



The Exorcist

William Peter Blatty

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Four decades after it first shook the nation, then the world, William Peter Blatty's thrilling masterwork of faith and demonic possession returns in an even more powerful form. Raw and profane, shocking and blood-chilling, it remains a modern parable of good and evil and perhaps the most terrifying novel ever written.

The Exorcist Details

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Author : William Peter Blatty

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From Reader Review The Exorcist for online ebook

Anish Kohli says

“I think belief in God is not a matter of reason at all; I think it finally is a matter of love: of accepting the possibility that God could ever love us.”

An unexpected and unplanned BR with The newly minted Kaz and Inej lover, The closeted lady reviewer and The guy with **STILL** no profile picture. Thank you guys, for ~~leaving me in the dust~~ such a nice time!

Phew! What a crazy and scary read!

What can I say about the book that's not been said a million times over? I mean it's been out there for decades and its famous and well received to say the least. So what am I supposed to add to it? Nothing. Well, this book? I happened to pick it up even when I hadn't planned to and boy am I glad I did!

The important question first! Was it scary?

Why, you ask? Riddle me this:

Have you lost control over something? Have you ever been in a situation where you could only watch things go to shit and you couldn't do a thing about it? I bet it made you feel helpless, didn't it?

Now close your eyes and imagine this little thing...

Imagine, being trapped inside your own head. Imagine someone or rather something take control of your life. Your BODY! Imagine not being able to be heard, or seen. Imagine seeing your hands killing or hurting someone, maybe even someone close to you, and not being able to stop it. Imagine your own body being ravaged at your own hands but at the will of something else!

Imagine seeing a loved one being contorted out of shape, physically and mentally, to an extent where you don't recognize them anymore. Imagine a loved one acting in ways you can't even comprehend. Imagine being scared by someone you love. Imagine, hoping for a rational explanation, something your mind can process and accept. Imagine being denied and being forced to accept something you couldn't think possible. Are you scared yet? You should be!

I think sometimes people focus on just one thing. Scare factor is not just the Demon/Spirit or what horrible or gory acts they perform. The very notion and concept of possession is a horrifying one! The idea of a family to see a member suffer and change in such a way is terrifying! For me, that's the real scare factor. The transformation of a person in a way that they aren't the recognizable anymore. And in my humble opinion, the author has captured all of it perfectly!

The writing of this book is bloody beautiful! It's done so nicely. And not just that the prose is pretty. The details in the book are very rich and amazing. This is not a straight up *'oh well, that's a demonic possession, let's go for an exorcism'* thing. There is an exhaustive detail of doctors trying to figure out what's wrong with the lovely Regan, a 12 year old who seems to be acting out. Theories of a physical illness transform into theories of a mental illness. Drugs being administered and tests being performed. Hoping for a result that

makes sense. But to no avail. And when all hope is fleeting, the realization of the only road that is left to tread.

“Could it be? wondered Karras. Could the only hope for Regan be the ritual of exorcism?”

The book has only a small set of characters which are wonderfully shaped and so distinct and real. Their relationship with other characters make sense and is well done too. The character of Chris, Regan’s mother, is amazing. I loved her character and all the emotions that were portrayed through her. Damien Karras is a strong and intense character with just the right amount of skepticism to make him real. I loved how his mental status was outlined. His guilt and tiredness. His ever consuming desire to be rid of his duties and yet, to be able to help people. A heavy burden to bear.

Best of all though? The character of the demon itself. The portrayal of the evil entity. It was filled with malevolence, hatred and disgust. Treating others with impunity and the air of superiority. It was simply put, spooky!!

There were multiple scenes that were just absolutely stellar in their own ways by either being super creepy or grotesque. One of them was the first encounter between Damien and Regan the thing in the room! The dialogue were crisp and very very on point.

“Well, then, maybe we should introduce ourselves. I’m Damien Karras. Who are you?” “I’m the Devil!”

But obviously, I think the best and the craziest were the staircase scene and the one with the Crucifix! They just creeped me out!

I have to make a special mention about the last chapter of part two, which alternates between the present ongoings and the conversations that Chris has had with the doctors regarding Regan. It was masterfully done and was completely delectable! I loved how that chapter coalesced and that was the part where the book started picking up pace and things started becoming abysmal!

Honestly, I did not see the point of Father Merrin’s character, especially considering the sort of ending that was executed.

The ending, for me atleast, was a negative point in a way. I did not get the answer to the ‘why’ of it all and then the way it did end, it added another ‘why’ to the existing one. Also in essence, I think the ending is a negative one. There is no clear win of good over evil and so it leaves things open to interpretation. The feel of it though, the need of Karras’s character to save himself of the overwhelming guilt by helping others, is only reinforced and goes to further show that the ones who so willingly help others, sometimes they need help too. Sometimes they need attention too.

“We mourn the blossoms of May because they are to wither; but we know that May is one day to have its revenge upon November, by the revolution of that solemn circle which never stops—which teaches us in our height of hope, ever to be sober, and in our depth of desolation, never to despair.”

