



The House on Tradd Street

Karen White

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Practical Melanie Middleton hates to admit she can see ghosts. But she's going to have to accept it. An old man she recently met has died, leaving her his historic Tradd Street home, complete with housekeeper, dog, and a family of ghosts anxious to tell her their secrets.

Enter Jack Trenholm, a gorgeous writer obsessed with unsolved mysteries. He has reason to believe that diamonds from the Confederate Treasury are hidden in the house. So he turns the charm on with Melanie, only to discover he's the smitten one...

It turns out Jack's search has caught the attention of a malevolent ghost. Now, Jack and Melanie must unravel a mystery of passion, heartbreak, and even murder.

The House on Tradd Street Details

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Author : Karen White

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From Reader Review The House on Tradd Street for online ebook

Mary says

I have found a new favorite author, and her name is Karen White! I picked this e-book up through my local library without reading the full description, and after I read the summary I thought it would be silly. I love any books placed in the south, and Charleston especially was great, but Melanie can see ghosts..I thought oh no another attempt at a spooky chick lit I see dead people story. I gave it a chance and was immediately drawn in. Funny, well written, great characters, and so compelling I had a hard time putting it down. The ghosts were not silly, or dopey, or cartoonish. They were real, one loving and one really really mean. The story line was not predictable, I thought I had several things figured out but was wrong (I did figure out the fountain, but hey, I'm allowed). I have already borrowed Tradd Street #2 and am looking forward to another enjoyable tale from Ms White.

skein says

Barely readable. But that might just be me. I know - to my horror and disgust - that there *is* a market for pseudo-ghost-story-romance-Southern-literature.

Mellie is a Modern Woman with daddy issues (alcoholic ne'er-do-well) AND mommy issues (abandonment). Also, she happens to see/communicate with ghosts, in a consistent and improbable way (conversations). Also, she sells old houses, even though old houses make her want to retch from the layers of ghost droppings, and she cannot even touch an old photo album without wearing heavy plastic gloves. Also, a random old man makes her the beneficiary of his old house and traps her into living there. Also, the wildly sexy, wildly successful young writer who just happens to be writing a book about the *mystery!* occurred in her house. Also, the wildly sexy writer just happened to be the son of her mother's BFF.

Also: Confederate gold! ginormous diamonds! A love triangle! Murder! Mystery! Mayhem! Cool 1920's outfits! A mysterious fountain in the back yard that doesn't work for some mysterious reason! *Mystery!!*

And a hefty dose of *aww-shucks!* Southern charm. Apparently it doesn't work on Yankees. I was totally unmoved.

I will stop reading crap books. I will.

Diane S ? says

I enjoyed these Tradd Street house reads. Good mixture of romantic suspense, secrecy reveals and the past coming alive to influence the future.

Serena says

Karen White's The House on Tradd Street is part romance, part ghost story, part mystery. The narration of this novel grips the reader with its beautiful descriptions of South Carolina and the historic neighborhoods of

Charleston. Melanie Middleton specializes in historic home sales, though she hates historic homes and believes those who buy historic homes are saps willing to waste thousands of dollars on renovations. Fate brings her into the home of Mr. Vanderhorst, who asks Melanie if she saw a woman in the garden. He suddenly dies and leaves her his home.

Melanie is given a historic home and the money to renovate and repair it from the Vanderhorst estate. There are a great cast of characters in this book from Mr. Vanderhorst to his mother's ghost and Melanie, her father, and Jack Trenholm. Melanie is a barracuda in the real estate world, but her inability to relate to her family or male companions hampers her ability to widen her horizons. Meanwhile, Jack uses his good looks and fame to woo women to his side and charm them out of information so he can uncover historical mysteries and publish novels. His charm and good looks, on the other hand, are just a cover.

The restoration at Tradd Street begins, and Melanie is overwhelmed by her responsibilities and the two attractive men that have fallen into her life--Marc Longo and Jack Trenholm. In spite of the restoration, Melanie gets wrapped up in the mystery surrounding Mr. Vanderhorst's mother's disappearance and the ghosts that haunt her new home.

