



The Chalice: A Glastonbury Ghost Story

Phil Rickman , Dion Fortune (Prologue by)

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Glastonbury, legendary resting place of the Holy Grail, is a mysterious and haunting town. When Diane Ffitch returns home, it's with a sense of deep unease. As the town becomes increasingly split by violence and death, Diane and her friends face up to the worst of all possibilities: the existence of an anti-Grail—the Dark Chalice.

The Chalice: A Glastonbury Ghost Story Details

Date : Published June 1st 1998 by Macmillan UK (first published April 4th 1997)

ISBN : 9780330342674

Author : Phil Rickman , Dion Fortune (Prologue by)

Format : Paperback 645 pages

Genre : Horror, Fantasy, Supernatural, Fiction, Mystery, Paranormal

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From Reader Review The Chalice: A Glastonbury Ghost Story for online ebook

Peter Clark says

This brings Glastonbury to life in an unexpected way but also unsurprising in its characterisations. I found the central characters very well formulated and brought very much to life in the descriptions of the real places. On my current visit to Glastonbury I found myself looking for the landmarks in this book and felt the need to go and explore more than I have ever wanted to in the past. In the process I discovered the actual grave of Dion Fortune (Violet Mary Firth) thereby adding a multitude of dimensions to this story.

Cara says

Read this many years ago, probably when it was first released in paperback. Lost my copy and pleased to see it on special offer for Kindle. An excellent Glastonbury mystery with lots of supernatural and historical elements. Phil Rickman has gone on to publish the Merrily Watkins series, but this remains my favourite book of his so far.

Jo Hurst says

I have had this book for far too long before getting round to it and it was wonderful. Phil Rickman never disappoints. This was my first stand alone non Merrily Watkins book and I did find myself missing Merrily and co to begin with and the book took a while to get going. However, Phil Rickman has a way of getting you to care for all the characters quite quickly and before long I was immersed in them all. This follows the story of the residents of Glastonbury as they approach the new millennium and dark forces start to show their many sides. It's full of what you would expect, great characters, political comings and going's, slightly crazy people, passionate people, unexplained happenings, creepy buildings, ancient legends and a climax that makes it hard to put the book down. A creepy delight!

Penny Holt says

As with everything that Phil Rickman writes the characters are so real and distinct that you feel them right beside you. Excellent counterpoint to the other-worldliness of all that is going on. Suspenseful.

Ruth Anna Spencer says

Spooky and atmospheric. I love PRs pagan style and a twist I didn't see coming. I trust underaged author, I must read more of his books.

Robin says

This was my first time reading this genre, supernatural thriller, I guess you call it, and I did enjoy it, because it was very much more about the community of various characters who live near Glastonbury than it was about spooky things. I had also visited Glastonbury Tor a number of years ago, so my familiarity with the region made it more interesting.

Wendy says

This started off as an interesting story with many promising threads. It ended up confusing, irrational and very fractured. Maybe reflecting the folk who featured in the novel, but it was a step too far for me. It was well written, with some very amusing passages and some very astute characterisations, but I felt that the plot, at the end, unravelled and sort of petered out. Shame, as I liked another book by this author.

Amy Sheldon says

I've really enjoyed all his other books - for the first 300 pages, he carefully lays everything out, then the suddenly the plot picks up speed and becomes a page turner for another 300 pages. This book, for the very first time, was unbelievably tedious until the last 50 pages. Took everything I had to finish it. Took me two weeks to read it. It should have taken me less than a week, but I just kept putting this book down.

Endless repetition of the same plot turns. Over and over. Ugh.

Kenneth says

The book is well written and draws you in. All the characters come to life yet still there was something missing for me. Maybe it is because the genre of mystical fantasy has never really grabbed me.

I found the scene shifts confusing. The author gives no indication that he is moving on to something else. One line stops in mid conversation and the next is two entirely different people in a different place doing different things. It is obviously a style thing but for me it disrupted the continuity.

I found the relationship development a bit rushed. I know that was not the main thrust of the book but it was still too sudden for me.

Despite all of this I did enjoy the book.