Amalia Gavea says

Strange as it may seem, I hadn't watched the film version of "*The Exorcist*" until last summer. I know, shame on me, but you see, I thought I wouldn't be able to take it seriously. I don't believe in possessions or devils or any of these things, although I love to read about them. Of course, I knew of Blatty's novel and I was aware of the cutie little green Pazuzu-face of young Regan, but since I don't believe in the main theme of the story, I knew I wouldn't be able to appreciate the film, right? Wrong! I admit I should have watched it sooner. I wasn't scared, however, only a little bit disgusted, but it was unsettling and full of interesting underlying information about psychology and the mentality behind the cases where exorcisms sounded as the best solution. Not to mention Max Von Sydow's formidable presence. Therefore, I eagerly searched for the novel and started reading to appreciate the story under a new light.

So, just as I believed, the novel is very, very good. Better than the film, its impact was felt immediately, and I must confess that I avoided reading it when I was alone in my house. I don't know why, but it made me nervous in a way the movie never did. To watch Regan's trip down to Hell, to anticipate the beginning of the child's ordeal was trully, trully agonizing. Naturally, this was possible due to the power of the author's writing. Blatty uses short sentences and everyday speech and the narration becomes much more immediate and the images more powerful. Certain infamous scenes of the film are a lot more graphic and highly disturbing in the book.

As in the film, my favourite character was Father Karras. I have a soft spot for him- partly due to him being Greek- but I feel that he represents the heart of the story. The struggle to seek the answers to his questions, the doubts over his faith and the agony to help in the name of God, the insecurity and lack of faith to himself and his abilities as a priest and as a doctor, are issues that are daily relevant to a significant number of people. On the other hand, I never warmed to the character of Chris, Regan's mother. I admired the fact that she was down to earth and close to her daughter as much as possible, given her demanding profession, but for some reason, I consider her rather naive and a bit stupid, to be honest. Perhaps I am a little harsher than I should, but her interactions with Regan's doctors and with Karras didn't exactly make her look like the sharpest knife in the drawer.

So, a great book that would have been a success even if the film had never come to pass. A loud applause to the producers who allowed Blatty to handle his own book and transfer it to the big screen, and the results are obvious in a well-made film that opened new paths to the Horror genre, Of course, on a personal note, it still can't hold a candle to "*The Omen*". Oh, and that scene(view spoiler)

Alejandro says

Curiosity compels you to read this!

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS

It was kinda hard to decide the rating on this novel.

If I'd think only on the raw reading experience, I would say that it was a 3-star material.

However, I had to ponder about the whole additional info and further development of characters compared with my experience with the film adaptation (which certainly is one of my favorite horror films). So, I think that the fairest rating is giving a solid 4-star rating.

Certainly due all those deeper details in the original book, I think that novel & movie make an irresistible combo to do.

You watched the film, and then you'll appreciate even more the extended information that you'll find in the original novel, but in matters of frightening, well the movie has a clear advantage, but don't dismiss the novel so quickly.

Since, may be not the best horror novel that I've ever read,...

...but certainly the book has...

...something to compel you to read it, and have it a huge respect to it.

MOVIE V. BOOK: DAWN OF POSSESSION

I am not surprised if almost any reader has watched the film before reading the novel..

...And my case wasn't any different.

I have watched the three film versions: Original theatrical, "The Never-Before-Seen" version and the "Extended Director's Cut". Any comment that I'd make in this review about the film adaptation it will be based on the latest mentioned version, the "Extended Director's Cut", due it's the most complete and also it's the one that I have on Blu-ray so it's the one that I have more fresh on my mind.

It's interesting how the film is generally accepted as the most terrifying movie of all time, while the novel doesn't keep that distinction. Actually the debate about which novel is the most terrifying of all, it's an endless dispute that I'm sure the general reading community never would be able to agree in a specific novel.

While the imagination is the best special effects generator, I have to admit that it wasn't so shocking to read scenes than in the visual presentation where they are truly scary.

Even, I don't know if there was the choice of words used in the narrative of the book, since I think that I'd some "technical" difficulties to visualize some of those scenes, if I wouldn't have previous notion of how they supposed to look like, thanks to the film.

PLAYING DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

So, I am still glad of having read the original novel, since not matter the film adaptation covered the most important elements of the general storyline;...

...the novel indeed gives you enlighting info about the background of the characters, even "new" characters that didn't appear on the movie version, and deeper development of many of the scenes.

On the film, you never have doubt that there is a demon inside of Regan,...

...but in the novel, there are plausible scenarios causing suspicions on other characters, with the chance of a more rational explanation.

So, not so ironically, in the same way that you have faith to believe in God, well, the story requires of you to have "faith" to believe in the existence of The Devil.

That, it's something so curious about many priests in Catholic Church, that I understand that there must be an investigation to discard a simpler explanation to some situations, but it seems that if you say that you're possessed by The Devil or to the contrary, you were witness of the word of God, in any case, the priests will see you as a perfect nut job to send to some psychiatric asylum.

