



# Craven Manor

*Darcy Coates*

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## **Craven Manor** Darcy Coates

Daniel is desperate for a job. When someone slides a note under his door offering him the groundskeeper's position at an old estate, it seems too good to be true.

Alarm bells start ringing when he arrives at Craven Manor. The mansion's front door hangs open, and leaves and cobwebs coat the marble foyer. It's clear no one has lived there in a long time.

But an envelope waits for him inside the doorway. It contains money, and promises more.

Daniel is desperate. Against his better judgement, he moves into the groundskeeper's cottage behind the crypt. He's determined to ignore the strange occurrences that plague the estate.

But when a candle flickers to life in the abandoned tower window, Daniel realises Craven Manor is hiding a terrible secret... one that threatens to bury him with it.

## **Craven Manor Details**

Date : Published December 2017

ISBN :

Author : Darcy Coates

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Horror, Fantasy, Paranormal, Fiction, Mystery, Thriller, Ghosts

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## From Reader Review Craven Manor for online ebook

### Shaina says

This was an excellent ghost story. I loved the main character's attitude; although he was a bit naive, Daniel was delightful. It's nice to see his type of character. In a lot of ways he reminded me so much of someone close to me and he was hardworking, so I bonded with him instantly. It was very refreshing. I loved the entire premise and legacy of the family at Craven and the story surrounding it all. I loved reading this a lot. I received an advance copy and read it right away and could not put it down. This is something I would even read again. Everyone has their type of ghost story and this was definitely mine.

This is a clean story, but spooky, full of the paranormal, some mystery and suspense thrown in. Would love if it continued though it ended well.

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### Empress Reece (Hooked on Books) says

This was the first book I've read by Darcy Coates and it was really good!

If you don't like very scary books, no worries, you won't have to sleep with the lights on or anything. It's just a little creepy and there's a few 'hold your breath' and 'make you jump' scenes but nothing over the top.

I'm kind of picky about ghost/ haunted house stories especially the endings but I was pleasantly surprised by this one. It wrapped up nicely and didn't leave you hanging with a million questions which seems to be the case in a lot of the ghost stories I seem to read.

I personally want to read all of her books now including her upcoming release *The Carrow Haunt* which sounds like it's going to be awesome too! My poor TBR is never going to decrease.

Before you stay at Craven Manor though, you need to know the Rules:

*No strangers are allowed onto the property.*

*Do not enter the tower.*

*Do not leave the groundskeeper's cottage between midnight and dawn.*

*Draw your curtains.*

*Keep the door locked. If you hear knocking, do not answer it.*

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### Latasha says

there is some really great scenes here. i really like how some of the characters and scenes are described. The story is good but not really scary. the characters are just fine.

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## **Peter says**

Daniel Kane, is a homeless person, looking for a job. His cousin Kyle takes him in so he can help pay the rent. Daniel works all kinds of odd job to help his cousin pay the bills. One day a note is slip under his door, with some money, and a job offer. Against his better judgment, Daniel decides to take the job. The position is grounds keeper at Craven Manor. Daniel moves into the ground keepers cottage, right behind the crypt. Daniel goes to the manor, and the door is wide open. He also notices, that the outside growth, is way out of control. Cleaning this up, will take along time, for one person. When Daniel enters the manor, there is a note with money, and promise of more. There is also a list of rules, that he must follow, if he wishes to keep his job. Daniel notices, that the inside of the manor is covered in dust. Daniel believes that no one has lived here, in a very long time. One of the rules that Daniel must follow is, that he can't go up in the tower section of the manor. He wonders, what could be up there, that make this off limits. The only living thing, that Daniel has seen in the manor, is a stray cat. Strange things begin to happen around the manor. While outside, he thinks that he see somebody in the tower window. How can this be, no one has lived here for a very long time. Daniel knows that Craven Manor is hiding something. There are many twists, and turns along this bumpy road. The author does a excellent job in developing the characters in this tale. Craven Manor, by far, is one of the best books that I have read by Darcy Coates. I highly recommend this book.

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## **Marie says**

This was another awesome ghost story by author Darcy Coates and I have added it to my favorites shelf.

The mystery begins when Daniel receives a note under his door to become a groundskeeper of an old mansion called "Craven Manor". He is wary of who sent him the note and why they would want him to take care the mansion. But as mysterious as it sounds he sets off to find out if the note is for real or if someone is playing a trick on him.

But it is not a trick as when he arrives at the mansion, he finds there is an envelope inside with strange kind of money. He becomes more intrigued as he also has instructions not to enter certain rooms in the house and to never enter the tower.

