



# The Mephisto Waltz

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## **The Mephisto Waltz** Fred Mustard Stewart

"Paula and Myles Clarkson's luck was in the ascendant. After a period of depression following his resounding failure as a concert pianist, Myles had decided, with Paula's encouragement to turn to a career in writing. Now the free-lance assignments that would finance his work on a novel were beginning to come in, among them a journalist's dream - the chance to interview the internationally celebrated pianist Duncan Ely. Astonishingly, the notoriously difficult Duncan warms toward him, sensing perhaps in Myles' love for music - and in his extraordinary pianist's hands - a kindred soul. The Mephisto Waltz is a spellbinder of a novel - a novel that makes Rosemary's Baby look like child play." The book was made into a major motion picture released in 1971 starring Alan Alda, Jacqueline Bisset and Curt Jurgens

## **The Mephisto Waltz Details**

Date : Published 1969 by Coward-McCann

ISBN : 9780718106928

Author : Fred Mustard Stewart

Format : Hardcover 256 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction, Mystery, Suspense, Fantasy, Thriller

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## From Reader Review The Mephisto Waltz for online ebook

### Alexandra says

pretty creepy

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### Lynda says

I have to say that I'm surprised that there are a significant number of people who enjoyed this book. I chose to read this book after reading Fred Mustard Stewart's "Century" which is in no way similar to the suspense filled genre of "The Mephisto Waltz." I had watched "Rosemary's Baby" several years ago and it struck me, while reading "The Mephisto Waltz" how similar the movie and book were. They weren't exactly on point but the journey to find clues and the existence of the cult truly made me think of "Rosemary's Baby." I found the plot moved far too fast to really make the book scary and thought Stewart did such an amateur job in creating the characters. I did find it amusing how Myles, one of the main characters, was a novelist who was writing a story on a family that followed them through several periods as this seems to allude to Stewart's own life and his writing of "Century."

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### Rebecca McNutt says

Incredibly disturbing and unsettling book, definitely a well-written horror novel although the plot wasn't the most original. I loved the haunting moments and writing style.

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### Jewell says

Loved this book as a young teen. Enjoyed it as an adult.

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### Diana Fearn says

I've seen the movie years ago, and just the other day, but it pales in comparison to the book! The Mephisto Waltz is a fairly quick read, but it was full of details, right to the very end. Mr. Stewart's writing is through, yet easy to read. Although the movie was unnerving it doesn't capture the story in its entirety. I don't want to give away the plot, but what I will say is read this book!

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### Helen Azar says

In the great style of Ira Levin (one of my favorite psychological thriller authors), this book is fast paced and suspenseful. A treat for any conossieur of the genre.

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### **Katey says**

This was my first Fred Mustard Stewart and I immediately fell in love. Check out my blog for more details: [kateyreads.wordpress.com](http://kateyreads.wordpress.com)

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### **Fishface says**

This was such a good read that I plowed straight through in a few hours. I will definitely be reading this one again. Great late-Sixties period piece, wonderfully written, terrific suspense and -- until you get to the end - almost exactly the same feel to it as ROSEMARY'S BABY.

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### **Boris Cesnik says**

Sometimes I complain some books should have got edited down more, but this time I don't know why but I sense the publisher must have slashed one of two sentences or maybe entire paragraphs off too much. There are a couple of passages, particularly in the middle of dialogues and descriptions that must be missing. Nevertheless I loved the book and gulped down in a blink of an eye. Its language is mellifluous and the story a winning page turner. Eventually you can't avoid comparing it to other similar and more popular books written over that decade. It's not on the same level as Rosemary's Baby but it does share some good old 60's chilly scenes with it.

If the music, the piano, that specific sonata, the masks, the ritual etc were given more attention and a definite central role in the story, it could have raised the book to a whole new level. Where it lacks in atmosphere it makes up for suspense and entertainment.

And let's not forget! Finally a good old traditional ending! I missed you!

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### **Grady Hendrix says**

“Who are these people of the occult? How long does it take them to drive a woman out of her mind?” Fred is a trained concert pianist, which is why the only parts of this book that have any conviction are the piano playing scenes. Satanism book written by someone whose knowledge of the occult doesn't extend past *TIME* magazine covers, it was sold with a flexi-disc 45rpm of Liszt's titular "Mephisto Waltz," which is probably the most interesting thing about it.

“Oh, God...but there is no God! There is only Satan!”

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### **Lobstergirl says**

This is a totally cheesy 1969 horror novel, along the lines of Rosemary's Baby and The Exorcist. I devoured it with equal parts enjoyment and chagrin. It's wonderfully dated - the protagonists are thrilled with their

newly renovated kitchen and its *blue vinyl countertops* - and effusively sprinkled with the most ghastly product placements. Myles and Paula Clarkson smoke TarGard Viceroy's, use a Chemex coffeemaker, drink Diet Rite Cola, someone drives an XK-E (it's assumed we know, until the next page reveals, that's a Jaguar), someone's mother is described as a "Lady Clairol blonde." Paula wears Shalimar, her nemesis Roxanne wears Joy. Lots of sherry is drunk, but only specific brands. My favorite sentence (I still have no idea what it means, since Arthur Treacher to me just means horrible, frightening, marine fast food) is "He's so stuffy he makes Arthur Treacher look *sportivo*." It's written with many explicit stage directions, along the lines of "Paula moved to the window and looked pensive," almost as if Fred Mustard Stewart had in mind selling it to a movie studio. Which happened, it was made in 1971 with Alan Alda and Jacqueline Bisset and *I must see it*.

I won't reveal any spoilers but the basic plotline is that Myles Clarkson is a failed concert pianist who has had to fall back on writing as a career. He gets an interview with famous pianist Duncan Ely, whose chilliness evaporates when he sees how large Myles's hands are. Ely and his daughter Roxanne befriend Myles and his wife Paula and are massively interested in them and their lives, leading Paula to become suspicious. What do they want? A Faustian bargain, it turns out.

You don't have to know anything about classical piano repertoire to read the novel, but it will enrich the cheesy experience. (Fred Mustard Stewart, like his protagonist, had planned to be a concert pianist and had studied at Juilliard.) What made me suspicious wasn't the demonic happenings as much as Myles's Carnegie Hall program: the Goldberg Variations, followed by the Hammierklavier Sonata, followed by Chopin's Andante spianato and grande polonaise - then intermission? That's somewhere between 1.5-2 hours of music (possibly longer, with repeats), and it's nutty.

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### **Mary Kay says**

This novel taught me early on that I loved a fast plot, a lot of twists, and characters that are pure evil.

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### **John Schmitt says**

Well structured suspense and mystery- interesting confluence of the mystical, supernatural and merely psychological phenomena that keeps you shocked and guessing to the end. Not for the faint-hearted.

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### **Frank says**

Read in the 70s

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### **Thomas Amo says**

Originally I saw the film. Years later when I worked a job where I had a two hour lunch, I found myself spending at least one or two days a week at the used bookstore. When I came across the book I hadn't realized it was a novel. At first I thought it was a book adaptation of the film, but was pleased to find out it

wasn't.

On further research it's interesting to note the author wrote this book after attending Julliard.

I would read this book again.

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