So, while the priests are supposed to believe in God, it's like they don't want to believe in the existence of The Devil, that's it's quite odd, since they are both sides of the same religious coin.

Also, some elements in the novel, that you may perceive as "random" in the film version, even not clarify enough for really understanding why they are in the story, those elements are well developed on the novel and even making ties to the demon inside Regan that you may didn't think about before.

Moreover, some reactions and conducts of the characters, knowing key info about their pasts, you can rationalize better why they are reacting in such ways.

Even some conversations, they are the same in terms of dialogue, **but** the mood of them are perceived in a different way in the book, giving some new angles to the dynamics between characters.

SPEAKING OF THE DEVIL

That's exactly what I expect when I decide to read a book (original novel or novelization) when I already watched the film adaptation.

Since while I invest only two hours to watch the movie, I can invest like a week (or more) to read a novel. So, if I read just the exact story on the book, I think that it would kinda pointless, but if I got enough additional info,...

...certainly then, it was well invested time.

I think that the most effective element on the construction of the story is that you get a lot of arguments and plausible explanations of what it's going on, so in some reverse psychology gimmick, you get to believe more and more that Regan is indeed possessed by a demon.

While in some other novels where they approach the paranormal angle directly, the reader tends to accept it without a doubt.

Maybe you don't believe in The Devil or in God even, but don't worry,...

...since you also can say that you don't believe in Jupiter (the planet, not the Roman god) and that doesn't make that that planet isn't out there.

Many people are atheists until they have to face a demon by themselves.

And it's not like that I am saying that you have to believe in the Christian God, since while I am Catholic, my wish is only that all people believe in some higher power, that you may name whatever you prefer, but believe, in something higher than us.

Since some others may call as unrealistic, to believe in gods or higher powers,...

...for me, not believing in some higher power, I'd call it as sad.

Believe in God. Beware of The Devil. Both are real, not matter if you believe in them or not.

Getting back to the book, I recommend the novel for any fan of the film and wishing to get a deeper developement on the story.

P.S. (Updated Jan, 13th, 2017)

I just knew that William Peter Blatty passed away. I'm glad that I was able to read his most iconic work way before he would die.

Kemper says

You gotta be impressed with a book that inspires a movie that managed to turn entire generations off of pea soup.

Chris MacNeil is an actress who is filming a movie in Georgetown when her young daughter Regan starts to exhibit bizarre behavior, and when medical science fails to provide any answers she turns to Father Damien Karras for blah, blah, blah, blah. There's no point in a plot summary because we all know the set up on this one. It's also one of those books where the film version has become so well known that it's nigh on impossible to separate the two versions. In fact, I don't see how anybody could read this without hearing *Tubular Bells* in their head.

So just to get this out of the way: The movie is better. That's not to say that the book is bad. Blatty does a very good job of putting us in a normal early '70s setting, and then he slowly turns the dials up from what seem to be mild annoyances to the point where Regan has been turned into a head-spinning puppet of the

devil. I particularly liked how there's a systematic investigation of all the non-supernatural explanations for Regan's behavior, and that when the subject of an exorcism is first brought up it's presented as a kind of psychological shock treatment rather than a needed religious ritual.

The book has more of an underlying theme of questioning whether Regan is possessed than the movie lacks in part because once you see that kid's demonic features and her head spin all the way around on screen, you know it's supernatural in origin. Whereas the book can spend more time on the whole question of whether she is or isn't while making the answer more a bit more ambiguous.

Father Karras, a Jesuit psychiatrist suffering from his own crisis of faith, is also a great character to eventually put in the middle of this, and the way he swings from doubt to belief is well done. It's also a nice twist that he's kind of secretly hoping that Regan does have a demon in her because it would validate his beliefs. That doesn't prevent him from questioning everything and seeking hard evidence to prove it. However, I did get a laugh that at this point in the '70s Blatty thought there was enough evidence for the existence of ESP to have Karras consider things like telepathy and telekinesis possible without being demonic in nature.

So it's a solid horror story that plays more with the suspense of making you question what's happening to Regan rather than just making you scared of the Devil like the movie does.

One personal note: I had been meaning for a while to reread the old paperback I've had for years as part of my Rubbermaid Treasure reviews, but I just never seemed to get around to it. Then Audible had this on sale shortly before Halloween so it seemed like the perfect opportunity to finally get it done. It was only after downloading it that I learned that this version is actually the 40th anniversary edition in which the author rewrote parts of it, and since I last read *The Exorcist* something like 25 years ago I have no idea how much it differs from the original. So already this thing has turned from a simple gimmick review to what felt like a pain in the ass.

Since I don't have the time and/or patience to figure out all the differences I won't dig into that, but I'm not calling it a Rubbermaid Treasure either since it's technically a different book. I know that nobody but me cares about the stupid internal logic I use, but it nags at me if I don't explain what I'm doing and why.