White easily draws the reader into the beauty of Charleston and her ghost mystery. The intricate relationships between these characters are complex, and in spite of the convenient connections between Melanie's family, the Vanderhorsts, and the Trenholms in a big city like Charleston, I was enveloped in the storyline.

The mystery doesn't get heavy with humor sprinkled in. The interactions between Melanie and Jack is contagious and will make readers smile.

I recommend this book to those who love a good mystery and a good ghost story. Stay tuned tomorrow for Karen White's guest post on the writing and publishing process.

Becky Morlok says

Reading this book was like being 12-years old again (with more adult themes of course) and disappearing into a Nancy Drew book. This was my second Karen White book (On Folly Beach was the first - 5*'s), both perfect summer reads. I was dreading the finish of Tradd Street as I would miss this pleasure - until I realized at the end that she included the first chapter A SEQUEL: The Girl on Legere Street. OH YES! My fingers immediately located it on amazon.com!

I signed up for White's mailing list, FaceBook page and website. On her website she lists her favorite book recommendations. Imagine my surprise and pleasure when I discovered that the next book up on my list to read, Fireworks Over Toccoa by Jeffrey Stepakoff is on her current list! My daughter-in-law gifted me an autographed copy for my birthday.

So....off I go!!!!

Miriam says

The opening of the book caused me to fear that White had aspirations toward Literature:

Pewter reflections of scarlet hibiscus colored the dirt-smudged windows of the old house, like happy memories of youth trapped inside the shell of an old man. The broken pediments... And there are immediate intimations of Dark Family Secrets, parental abandonment, etc that have left our protagonists alone, rootless, approaching middle age.

But this fear was unfounded. Literary pretensions exhausted, White quickly took a turn for the chick-lit-ish. And I do mean that in a bad way. Despite being on the verge of 40, Melanie is cute! and thin! despite eating doughnuts and lattes every morning! And she cares about clothes! And has an annoying new-agey arty Best Friend! Most chick-lit-ish of all (and this is why I seldom read chick lit) she is a twit. As is far too common in this genre, we are *told* that Melanie is a successful Realtor (the author capitalizes this, so I will too), competent and independant. But this is not what we are shown. What we see is a woman who forgets to set her alarm, is always off-balance, doesn't speak up or assert herself when the situation warrants it, can't manage her secretary, and blushes and stutters like a teenager when she talks with attractive men. The male lead so far seems like the typical arrogant jerk. He makes inappropriately sexual comments to strange women with whom he should have a professional relationship. "But he's so hot!" Is this really how most adult women interact with the opposite sex? From the first he calls Melanie by a diminutive, and when she finally, weakly, tries to protest, he responds, "But you look like a Mellie." What the hell does that mean? You look like someone I can talk down to? I guess jerk-off is right about that.

Also, if you have to use a riddle in your book, don't for the love of Oedypus use take the Riddle of the Sphinx! Anyone who can read complete sentences knows this riddle, and having your characters pretend to have never heard it before just makes them look dumb.

I did want to know about the ghost and the Secret of the Old House but not badly enough to keep reading this.

C. says

“**The House On Tradd Street**” is outside **Karen White’s** norm. Fortunately, she made a series of it! Nattering reviews nearly talked me out of this book. To the contrary: this is the rare kind of novel I’ve been longing to read! Know this: ghost fiction for adults is rare. I don’t want vampires, demons, nor a “young adult” protagonist. I want a big old house to explore and really mystical encounters. **Karen** excels at three-dimensional people with long reaches to the past. Melanie is a real estate agent, wondering why a gentleman is waxing personal; instead of selling his multi-generation home. His Dad was buddies with her Grandpa, thus he bequeaths it to her. He includes a request that she find out why his Momma vanished in the 1930s.

The hallmark of superb plotting shows, when a lot of work, from numerous angles, goes into an investigation. Telling papers and people might be encountered but we cannot call the resolution an instant giveaway. Readers don’t want a flawless Nancy Drew type either. Melanie has an attitude about antiquity I don’t share, about newness being lucrative. That opinion would be annoying. if we weren’t shown that her Momma’s departure severed her appreciation of having roots. She’s undeniably grumpy but clearly has heart. Endearred friends lovingly ignore the grouching.