Allison says

Two and a half. I recently remembered that I really liked Phil Rickman and got this from the library. Ugh. Still going to start the Merrilee Watkins series from the beginning, but this was disappointing. Still better

than your run-of-the-mill horror, with well-developed characters that you care about, but the plot was all over the place, the middle dragged majorly and once I ploughed through just to be done the end was rushed and unsatisfying.

Bettie? says

Drescription: Glastonbury, legendary resting place of the Holy Grail, is a mysterious and haunting town. When Diane Ffitch returns home, it's with a sense of deep unease. As the town becomes increasingly split by violence and death, Diane and her friends face up to the worst of all possibilities: the existence of an anti-Grail—the Dark Chalice.

Opening: September 1919: There she was, lying across the bed, stretched out corner to corner, as though this could relieve the cramp inside caused by the way she had been used... trifled with and slighted, yes, and humiliated ... as if, as a young woman, she was natural prey, just another hopping bird in the hawk's garden.

Saturday, 15 November 1539, Richard Whiting, the last abbot, was taken to Glastonbury with two of his monks, John Thorne and Roger James, where all three were fastened upon hurdles and dragged by horses to the top of Glastonbury Tor which overlooks the town. Here they were hanged, drawn and quartered, with Whiting's head being fastened over the west gate of the now deserted abbey and his limbs exposed at Wells, Bath, Ilchester and Bridgwater.

- a Welsh mythological figure, the king of the Tylwyth Teg or "fair folk" and ruler of the Welsh Otherworld, Annwn. Described as a great warrior with a "blackened face", Gwyn is intimately associated with the otherworld in medieval Welsh literature, and is associated with the international tradition of the Wild Hunt.

Gwyn ap Nudd is intimately associated with Glastonbury Tor.

The thorn on Wearyall Hill

The Abbey was destroyed by Cromwell for Henry VIII

A full month of Halloween 2015 reads (because I have so many of these on my TBR mountain!):

- #1: 3* Nobody True by James Herbert: fraudio
- #2: 4* The Horror Stories of Robert E. Howard: fraudio
- #3: 1* Brain Child by John Saul: fraudio
- #4: 3* Domain (Rats #3) by James Herbert: fraudio
- #5: 3* The Mourning Vessels by Peter Luther: paperback
- #6: 2* The Doom of the Great City: ebook short-story
- #7: 5* Long After Midnight by Ray Bradbury: fraudio
- #8: 5* The Dead Zone by Stephen King: fraudio
- #9: 3* The Chalice: hardback

#10: ~~WL Seven Gothic Tales~~
#11: 4* Tales of Men and Ghosts: gutenber
#12: 2* Shattered by Dean Koontz: fraudio
#13: 5* The Dunwich Horror: e-book: gutenber
#14: 4* Death At Intervals: paperback
#15: 3* Alone: gutenber
#16: 3* The Shunned House: gutenber
#17: 4* The Thing on the Doorstep
#18: 2* Shadows by Saul: fraudio
#19: CR Precious Cargo: paperback
#20: 2* The Magicians of the Golden Dawn: ebook
#21: 2* The Book of Black Magic
#22: 4* Beyond the Wall of Sleep
#23: 3* The Haunting of Hill House
#24: 2* Inferno
#25: 4* Monkey's Paw
#26: 4* The Pit and the Pendulum
#27: 3* William Wilson
#28: 4* The Moonlit Road and Other Stories
#29: 3* The Black Cat
#30: 4* The Cask of Amontillado
#31: 4* The Tell-Tale Heart
#32: 3* The Devil Rides Out
#33: 3* The Omen (I, II, and III)
#34: 3* Cool Air
"35: 3* Young Goodman Brown

CR The Chalice
4* The Bones of Avalon
4* December
WL The Heresy of Dr Dee

4*The Wine of Angels
4* Midwinter of the Spirit
3* A Crown of Lights

Leanne Hunt says

This fictional account of events in Glastonbury, arguably England's most spiritually aware town, centres around an ancient tor or hill, said to be where Jesus' uncle, Joseph of Arimathia, planted his staff and it sprouted leaves. The main characters are Juanita, a local bookshop owner, and Dianne, the psychic daughter of a powerful landowner. But the story draws in all sorts of townsfolk and people from further afield, such as the scraggly troop of new age travellers who arrive in a broken-down bus, the mystery-obsessed artist who is forever painting the dusk, the stoical housekeeper who guards a spooky house for her deceased master, and

the author who seems to be haunted by the ghost of his grandfather.

