be Laymon's worst book next to "The Lake." Nothing could ever surpass that ridiculousness.

Glenn Rolfe says

Another Laymon book, another story of madmen doing horrible things to people obsessed with sex... This one had me really engaged for the first three quarters, it got a bit silly and redundant toward the back end and brought together all the people you were expecting. So, not much for surprise, but it was classic Laymon.

I couldn't set this book down in the first days I started. I love when that happens.

For that, I give DARKNESS, TELL US 4 stars!

Nate says

Was this an incredible ouija board story? Not really. Was this an awesome Laymon novel that featured an ouija board? Absolutely! The ouija parts were creepy and cool, but were pretty minor in the story overall. Still a cool Laymon novel, and I really liked the ending.

Adam Light says

Great Laymon! Technically proficient and well told. I love it when a Laymon story works this well.

Sunshineandbooks1410 says

Höre ich als Hörbücher.
absolut krank. ? Sowas muss man schon 'mögen'.

Andy says

Classic Laymon. (yes) Memorable and quirky characters on a (yes yes yes) zany adventure. I was somewhat (yes yes) dissatisfied with the ending. One too many coincidences for my liking. (yes yes yes)

Ellen Gail says

Three stars. Really strange, but undoubtedly entertaining. Review to come!

Andrew Lennon says

What a great read. This book had me gripped from the very beginning. Who doesn't like a creepy story with a ouija board? But this was more than just a ghost story, it had a pretty epic game of cat and mouse and the brutal back story really made you feel for the characters.

Great story, definitely check it out.

Marie says

It is never a good thing when a Ouija board is used for just wanting to find out things so it is even worse when it is used to hunt for something. Which is what happens in this book. Some college friends get together over at one of their professor's house and end up playing with a Ouija board. They ask the board the normal questions, but then things take a twisting turn as the board tells them that there is "treasure" to be found and they are going to have to travel to the mountains to find it.

They steal the board and off they go on a camping trip to find their "treasure". What happens next is the most twisted edge of your seat thriller that you can find in a Laymon book. Of course, you have the normal stuff that you will find in a Laymon book too with sex, gore, more sex, and more gore.

This is a very tension gripping tale of college kids trying to have some fun and they end up with something beyond their wildest nightmares. The book takes off from the first chapter and spirals through a terror ride to the end of the book. Four stars on this twisted tale!

Michael says

Ich möchte der gütigen Vorsehung danken, dass ich "nur" die gekürzte Hörbuchfassung gekauft habe, aber dann fällt mir ein, dass der Dank recht eigentlich Audible geschuldet ist, da keine ungekürzte Fassung angeboten wird. Schließlich verschiebt sich die Perspektive ein letztes Mal und angedenk der sieben Stunden Laufzeit überlege ich, Audible zu verklagen oder alternativ zumindest mein Abo zu kündigen.

DER GEIST ist mein erstes Buch von Laymon und das zweite Desaster nach McFadyens BLUTLINIE. Wieder wollte ich ganz arglos etwas Unterhaltsames, das ich beim Walken hören kann, und wieder habe ich mich von vielen positiven Bewertungen verleiten lassen.

Die Handlung? Also, da ist eine 30-jährige verwitwete Doktorin, die was auch immer an der Uni unterrichtet; offenbar früh dran mit allem, die Gute, ansonsten aber nicht reifer als ihre Studenten; eben jene Studenten, die ich eher als Schüler einer 7. oder 8. Klassenstufe verortet hätte, unreif, infantil und notgeil. Wer EIS AM STIL (egal welchen Teil) für einen unterhaltsamen Film hielt, möge sich am GEIST versuchen. Unter den Schülern gibt es neben einem übelkeitserregenden Maulhelden den jungfräulichen Nerd, der etwas pseudosensibler als seine Mitschüler, Verzeihung, Mitstudenten ist. Er ist wohl die Identifikationsfigur für all die 14- bis 15-jährige Leser des Buches, an die Laymon sich eigentlich richtet, die aber Mami und Papi nicht zeigen dürfen, was sie da lesen. Und es gibt das Mädchen, dass alle Spielarten des sexuellen Mißbrauchs über Jahre erduldet hat, aber immer noch guter Dinge und einem one-night-stand nicht abgeneigt ist.

Besagte studentische Gruppe bekommt nun vom Geist Butler via ouija board einen Schatz in Aussicht gestellt und macht sich prompt auf die Suche danach, wenig später gefolgt von der besorgten Dozentin und ihrem Schwager, welchen sie nach erstmaligem Sex sofort zu heiraten beschließt.
Ach Leute, es reicht, keine weiteren Details.

Dauernd streicht hier ein Wind durch die Shorts der Mädels und Jungs (lachen sie nicht, so will es der Autor), und eine Passage ohne Sex oder Anzüglichkeiten ist Mangelware. Hier bleibt nur Fremdscham und tiefstes Bedauern.

DER GEIST ist ideal für Leser, die es lieben, wenn das gesamte Personal des Romans unmotiviert und sinnfrei agiert und gefühlsmäßig und intellektuell auf dem Stand von 15-Jährigen ist; außerdem sollte man auf unglaublich schlechte Dialoge stehen und gerne Strichlisten führen. Solch eine Liste könnte wie folgt aussehen:

Erwähnung von

- Busen / Schenkel: XXXXX, III
- Erigierter Penis: XX, IIII
- allgemeine sexuelle Erregung: XXXXXXXX, IIII
- Sex: XXX, II
- Geist: II

(irgendwann habe ich keine Striche mehr gemacht).

Kein Wort mehr, der ganze unsägliche Text ist eine sie-wissen-schon-Vorlage für dauererregte Teenager und stellt den Rezensenten nur vor ein einziges Problem: warum kann ich nicht 0 Sterne vergeben?