Her Daddy assists her restoration, with the son of her Momma’s best friend. Roots are all over Charleston. Her receptionist and best friend are hilarious. I can’t think of one far-flung character whom **Karen** didn’t construct complexly. This is a gifted author. Better than anything: she grants grownups the treasure-hunting, clue-deciphering quest that HAS NOT EXISTED in our demographic! She carried off the diverse parameters

of her story exceptionally well. It was so rewarding to follow adult protagonists, having encounters with unforgettable ghosts.

Ivonne Rovira says

The House on Tradd Street is a decent enough mystery, if not a great one. The characters, other than Nevin Vanderhorst, never rise above two dimensions. Real-estate agent Melanie Middleton will strike some as a bit dense when, torn between two men, she cannot discern which one is trustworthy and which is not. Long before our protagonists, readers will determine the identity of the menacing ghost on the second floor and guess the final whereabouts of Louisa Vanderhorst and Joseph Longo; however, readers will be curious as to the resolution of the other mystery in the novel, which is more cleverly plotted, and the details of the scandalous disappearance in 1930.

A great book on the level of the best British cozies? Hardly, but the time spent reading Karen White's novel were a pleasant enough diversion, and the final few pages contain the seeds of what's certain to be a sequel. I learned a lot about Charleston in the 1920s, Charleston's unique single houses, and the travails of authentic restoration. Granted, White will never give Dame Agatha Christie a run for her money -- or Barbara Michaels, Gladys Mitchell or Louise Penny, for that matter. Yet, I'm ready to take on the sequel when I'm in a dry spell between other, more favored mystery writers.

Lauren says

The House on Tradd Street

4 Stars

Melanie Middleton is a no-nonsense real estate agent who just happens to see ghosts. Melanie has always managed to push her unusual ability aside until the day she inherits a dilapidated old house from an old man she barely knew. All of sudden, Melanie becomes the center of attention not only from a gorgeous writer obsessed with old mysteries and a wealthy tycoon with connections to the house, but from a pair of spirits who may or may not have malevolent intentions.

Let me begin this review by stating that this book shares many similarities with Amanda Stevens' **Graveyard Queen** series. So if you enjoyed **The Restorer** and **The Kingdom** then this is the book for you.

Melanie is a prickly heroine and her stubborn obstinacy doesn't always endear her. Nevertheless, as the details regarding her difficult childhood emerge, the reasons for her behavior are easier to understand and it becomes possible to both sympathize with and even admire her.

It also takes time to warm up to Jack, who initially comes across as somewhat arrogant and presumptuous, but he is just as damaged as Melanie in his own way and it would seem that they are actually kindred spirits in many respects.

The historical background on Charleston during the Civil War and the prohibition era is fascinating and contributes to the rich atmosphere of the setting and the story. The mystery is a little predictable once the clues start adding up, but it is enjoyable nonetheless and it is fun following along with Melanie and Jack as

they investigate.

The one drawback is the irritating love triangle. Jack and Melanie have strong chemistry, so the appearance of a third wheel only undermines the hints at a romance between them. Moreover, there are times when Melanie needs to be smacked upside the head as she cannot see the truth staring her in the face. Thankfully, this is resolved by the end of the book and will hopefully not resurface in the next.

On a final note, the narration flows smoothly although it does take a minute or two to get used to Aimee Bruneau's Southern accent. She has this tendency of speeding up her speech during the action scenes, which really ratchets up the tension a notch and adds another element of excitement to the scene.

All in all, a satisfying mystery with well-developed characters and excellent attention to detail. Looking forward to reading the next one.

Donnelle says

This book is rife with so many issues and themes that it could have easily become a tangled, unreadable mess. The fact that Karen White was able to deftly handle each and every plot is a testament to her talent as a writer. She was able to tackle everything from ghosts (both of the benevolent and evil varieties) to treasure, betrayals, love, abandonment, and even how one goes about restoring an old house to its former splendor.