While the enormous cast of characters sometimes makes the novel feel overwhelming, the plot is essentially straightforward. A motorway is being planned, and its route is to go directly below the sacred hill. As always, Rickman represents different points of view with sensitivity and skill. The ever-present conflict between those who want to preserve the ancient past and those who want to enable progress is a strong theme throughout, and even if the reader isn't fascinated by the various angles on conservation and change, provides lots of food for thought.

I personally found the portrayal of the various camps of spiritual seekers very interesting and entertaining. This isn't just a story about old versus new; it's about fresh new takes on the old and stodgy old takes on the new. Thoroughly absorbing to the very end.

Diane Dickson says

Well I'll look at Glastonbury differently next time I go!!

This was not one of my favourites from the keyboard of Mr Rickman but it was still a good read. The plot is very complicated and I did get a bit bogged down at times but there is mystery, there is magic, there is blood and gore and there is a rather lovely three legged dog! So much to enjoy.

The final chapters are generally gripping but - like the taped confessions in another book - I found the letters a little bit - oh I don't know - disappointing as a way of rounding things up. I don't know how else it could be done though.

Good stuff.

Michelle says

As usual Phil Rickman delivers... Spooky and a well thought out plot, with plenty of twists and turns... Evil rears its ugly head at the ancient holy earth site of Glastonbury Tor... I have never been, but after reading this I want to... Not for the happy clappy pagan stuff, but just to see it as he sees it... A beautiful place that can be your dream or nightmare depending on what you see in it... I like the fact that he brings JM Powys back from Curfew and his adopted three legged dowsers dog... I always have time for his characters, and can get attached to them, although in all his books he is not afraid to kill off what seems at the time to be central to the story... I enjoy all his books, what got me started on them was the Merrily Watkins series, but the stand alone novels are just as gripping and in some ways darker... If you have never read any of his books you should give one at least a go...

Patrice Hoffman says

This is definitely not my favorite by Phil Rickman but it is still a great read. Once again Phil Rickman has readers in a town Glastonbury where there is a lot of paranormal activity also coinciding with the sudden arrival of New Agers. Amongst the New Age people is Diane Ffitch. She is considered to be a person "prone to imaginative excursions" so it isn't a surprise when she returns to her home town, cloaked as a journalist, traveling with the Pagan Pilgrims.

The reason for most of the turmoil and strife in this town is brought on by the new plans to build a road that will help connect Glastonbury to London. The New Age community does not want this road because it is believed that the Holy Grail is somewhere in this small town. In an effort to solve what's going on before the town implodes, Jaunita (local New Age bookseller) and Joe Powys search for evidence of this Holy Grail. Instead of finding evidence of a Holy Grail, they stumble upon information on it the opposite.

Based off the other books I've read by Rickman, I knew to expect many characters. He uses the small-town creepy atmosphere, and weird residents to his advantage in most novels. I didn't feel this novel expressed what I've come to expect from him. I expect a slow build that is laced with suspense and paranormal activity. Instead I got a lot about a road, a tor, and how chubby Diane was. I could not take one more description of her being fat... SERIOUSLY not one more Chubby.

What Rickman does right in this novel is give us characters that are dimensional and interesting. Juanita was definitely my favorite character and I instantly took notice when the chapter was about her. Although the whole town had a feeling of malaise, she was the only one bold enough to get a grip on this town as well as Diane.

Joe Powys is also a pivotal character who I believe fans of Rickman will remember from Curfew. He's a New Age novelist that is researching old materials from an uncle and stumbles upon evidence of Diane's history and the truth of the Chalice. Usher in the novel's climax which is always pretty worth the 600+ pages.

Ultimately, Rickman does a great job at captivating his audience and holding them in suspense with this novel... some of the time. Although, this isn't my favorite novel by Phil Rickman, I do look forward to reading some more of his novels. Fans of tomes with supernatural flare might want to take a looksee at The Chalice.
