



The Haunted

Niki Valentine

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Arriving in the Scottish highlands, Martin and Sue decide to escape their luxury hotel, heading out for a night of back-to-basics living in an abandoned shack. When a storm strikes, they find themselves stranded. As gentle bickering leads to violent arguments, Sue starts to sense they are not alone.

The Haunted Details

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Author : Niki Valentine

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From Reader Review The Haunted for online ebook

Michael Mckean says

An excellent horror, though got a little repetitive. The descriptions of the 'man' and the 'presence' had me on the edge of my seat!

Karin Muller says

What would you expect when you read on the cover of a book “They wanted a Honeymoon adventure. They found a place of nightmares. A guaranteed Halloween hit! “? If you’re anything like me, you’d expect a book you definitely don’t want to read alone in bed. Shouldn’t a horror book pull you in? Making you a bit reluctant to read on but you just can’t wait to know how it’ll end at the same time? The Haunted, I’m sorry to say, didn’t have that pull. On the contrary, it was a painful read for all the wrong reasons.

The story in a nutshell: Martin and Sue leave their luxury hotel with romantic thoughts of spending a night together in an abandoned bothy in the Scottish Highlands. When a storm strikes, they find themselves stranded in the hut, completely isolated and with no way of escape. They’re desperately trying to hold on to their sanity while their thoughts turn murderous.

The problem with this book is the indecisiveness of the writer. She sells a horror story, but it reads like a story about a marriage gone bad. There is nothing romantic about the relationship of Sue and Martin. If anything is horror in this book, it is the marriage. If Niki Valentine would have left out the one scene which could have been described as horror, the book would have been just that. A book about a far from happy marriage.

Her main character, Sue, is as indecisive as her creator, alternating between romantic and or loving feelings - that just don’t add up if you get to know more about her marriage - and resentment towards her husband. Because of that it’s hard to believe in her sincerity. You just want to slap her for not listening to her instincts. But that’s not all: the story simply unfolds too slow. Somewhere in the middle of the book I caught myself thinking: this could have been one hell of a short story, because truly, the idea of the story is great! But someone should be brave enough to tell the author that sometimes deleting is best. A good editor, who points out the contradictions wouldn’t hurt the story either. If you want to read about a marriage gone sour, please, be my guest and read and learn. But if you want a good horror story, one which makes you reluctant to walk your dog after midnight, you better refrain from this one.

Scout Dawson says

www.scoutdawson.com / www.dinewithdeath.com

Full review here: <http://www.dinewithdeath.com/scoutdaw...>

According to the inside of the back cover, Niki Valentine is a pseudonym for the “award winning” author Nicola Monaghan. I have not read any other works by Niki/Nicola, but after what I endured with The Haunted, I am unsure that I will bother checking out her other works.

The Haunted has a lot of problems, and it's going to be difficult to go through them all without this review sounding as all over the place as the novel does. However, I will try my best.

First of all, I have never personally reviewed an author badly for having a 'stupid' character (one of the largest causes of one-star reviews, I've noticed). Sometimes, people behave stupidly and do things that defy logical, sensible reason. It's rather brave and potentially quite clever to inject a character of such ill awareness into your story. However, I don't think that Susie (the wife of our main couple) is actually stupid. I just think that she's poorly written.

Sarah says

Awful, predictable waste of a tree.

Alexandra says

I have to say this book was a major disappointment. I was expecting more supernatural elements. Martin was a vile character. Why on earth Susie stayed with him is beyond me. Susie was an annoying character too. First of all not wanting to stay at the bothy. Then not wanting to leave . Because she thought her dead teenaged boyfriend had come back to her, at long last.

Carmen says

I really enjoyed this book, hubby kept saying to read it so I did in just 2 days..I couldn't put it down...very different than I normally read ..give it a try..

Jess Twibey says

Chapter two had the word susie nearly 50 times, it was driving me crazy, add to that the couple are annoying and self centred and just pitiful, I only managed like 5 or 6 chapters before giving up on the book before I gave up on life.

Ni says

If you wonder about the dark peaty side of the Scottish Highlands then this book is for you. If you like happy romances in mountainous settings then stay away. This literary psychological thriller earns its place as a page turner through its intelligent writing and detailed main characters. Niki almost pulls off the laid back husband Martin who suggests a couple of days in a crofter's hut as an adventure. Niki's literery persona takes a bleak view of human nature so trouble inevitably looms. We watch through Susie's eyes as events become increasingly uncanny fuelled by isolation, hunger and lack of sleep. Martin and Susie's deep traumas constantly threaten to be disastrously acted out. Niki achieves a claustrophobic mood reminiscent of films made entirely in a phone box. Blair Witch, Hamlet, and possibly Macbeth and Frankenstein are drawn in as

cultural references. A thoroughly well written novel. I withhold one star because the setting feels a tiny bit like a film set [is there an element of parody in the lightning strikes?] because Martin's personality shift stretches my credulity and because the male characters don't exactly endear themselves to me.

Gina says

An unlikable main character and an unconvincing plot made for an unsatisfying read.