Through all of that, White managed to create characters that are deeply flawed, yet also realistic, and the reader winds up truly caring about them as they navigate through traumas and obstacles that not only creep up on them in present day, but also those that befell them in the past.

Even as they deal with pain and loss, their likability shines through, which leads to quite a bit of humor throughout the book. Case in point - the story's protagonist is, on the surface, all about strict organization and efficiency, and the reader quickly finds out that this is part of the defense mechanism that she's relied upon since her incredibly troubled childhood. A less talented writer would have made it pretty difficult to care about Melanie, but White imbues her with so much snark, humor, and quirks - i.e. her love of spreadsheets is second only to her utter devotion to sugar in all of its various forms - that the reader quickly becomes invested in her and her relationships as she deals with (amongst other things) a multitude of ghosts and her desire to solve the mystery of a family's tumultuous, tragic past.

Then, too, Jack is an excellent foil for Melanie. Rather than merely being an exceptionally attractive playboy writer, his charm and humor endear him to readers as he interacts with Melanie, and tries to solve a mystery or two of his own, while he's still reeling from an event that caused him a great deal of emotional pain.

This book was very good on any number of levels - it's both funny and sad at times; the multiple mysteries are all interesting and suspenseful; and the ghosts run the gamut from being heartwarming to exceedingly creepy and dangerous. It is truly a great book, and it serves to make readers eager to follow Melanie and Jack through their next adventure(s).

Amy says

This book was given to me by a non-reader friend, who is a friend of the author. She was very excited to recommend a book to me, yet also apologetic that it probably wasn't "the kind of thing you usually read" (Ha! She's obviously never taken a look at my eclectic shelf!)

There were things I both liked and didn't like about the book. Liked that it was set in Charleston, in an area that is within a block of where javaczuk works. And that the two main houses mentioned were on streets I'm *really* familiar. (I had a high school sweet heart who lived just down the street from one of the houses. My heart skipped a beat when I thought at first the address was his.) The story was a little obvious and a little sappy. Melanie is a bit of an idiot where men are concerned, but many of us are at times, so I can't fault her too much. Annoyed the crud out of me that it's such an obvious set up for a sequel. But hey. At least this one can stand on its own, so I don't *have* to read it.

Julie says

The House on Tradd Street by Karen White is a 2008 NAL publication.

This year I have made some changes to my reading habits by cutting back on review copies, which can introduce me to new authors and genres, but can also cause me to miss out on some really good books, too.

Karen White is one of those authors that I have been missing out on and so I decided to get with the program and check out a few of her novels.

This book is the first in a four book series, set in Charleston, South Carolina.

Melanie is an obsessive compulsive, but very successful real estate agent, hoping to land the listing for an old, storied home in the area. But, when Melanie meets with the current owner, she feels a connection to the old man whose mother abandoned him as a child, like her mother abandoned her. But, the man believes his mother loved him and the house, which makes throws doubt on the rumors that she left her husband and child for another man.

While visiting the home, Melanie also discovers her sensitivity to the dead is very strong, when she sees a ghost or two. But, the real shock comes when the owner passes away suddenly and leaves the house, all its contents, and a sizable sum of money for repairs, to Melanie.

To make things more interesting, Melanie is contacted by a writer, Jack Trenholm, who claims to be writing a book about the house and the family who owned it all these years.

Although Melanie doesn't really want to keep the house, especially since the will states she must reside there for one year before she can sell, she decides to meet the challenge and even allows Jack to stay on the premises while he does research for his book.

On a more personal note, Melanie is coping with her father's alcoholism, hoping against hope he can stay

sober this time around, even if she should know better by now.

Who are the ghost who live in the house on Tradd Street? Can Melanie solve a decades old mystery? Can Jack be trusted or does he have his own agenda? Is Melanie in danger?

I have always enjoyed a good ghost story, if it's done right, and this one measured up to my standards quite nicely. I love the southern setting, the rich historical details, and the charm of the old house Melanie inherited. The mystery ties in with Melanie's own family in some ways and of course the circumstances provide Melanie's father an opportunity to set some things right after all these years.