I'll also note that Blatty himself is the narrator for most of it, and it confirms my belief that most authors just shouldn't read their own works aloud. Blatty isn't the worst I've heard, and he seems to delight in evil laughter and doing the demon voice, but this really could have used a professional actor/narrator. It's even weirder that he reads the Regan parts early on, but then a woman is brought in to do a child's voice later to speak and sing as Regan's 'actual' voice once she is possessed. It's just jarring.

Sadie Hartmann Mother Horror says

It's no surprise to me that this book was a very spiritual read for me. I knew, considering the topic, that this was going to come down to a showdown between light and dark, good and evil, God and Satan.

In which case, there could only really be one clear outcome. But more on that later. I'm going to try to be as spoiler free as I can considering some people may not have read this *or* haven't seen the movie, in fact, it would help you to know that I only saw the movie when I was very young and I kept my eyes closed most of the time, so even though this book is old, there are those who have intentions of reading it and don't want the

story spoiled.

That being said, if you want to go into this book totally blind, maybe skip the rest of this review and just know this: I recommend this book for fans of horror. It was well written, it scared me pretty damn good and it had great, memorable characters. It's classic, legendary horror that must be read if you consider yourself a big fan of the genre.

“for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.”
Rev. 12:10

At the beginning of this story, I was a little bored. I grew restless with the mother, Chris and all the scenes around her acting career. I felt like her parenting left much to be desired and found myself already blaming her for what I knew was coming, who lets their 11 year old child play with Ouija boards?? Especially considering that child already has a made up friend that talks to them through the Ouija Board and the child is becoming increasingly afraid of it??

Um, anyways. Now that I finished the book, I think it is the intention of the author to cast doubt and blame at all the adults in the story, for us to stand as accusers of one another when really, our battle isn't with each other, but with something much, much worse. Something that wants us to be wrapped up in our hate and anger and displaced blame so that we are found weak and distracted.

“But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?”

And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.” Acts 15:15-16

I think this is one of the scariest verses from scripture. The demon possessed man says to some people trying to perform an exorcism and cast out demons, hey look: I know the name of Jesus and I know the name of Paul, but I have no clue who you guys are and I'm going to kick your ass.

There were so many times this scripture came to mind while I read this book. People just don't know what the hell to do when they are dealing with demonic activity and truth be told: If you don't know what you're doing, DON'T EFFING CALL UPON IT! You know what I mean?? That's my ultimate warning and what I learned from this story, maybe you don't believe in demons, that's fine—whatever, then you don't care either way about them, you're indifferent, so BE indifferent, I wouldn't run around and tempt it or dare it, like people who say they aren't allergic to poison oak so they rub it all over themselves?? NOT SMART. And maybe you do believe in demons, like me so you just make wide circles around that stuff okay? Don't touch it! Don't think you're so faithful and pious you'd know what to do in a situation like this.

That's why this book was so terrifying.

It scared the hell out of me.

But I loved the different way the characters approached it—The detective with his logic and sleuthing

The Father with his background in psychology

The Exorcist with his unflinching faith

Even the mother scored points with me in the end with her unwavering plea for help.

I cried as she begged for help. I could empathize with her as she sought medical, mental and spiritual help for her daughter in horrific crisis.

I really loved the ending too but I don't want to spoil anything. I'll just leave a fitting scripture:

“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13

Lastly, while parts of this story were very difficult for me to read because they were so crude and blasphemous, I thought it was, in contrast, a beautiful story of sacrificial love against impossible danger. So I gladly mucked up my heart and my mind with grotesque language and offensive, vivid details in order to finish. I wanted to see that outcome I was waiting for...and it was delivered as expected. My review would have been very different if it didn't go the way I thought it would.

Mia Nauca says

El exorcista es, sin lugar a dudas, el libro más terrorífico que he leído. Recordemos que el miedo es subjetivo, y mi debilidad siempre han sido las posesiones satánicas.

No me esperaba el análisis psiquiátrico ni las explicaciones psicológicas para enfrentarnos a las posibles explicaciones de las "posesiones", pensé, que habría mucha religión involucrada y actos de fe, pero me encontré con razonamientos lógicos que la verdad nos dejan a todos una sensación de: ¿ok entonces, todo está en la cabeza o de verdad existe el diablo?

Es un libro completamente engatusador y repugnante que me dejó realmente perturbada pero ¿en el buen sentido? Una obra maestra

Jeffrey Keeten says

**"In our sleep, pain, which cannot forget, falls
drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own
despair, against our will, come wisdom
through the awful grace of God.
--Aeschylus**

I get a wild hair every so often and recently I decided that I needed to go on a 1970s blockbuster horror novel extravaganza tour. It all started with shifted some books around and finding this ~~ratty~~ well loved copy of *The Exorcist* that inexplicably found its way into my book collection. I'd swear it was stolen from one of Kemper's now famous Rubbermaid container boxes of nostalgic paperbacks, but I gave my midget ninjas specific instructions NOT to take anything from Kemper's abode, but simply take a look around, so the presence of this book on my shelves is still a mystery.