Selene says

I actually really enjoyed this book. I didn't think I would at the beginning as I couldn't see where the haunting set in, but from about half way through I couldn't put it down! There were several things that drove me mad - if it had been me I think I would have done anything to get away (that's coz I'm stupid and impatient) rather than hang around in the bothy too long. I also couldn't understand why no one had sent a helicopter out for them. But on the whole I enjoyed it.

Kim Smiley says

Not overly impressed with this book. Another boring read in my opinion when I was looking forward to a thriller.

Sue goes on her 10th anniversary holiday w/ her husband Martin. He's a stuffed shirt and I hate him from the beginning of the book. He wants to go visit this bothy that he went to as a child with his parents. It's in the middle of nowhere and it's a rough hike to get there. But Sue agrees even though she is completely apprehensive about it.

I don't like Sue either. She seems to let Martin push her around from the start. Always worried about upsetting him and having him treat her like crap. Doesn't sound like a wonderful 10 years to me. And because of him, they never had kids because to him there was no reason to bring another living being into such a horrible world.

So these two get to the bothy and Sue immediately keeps seeing things; a man in particular. She feels his touch when Martin isn't there. Martin, starts acting like more of an ass than he already is. All they do is fight and for one reason or another, they can never seem to leave this place.

very slow paced book. Could've finished writing it in way less than 400 pages. I considered it a waste of time.

Carole Tyrrell says

This book was a real disappointment. From its cover and the accompanying blurb I was expecting a good spooky supernatural read. Instead what I got was a very slow paced psychological thriller. At times it had the definite feel of someone wading through treacle whilst wearing diver's boots.

The Haunting is set in the Scottish Highlands near Fort William. Susie and Martin, a middle-aged professional couple are on holiday. Martin decides that they will spend a couple of days and nights staying at a local bothy in the middle of nowhere. He'd stayed there as a child on a family holiday and wants to re-visit it. They set off with a gas stove, torches and provisions to last them during their brief visit, arrive, and settle in.

Then bad weather sets in immediately and they're trapped there with each other. And something else. At first they seemed to be a content couple but, marooned in a wilderness, Susie has time, a lot of time, to reflect on her marriage. It seems to have been in trouble for some time; she regrets not having children and replays memories of a nasty weekend with Martin. Susie does a lot of this and eventually it feels like navel gazing as I'd certainly be a bit more proactive in the bothy situation. Martin appears to be a bully and has taken them on this trip down memory lane with only limited supplies and no back-up plan. But we never hear his viewpoint.

Then strange things begin to happen as Susie feels haunted by a presence within the bothy that seems to want to get up close and personal. She wants, and chooses, to see it as the ghost of an old, dead lover. The camping gas stove and their mobiles disappear and reappear with each accusing the other but, as their food supplies dwindle, they seem content to stay there. Martin goes foraging for leaves and berries and Susie soon begins to feel light-headed and prone to even more fantasies and memories. Martin also seems to be playing psychological games and eventually, very eventually it's finally revealed what happened on that long-ago family holiday and I found myself almost screaming at the page 'And you wanted to go back there when you knew what awaited you?' This provides the meaning to the book's title.

The ending and climax were almost laughable and it seemed to just peter out as if the author, having dragged the reader there at last, had no idea of how to end it.

This book really was slow and I felt that if it was shortened by at least 25% then the pace would be greatly improved and there would be some tension. Susie's endless internal monologues replaced real action and I found myself thinking 'Why are you both prepared to stay there and possibly starve to death?' It felt like a book that didn't quite know what it was and so included an element of the paranormal which didn't convince, a thriller and a psychological study of a bad marriage.

Not a book for anyone looking for a good, chilling supernatural tale as you would be disappointed. I'm not sure if it would work as a thriller due to its sedate pace.

Megan says

Enjoyable thriller. Its not going to change your life, but if you're after an entertaining read give it a go!

Fiona says

Martin and Sue have been married 10 years and decide to take a break in the Highlands. For years Martin has wanted Sue to go hillwalking and stay the night in an old bothy located in the middle of nowhere. He tells her it will be a romantic adventure and leaving the luxury of their hotel they set off armed with enough food, clothes etc for a one or two night stay.

Sue isn't keen on the idea, she feels troubled at the thought of it but can't put her finger on what is bothering her but to please her husband she goes. Bad weather hits and they find themselves stranded with no means of escape until the weather settles. At first it seems like an adventure indeed but soon the normal arguments couples have turn to something worse with violent thoughts and murder in mind. Sue has the sensation that a presence not of this world is there and controlling both their thoughts and actions. Martin laughs it off being the "sensible" party in the relationship.

With supplies quickly depleting and objects mysteriously disappearing can they keep it together and return home unscathed?

The blurb describes it as a read that will chill you to the bone and I am afraid it didn't do this to me. It was a psychological thriller in the loosest of terms, both characters I didn't warm to. Martin is a bully and Sue way too spineless for my liking but a reasonable read all the same.

Hannah says

This book was quite odd, and I couldn't get into it. SO, as much as I hate giving up on a book, I had to after about 4 chapters because I wasn't enjoying it.
