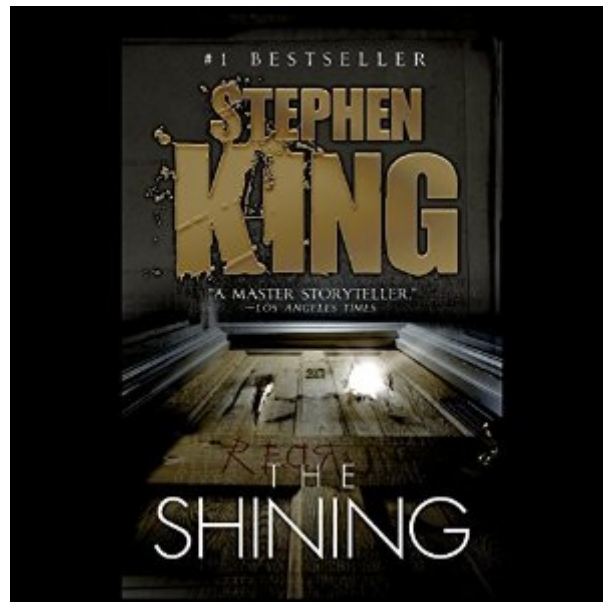


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The Shining



Synopsis

Jack Torrance's new job at the Overlook Hotel is the perfect chance for a fresh start. As the off-season caretaker at the atmospheric old hotel, he'll have plenty of time to spend reconnecting with his family and working on his writing. But as the harsh winter weather sets in, the idyllic location feels ever more remote...and more sinister. And the only one to notice the strange and terrible forces gathering around the Overlook is Danny Torrance, a uniquely gifted five-year-old.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Twenty-seven years after its publication, *The Shining* remains a visceral, gripping read that showcases Stephen King's unfathomable powers to hypnotize and terrify readers, a power King had in abundance in the early stages of his career. Coming on the heels of *Carrie* and *'Salem's Lot*, *The Shining* truly established King as a modern master of horror and an unequalled purveyor of a literary mirror into pop culture. If you've only seen the original movie starring Jack Nicholson, you really owe it to yourself to read the novel; Stanley Kubrick made a fine and scary movie, but he did not capture the essence of King's story, and his dramatization followed a different path than what you find in the original vision brought to life through the words of King. The more recent miniseries was more faithful to the novel, but it doesn't take an Einstein to figure out that a made-for-TV dramatization is limited in terms of what it can get away with in a number of important areas. Simply put, *The Shining* stands just behind Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* as one of the best "haunted house" novels ever written. The plot should be quite familiar to one and all by this point. The Torrance family

embarks on a months-long retreat into complete isolation when Jack Torrance signs on to be the winter custodian of the Overlook Hotel in Colorado. Jack takes some personal demons with him to a hotel chock-full of malevolent, ghostly spirits; he is a recovering alcoholic who, in the last couple of years, lost his job and broke his little boy's arm in a state of drunken fury. He thinks the months alone with his wife and son will allow him to find peace - and to finally finish the play he has been working on.

Stephen King has been called a great many things. The Master of Horror Fiction. Fascinating. Frightening. Hypnotic. Demonic. Tremendous. Spellbinding. His own bio blurb refers to himself as the "world's best selling novelist." One critic has even gone so far as to speculate that Stephen King is our era's Charles Dickens. Anyone who has read King would probably agree he's a writer with a tremendous range, a genius-level vivid imagination, and an understanding of human emotions both simple and yet rarely matched. The Shining is probably his best known novel and of the first twenty or so novels that he wrote, and it seems to me the one he wrote at his happiest. He wrote part of it at the Stanley Hotel near Estes Park, Colorado when he was young enough not to be a commodity and old enough to know what the hell he was doing. Compared to The Dead Zone, Cujo, Pet Semetary, Misery it just seems like a book he enjoyed writing more than any of the other early works. The irony is that The Shining has become synonymous with horror fiction. And that's the way "The Shining" works on you. Jack Torrance is a flawed man with a drinking problem, a violent temper, but a sense of humor and a genuine love for his wife and child. He's a guy we want to root for! And that's why his descent into madness is so powerful. (and so chilling) To some degree, we all can relate to him. Room 217. The Overlook. Grady. The hedge animals. The isolation. And the shining. All of these devices work so well together in the novel that it's hard not to picture Stephen King writing this thing at points -- a maniacal captain aboard a hotel trip into hell. The guy just gets a kick out'a writing and as simple as that sounds it's actually kind of rare in this world.

So I re-read The Shining over this weekend (21st/22nd Sept 2013) in preparation for Dr Sleep - the sequel - which landed on my doorstep on Saturday morning, all shining (pun intentional) and new. Reading The Shining first seemed appropriate and was like having the best homework assignment ever! Danny was only five years old but in the words of old Mr Halloran he was a 'shiner', aglow with psychic voltage. When his father became caretaker of the Overlook Hotel his visions grew frighteningly out of control. Do you know I adore Stephen King novels and yet I hate reviewing them - why? Because each time I just want to yell "Its brilliant damn it, its King. Just read the darn thing you

don't need to know anymore!". In fact the temptation to leave it at that and just go and dive headlong into the next part of Danny's story is a burning need right down in my reading soul right now but hey, I'll squash that and do my best...Stephen King. Words are his Power. Yes they really are - now I'm aware that he is not universally loved, and even many of his constant readers have been disappointed in his later novels, but that isn't the case for me. They have all held me captive for the entire reading experience. Yes, even the much maligned "Cell". The Shining of course, is an older release and generally well loved by fans of Mr King, so for them I can't say anything they don't already know...For those of you who have not yet dipped a toe into the weird and wonderful world of King, this may well be a good place to start. It is one of his better novels (yes even me, unapologetic fangirl that I am, will say that some of his books are better than others). Its a haunting tale - haunting because Danny is haunted and he is just a child.

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