The Mysterious copy of The Exorcist.

When I was in middle school I rode the bus to school and every day this teenager with rumpled hair and scuffed motorcycle boots would catch a ride with us. He had been clocked for speeding by the cops and had led them on a merry chase around the countryside until he turned a corner too quickly, hit gravel, and rolled his car. He was a **LEGEND**. Needless to say he lost his driving privileges for a long, long time. He would always sit in the front and there was always this sweet scent coming off his clothes that later when I went to

college and attended my first party I had that ah ha moment. He'd lean back against the window and hoist those boots out in the aisle where we could all admire them. He always had a paperback novel with him, usually of the horror genre, and he would studiously ignore us and read his book. We of course were boring holes through him with fevered eyes because he was the most fascinating thing we'd ever seen.

One day he looked back down the bus at us and said, "You want me to read you some of this?" as he flopped the latest paperback in the air. It was called *The Exorcist*. I don't know if he understood or even understands today how cool a gesture that was, but it was pretty damn cool. So he started reading to us. We never got the whole story just bits here and there. Sometimes he would disappear for a while usually because he was jammed up in a little more trouble than normal. He'd show up with different paperbacks, *The Omen*, *Psycho*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *The Other*, and *The Amityville Horror* to name a few.

We were enraptured.

He scared the crap out of us.

The ghastly images those books inspired in my mind kept my eyes wide open late into the late which might have something to do with why my mom wouldn't let me read such books.

Those moments on the bus with him reading to us and scaring us are some of my most fond childhood memories. Boy, did we feel like we were getting away with something.

So I started reading my ratty, not Kemper's copy, of *The Exorcist* and could not believe how much I was struggling with the writing. The dialogue was horrible. How could this guy sell millions of copies of this book? I did some research. It seems that William Peter Blatty finished writing the rough draft of this book and was offered a lucrative screenwriting job and never polished the book. An editor, obviously not someone in the same category as Maxwell Perkins, allowed the book to go to print as basically a rough draft. Decades later Blatty is asked to read the book for the audio version. He kept having to stop to ask "who wrote this crap?" This story does have a happy ending. Blatty went back through and polished and rewrote and even added a critical scene to the book. It was released in time for the fortieth anniversary edition.

William Peter Blatty looking like he is ready for his casting call for a spaghetti western.

The Dodge City Public library, they never has anything I absolutely need immediately, had a copy of the fortieth anniversary edition. Hallelujah! Praise the book gods!

The difference between the books is a two star rating which I was already worried about how I was going to explain that rating to the legions of fans out there, and a four star rating which is much easier and much more fun to write a review for. So if you have thoughts of reading this book make sure you read the fortieth anniversary edition because as Blatty stated. "*This is the version I would like to be remembered for.*"

This is a novel about a demon possession of a twelve year old girl, but Blatty also spends a good amount of time explaining the other psychological aspects that could be causing the symptoms other than a demonic possession. The priest Damien Karras, who also happens to be a psychologist, finds himself confronting not only an evil entity beyond his wildest imaginations, but also his personal struggles with his own faith. He is damaged, dark, and brooding...a magnet for women if he were interested.

Jason Miller is Damien Karras in the movie.

"As he lifted the Host in consecration, it trembled in his fingers with a hope that he dared not hope, that he fought with every particle and fiber of his will. "For this--is--My body." he intoned with a whispered intensity.

No, it's bread! It's nothing but bread!

He dared not love again and lose. That loss was too great, that pain too keen. The cause of his skepticism and his doubts, his attempts to eliminate natural causes in the case of Regan's seeming possession, was the fiery intensity of his yearning to be able to believe. He bowed his head and placed the consecrated Host in his mouth, where in a moment it would stick in the dryness of his throat. And of his faith."

The thought that kept going through my head as I read this book is if you find proof of the devil or a demon or even true evil doesn't that mean you've found proof of God?

*Glory be to God for dappled things,
For skies of couple-color as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-fire-coal chestnut falls; finches' wings...
He fathers forth whose beauty is past change.
Praise him.*

Regan or Rags as her mother likes to call her starts exhibiting strange behavior, talking in tongues, and levitating. It is never really explained how or why she becomes possessed. Unless I somehow missed that part. Changing editions midstream has me a little worried about that as I did not go back and read the hundred or so pages that I'd read before the switch. She goes from being a creative, likable, normal twelve year old girl into something that is not only horrifying, but barely recognizable as human.

Linda Blair played Regan in the famous movie version.

"Reining in his revulsion, he closed the door and then his eyes locked, stunned, on the thing that was Regan, on the creature that was lying on its back on the bed, head propped against a pillow while eyes bulged wide in their hollow sockets shone with mad cunning and burning intelligence, with interest and with spite, as they fixed upon his; as they watched him intently, seething in a face shaped into a skeletal mask of unthinkable malevolence. Karras shifted his gaze to the tangled and thickly matted hair; to the wasted arms and legs and distended stomach jutting up so grotesquely; then back to the eyes: they were watching him...pinning him..."