On occasion, the plot got a tad outrageous, and it did become a little too busy sometimes, with Jack's backstory, Melanie's romances, her father's issues, the restorations, and of course the big mystery Melanie felt compelled to solve.

But, by the end of the story, many of these threads were sown up nicely, and the stage was set for the next book in the series, which I already have queued up and am looking forward to finding out what's next for Melanie and what mysteries she will solve next.

4 stars

Erica says

[I had to buy a new (used) car at the end of October. I couldn't afford to get my beloved vehicle fixed again so car payments it is. I'm still pretty upset about it all. My new (used) car is a 2001 VW, one previous owner, upgraded with many whist

Sara says

4.5 stars. This book was beautifully written and had a great plot that kept me interested. Melanie is a realtor in Charleston whose specialty is selling historical houses; she, however, does not like these old houses because she has always had the unwanted ability to see ghosts, who assemble in greater numbers around historical places. When a client dies and surprises Melanie by leaving her his entire estate, Melanie is forced to live in the old house and work on restoring it while doing her best to ignore the spirits she feels around the house. She has also been tasked by the previous owner to find out the truth behind his mother's disappearance years ago, hoping to clear her name after a smear campaign. A local mystery writer, Jack, who's as handsome as he is insistent that her house is the setting for his next book, joins Melanie's team working on the house and begins to help - and annoy - her as she searches for answers.

Like I said, the writing in this book is really strong. I felt like I was in Charleston - or at least could imagine it clearly - and everything was brought to life in a really vivid way. There were also some funny one-liners in the dialogue. The characters were likable, and the story was interesting and kept me guessing as to what had happened and what *would* happen.

My only two complaints:

1. The back cover of the book gives away a plot twist - not a major one, but still. I like to be surprised.
2. I hate it when *everyone* can see something but the main character. Her friends are telling her something is true, the reader can see they're right, and yet the main character refuses to believe it and does dumb things anyway... until (surprise, surprise) her friends are proven right. That is always quite frustrating, to not fully understand why the main character is acting so, well, stupid when it seems so obvious!

But despite my complaints, I really enjoyed this book and will be eagerly picking up the sequel when it comes out this fall.

the_cat says

I don't usually write reviews but this time my head is spinning.

Where to start?

First: editor. Is it that difficult or expensive to find one? The book is full of inconsistencies like drinks changing from one minute to the next or they being in the car and next line somewhere else. And she complains about losing sight, (in a word she can't see an elephant if it steps on her toe) but refuses to wear glasses. Still, that's not a problem to read all kind of letters, diaries and articles. I won't comment on the order in which they start the restoration of the house. ****cries**** And where did the pigeons infestation go??

Second: Our heroine. Did the author pick a book on Psychology and dump on her half a dozen random mental problems? To make her... what? More real? Not by a long shot. Melanie is one of those people who can't see or say anything positive. Everything is old or dirty, or cracked, or expensive to keep, or an annoyance. She is in permanent denial. She is obsessive compulsive. She can't stay in a chair without some nervous tick. She is a compulsive liar... But hey, most of her problems go away in around 250 pages and she even descends from her cloud to buy her first pair of jeans. She is 39 by the way. You should read the part of her weeding the garden wearing heels and pearls. And. She judges men by their taste in tailoring. (!!!)

OK I had to say all that because she kept reminding me of a series of people I've known and disliked in my life. I've met the always negative person. I've met and got wearied of the compulsive liar. I've met the person who thinks everything old is crap. I don't want to read about any of them.

The paranormal part: Melanie sees ghosts but denies it all the time even although everybody around her knows it. I think she doesn't deserve those friends who can ignore her lies. Of course when she is lied to she has a one week tantrum. :0 I liked how the ghosts walk around. And I loved her grandmother still phoning her after 34 years in the cemetery. Cool :)

The mystery part: Very good. It kept me wondering to the last page. It saves the book and now I'm curious about the next one. 3 stars.