Transformed!!!

Terrifying stuff!

"Requested and performed exorcisms had begun to decline in the Western world by the 18th century due to advancements in medical understanding, and occurred rarely until the latter half of the 20th century when the public saw a sharp rise due to the media attention exorcisms were getting. There was "a 50% increase in the number of exorcisms performed between the early 1960s and the mid-1970s".

Media suggested hysteria.

Iconic shot from the movie.

The church has a priest who had performed the last exorcism in 1949. He is an elderly Jesuit priest named Lankester Merrin. The two priests know they are over their heads, but in a true act of courage and faith take on the demon. No need for more details as I'm sure most of you have seen the movie and if you have not I would encourage you to read the book before watching the movie. The movie was nominated for ten academy awards and grossed over \$441 million worldwide. No wonder the demand for priests and their knowledge of exorcisms went up exponentially. The tour of 1970s horror will continue with *Jaws*. Stay tuned.

ADDENDUM

My friend, Gary Wyatt, supplied me with a picture of the house where the famous exorcism case happened in 1949. This was the case that inspired William Peter Blatty to write this book. Instead of a girl this case involved a thirteen year old boy named Roland Doe. Walter Halloran a Catholic priest of the Society of Jesus performed the exorcism. The setting: St. Louis, Missouri.

Exorcism House in St. Louis

If you wish to see more of my most recent book and movie reviews, visit <http://www.jeffreykeeten.com>
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Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

I think I'm ready. . . Help!

Well, maybe I'm weird but I found the movie scarier than the book. Don't get me wrong, there are a few parts that gave me the heebie jeebies, but overall it didn't get me like the movie. Just getting the gifs for this freaking review had me all creeped out!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! This book is very disturbing though. Reading the stuff about people in the Black Mass and what they were doing. Ugggg, no.

I thought about getting a copy of the movie to watch again since I have read the book but hell no. Just NO! The only reason I wanted to watch it again is because I wanted to see if they had some of the really disturbing things in the movie that were in the book. I wanted to see if they talked about all of the Black Mass stuff and different things that were in-depth in the book because I can't remember any of that stuff it was so long ago.

I remember when I was younger I had a nightmare that she was coming after me on a bicycle! Lol, and it was scary as hell and seemed real. A bicycle though, heh!

There is a part in the prologue that I didn't even realize was in another part of the movie until I read the book. It was about the demon when Father Merrin was overseas.

The man in khaki prowled the ruins. The Temple of Nabu. The Temple of Ishtar. He sifted vibrations. At the palace of Ashurbanipal he stopped and looked up at the limestone statue hulking in situ. Ragged wings and taloned feet. A bulbous, jutting, stubby penis and a mouth stretched taunt in feral grin. The demon Pazuzu.

Abruptly the man in khaki sagged.
He bowed his head.
It was coming.

He stared at the dust and the quickening shadows. The orb of the sun was beginning to slip beneath the rim of the world and he could hear the dim yappings of savage dog packs prowling the fringes of the city. He rolled his shirtsleeves down and buttoned them as a shivering breeze sprang up. Its source was southwest.

He hastened toward Mosul and his train, his heart encased in the icy conviction that soon he would be hunted by an ancient enemy whose face he had never seen.

But he knew his name.

This all started when Regan started playing with the ouiji board. People, just don't do it.

Regan's mom Chris who is a movie star let her do it because she didn't think there was any harm in it. Although, she did have some trepidation when Regan started talking about a "Captain Howdy."

Then things started to happen. Chris had Regan taken to all kinds of doctors and psych's until they finally said they need a priest. Ya think?

Chris was able to get in touch with Father Karras through some peeps but he had to spend time with Regan to prove to the Bishop an exorcism was needed. The kind of proof he had to look for in the book was ridiculous. With all of the stuff going on with Regan they must have been out of their damn mind! That should have happened with no problems.

And then we finally get Father Merrin => I loved him and Karras.

As the stranger reached up to remove his hat, Chris was nodding her head, and then suddenly she was looking into eyes that overwhelmed her: tht shone with intelligence and kindly understanding, with serenity that poured from them into her being like the waters of a warm and healing river whose source was both in him and yet somehow beyond him; whose flow was contained and yet headlong and endless.

"I'm Father Lankester Merrin," he said.

At any rate, the movie and the book were disturbing. Both in their own ways. The movie was scarier but the book had more detailed, disturbing stuff. Now I can only read normal horror for awhile!!

Enjoy!!!!

MY BLOG: Melissa Martin's Reading List

Leo . says

What a fantastic and scary but fascinating book. The film with Linda Blair and Max Von Sydow was so far ahead of its time. I was just a young boy when the film was released and remember that there was heaps of controversy at the time. Ambulances and police were rushing to theatres because people were fainting and screaming with hysteria. In some extreme cases priests were called. I know that the film was back in theatres a while ago and my partner and I went to see it again with our nephew and niece. They were both in their twenties back then and I recall them laughing all the way through the film. I guess times and tastes have changed. The book is great and the original film too, whatever the younger generation may think. The new TV series is good though, I must admit. I think it stars Ben Daniels as the priest.??

Lyn says

Boil it all down and The Exorcist by William Peter Blatty is about faith.

There is the demonic possession of Regan McNeil and the horrors that are described as a part of that invasion, the night and day distinction between a young girl and the maniacal, infernal force that changed her.

Also fascinating to read is the reactions of the family and friends of the girl and the forced dynamic of this group experiencing such an outrage. Then there is the psychological questions, the detective work piecing all

the fragments of evidence together and even a couple of interesting sub-plots. There is the great struggle between the elder exorcist and his devilish foe.

But what drives this work; the central focus is not the blasphemy going on in Regan's bedroom, but the spiritual conflict taking place within Father Karras. Blatty has crafted an intricately complete allegory about the modern divergence between strictly rational scientific thought and the traditional ideas about faith and religion. Karras, a Jesuit priest who is also a Harvard trained psychiatrist, is the living embodiment of this diametric clash, not between good and evil but between uncompromising faith and logically defined scientific knowledge. Karras wants the possession, wants to know that a demon has taken up residence in the child, because this will be his definitive sign from God that his faith is real.

Finally, in the peaceful words of Father Merrin, the exorcist, Karras finds absolution from his doubts. The obscene heresies graphically described by the author will keep most people of faith away, but for those who can get through this well-written work of speculative fiction, the result may be a strengthening of faith.

Rinda Elwakil says

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5-5-2017

Stephen says

A masterpiece...unqualified, unadulterated and unequaled.

How better to describe the definitive, **40th Anniversary** edition of one of **THE** classic horror novels of the **20th century**...rendered in audio format and narrated with passion, verve and pitch-perfect delivery by **William P. Blatty** himself.

I've seen both the original and extended, remastered versions of *The Exorcist* several times and believe it ranks among the finest horror films ever made. Until this week, I had never read the source novel. Now that I

have, let me add to the film's list of accolades that it's also one of the best film adaptations of a classic novel that I have experienced (along with *The Princess Bride* and *No Country for Old Men*).

I'm going to test the limb and walk out onto it by assuming that most people, even if for some inexplicable or metaphysical reason have not either read the book or seen the movie, are familiar enough with the basic plot that I can dispense with any fear of spoilers. A sweet, pre-teen girl gets **soul-jacked** by a demon and proceeds to expel various manner of noxious excreta from her various orifices while hurling more barbs and insults than a Don Rickles standup routine. Throw in a grizzled exorcist, a dogged detective and a Jesuit priest with serious mommy issues whose suffering a crisis of faith and you've got the playbill for this diabolical dance of dread.

Thus, without worrying about spoilage, I am going to mention briefly what struck me most about the book and then finish with a quick "compare and contrast" describing where I thought the film and the novel, respectively, were the superior product.

First and foremost, the single most impressive aspect of the book for me was the dense, lushly, beautiful prose employed by Blatty while converting this story from mind to paper. Given that Blatty did not become a prolific author (to my knowledge at least), I always assumed that the novel was standard fare that had just received a fabulous hollywood makeover into a successful film. Not only was I all the way wrong, but the film actually loses the rich psychologically melodramatic flavor of Blatty's verse. In the novel, everything is hyper real and a casual look or a fleeting feeling might be imbued with vast significance. A little like an updated version of Lovecraft meets Tolstoy meets Kafka. I thought it was wonderful and attained the rank of esteemed literature in my opinion. A heart-felt **BOO-YAH** to Mr. Blatty for his slick, stylish sentencings.

Okay, let's compare and contrast shall we....

Movie was Better than the Book:

(***Warning: shots from the film below may be shocking to some***)

The visual effects employed in the movie were so **megascreeam** scary at a gut level that they had my **twig and berries** crawling up my tummy to **nuzzle** against my liver. Thus, most of the following are moments in which the written word of Blatty just couldn't compete on the terror scale with the film. Beginning with:

1. The Face of Evil: The transformation of nice, innocent Linda Blair into one of the foulest, **fugliest** freak shows in film history is something that the book could not adequately convey.

The mismatched, demonic eyes...the pasty, cracked and **scrobiculated** skin, the raspy "*Barry White with a head cold*" voice...it's enough to cause temporary motor ataxia. The book, as good as it was, could not match this kind of visual perfection for visceral terror.

2. The "Crucifix" Scene: We all know the scene I'm talking about so let's not belabor the point and allow this to slide into something we might all regret.

Let's all just back away and proceed without further comment, except maybe a cringing "**ouch baby, very**

ouch."

3. The "Owl Head" scene: Up next after "*the #1 thing never to do with a Crucifix*" is the immediately following scene in which little Regan does the full 360 degree, spine-defying glance around. I almost dropped my digesting dinner when I first saw it:

If you are ever feeling irregular, this scene works better than a bran muffin and cup of coffee.

4. The "Crab Walk" scene: Only in the "extended" version, this bit of demonic gymnastics really **shivered my timbers**:

5. Three words: Max Van Sydow:

Nuff said.

The Book was Better than the Movie:

In general, in almost every particular beyond the items mentioned above, the book was superior to the film and in some cases vastly so. Here are just the top reasons that come to mind.

1. Again, the Writing: I know, I know...I mentioned this above but dammit it really is that good. Blatty's prose sucks you in with his vivid, impassioned prose that employs "over the top" nuance to make every step in the story feel like a necessary, critical piece of the puzzle. I can understand some feeling smothered by the narrative, but I found it enthralling.

2. The Demon: This was one of several key pieces of information that did not translate well on the screen. The film leads the audience to believe that the demon possessing Regan is Satan himself. This is based in the quote: "I'm Father Karras" and the response "and I'm the Devil." However, the book goes on to make clear that the demon is actually just that...a demon named Pazuzu. This ties into the beginning of the film.

3. Is it Real?: The movie leaves no doubt that Regan was possessed and that she is saved when the demon jumps ship into Father Karras before the "now possessed" priest does a Greg Louganis out of the window. While mostly free from doubt, the novel does a superb job of leaving just enough of a crack open so that the question is never completely answered. I thought this added a substrate of eeriness to the story.

4. Father Dyer and Detective Kinderman: I may be one of the few people that loved Exorcist III (not to be confused with the visual turd known as Exorcist II). One of my favorite aspects of E3 was the witty banter and close friendship between Father Dyer and Bill Kinderman (played by George C. Scott). Turns out a chunk of their dialogue came from this book and their relationship is developed to a significant extent in these pages. Major bonus for me.

5. The Smell and Sound of Evil: Just as the book could not compete with the visual perfection of the film, the film could not (for obvious reasons) come close to imbuing its telling with the stench described in the novel. The number of times Regan befouls her bed and deposits her insides as an act of belligerence towards Regan's mom or the priests is an aspect of the novel that adds to the vileness of the demon inhabiting this sweet little girl. Also, the dialogue is far more severe in the book than the movie could likely have gotten

away with at the time.

6. Satanic Worship: One fascinating aspect of the novel that was completely cut from the film is the in depth and detailed depiction of Satanic worship and some of the disgusting, sacrilegious practices performed at black masses. This was almost wholly absent in the film but made for compelling reading.

Overall, I loved the movie but think the novel far surpasses it in its artistic merit. It is a true classic and one that I can not give a stronger recommendation for fans of horror.

This was a special and very memorable experience. Thank you, Mr. Blatty.

5.0 stars. HIGHEST POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION!!!

Delee says

THE EXORCIST is on quite a few of my favorite lists.

I have read this book once before, and I own- and have watched the movie numerous times. This time I listened to the audio book.

It is my favorite movie poster.

It has one of my favorite "the making of" documentaries. It's in my top ten favorite movie list, and top five favorite horror movie list...and now that I have listened to the audio book. Favorite audio book...by far.

William Blatty's voice is like butter...slathered on the perfect horror filled bagel with cream cheese.

Georgetown, Washington:

Chris MacNeil- an actress, and her young daughter- Regan- are living in Georgetown, while Chris is filming a movie. And everything is going along hunky dory until Regan starts playing around with the Ouija board from the attic.

Regan starts receiving messages from Captain Howdy- who at first, Chris sees as a harmless invisible playmate..until frightening things start happening in Regan's room.

After a party at the Georgetown home- Chris cannot ignore the fact that something horrible is going on in her house, and with her once so innocent daughter.

..and when a person close to her is killed- she knows she must do something drastic- and seek help from people she never would have dreamed of asking before.

THE EXORCIST- I can't recommend it enough. The movie...the book, and now the audio book. Go!! Now!! Watch! Read! Listen! I beg of you.

Maureen says

Scared the heck out of me !!

Ginger says

I'm not going to go too much into a review of this book. I'm sure most of you have seen the movie.

If you found the movie scary, the book is more horrifying in some ways. I think it's because your imagination is in overdrive. There were scenes in the book that had me cringing, gasping and I was totally creeped out. Also, the description of Black Mass was disturbing and I was on Wiki to look up more information. Holy Catholic hell?!

High point of the book for me: All conversations with the demon and the slow, devastating change of Regan. Jiminy Christmas!

Low point of the book for me: Lieutenant Kinderman (just couldn't get into the character) and too much information on Father Karras's background. I'm not sure why I didn't want his background. I guess I just wanted him to finally get to the action of saving Regan. I'm sure I'm in the minority on this one because the backstory was crucial to his faith.

The movie at the end scared the bejesus out of me, but not as much with the book. So because of this, I'm giving the book 4.5 stars instead of the full 5. The Hollywood special effects at the end of the movie must have really scared the shit out of me.

Overall, The Exorcist is a creepy and chilling classic. I really enjoyed this book and this is a must read for horror lovers!