The only living creature in the house is a cat which looks kind of poorly, so Daniel decides that he will take up the offer and do what he can around the mansion. He also moves into the groundskeeper's cottage so that he can keep an eye on the estate.

There are loads of twists and turns throughout the book along with plenty of ghostly mystery. Darcy Coates has done it again with pulling haunting stories out of her imagination and taking the reader into her ghostly world. Five stars for this one.

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## **Susan says**

Not as creepy as The Carrow Haunt, but still a very enjoyable book.

Daniel is living with his cousin Kyle in a 2 bedroom apartment. Daniel is glad Kyle let him live with him,

since he was living on the streets before Kyle found him.

Kyle may not be the best roommate, and Daniel still doesn't have a steady job, but he thinks he will get by like this. But his search for a job is not going that well, and he goes hungry a lot since all his money goes to Kyle for rent.

When Daniel finds an envelope on his doorstep addressed to him one day, he isn't sure what to think. The envelope contains a note offering him a job as the groundskeeper of Craven Manor. Daniel is curious enough to go check the place out, but when he sees the isolated dark manor in the middle of the forest, he isn't so sure he wants anything to do with it. But when Kyle tells Daniel they're taking on another roommate who is taking Daniel's room, Daniel has no other choice than to accept the job offer and move out.

To Daniel it looks like Craven Manor hasn't been taken care of in a very long time. He's not sure how anyone can live there. But apparently Bran, the owner of Craven Manor, does.

Daniel finds a letter with instructions to clear out the garden, all the way to the crypt, and some valuable coins. He can live in the groundskeeper's cottage, but he can't go out between midnight and dawn and he should ignore it if someone knocks on his door at night...

This was more creepy than scary. The whole atmosphere was just what I was looking for in a book, even though I wasn't all that scared.

I really liked Daniel and how he dealt everything. I could really feel his desperation and how he felt he had no other choice but to accept the job as groundskeeper for a creepy old house in the middle of nowhere. The fact that he had nowhere else to go added to the whole suffocating atmosphere.

I do have to say that it wasn't as scary as *The Carrow Haunt*, the only other book I've read by Darcy Coates so far. And the end was.. strange. This is not a 'the ghosts are all exorcised and I moved far away from it all' kind of ending. Not that it was bad, it was just different. And I was thinking how things would go for Daniel in the future.

But this was still a very enjoyable book that sucked me in from the first page. I really like Darcy Coates' writing and I can't wait to read more books by her.

(PS, this is not a romance)

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### **Lisa Eirene says**

I don't understand the high ratings and reviews of this book. This book is very poorly written. The concept could have been really interesting but the execution was poor. The characters were flat and unrealistic. The supernatural aspect of the book could be interesting but again, poorly written full of cliches!

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### **Nora Peevy says**

Bran is an endearing character. This book is original and captivating. I read it in one sitting. I loved the cat. ?

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## Amitaf0208 says

Enjoyable however the main character was too gullible and I was frustrated at times at his choices.

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## Paul says

somewhere between 3 & 3.5 stars. some good atmosphere yet i found the writing style so straightforward, which in itself isnt a negative but it wasnt quite as atmospheric as it may have been with a little more flourish. the ending also seemed a little draggy to me but overall an enjoyable read.

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## Kimberly says

**CRAVEN MANOR**, by Darcy Coates, is a supernatural novel with a rather unique scenario. In the beginning, we are introduced to a young man--Daniel Kane--who is searching for odd jobs every day just to survive. His cousin, Kyle, allows him to stay in his cheap apartment--providing Daniel can get together enough money to pay half the rent. Immediately, Coates is able to show us the intrinsic differences between the two. Daniel is something of a rare anomaly nowadays; a gentle, caring person who would give his meager earnings to others in need, rather than buy food for himself. Kyle is obviously one who feels that world owes him, and thinks nothing of walking all over people like Daniel. Not one to complain about his situation, Daniel would remind himself: *"... He lived in a home for desperate people, and desperate people couldn't be choosy . . . "*

I found myself very impressed with Darcy Coates' writing style. In some places, her words flow with such a graceful ease, yet their meaning is so full of conviction and leaves you thinking on them for some time afterwards.

*"... No one said hello or even made eye contact . . . that sense of non-existence had left him with a permanent fear of being forgotten by the world . . . "*

Our adventure begins when Daniel finds a curious note addressed to him, informing him that he has been hired as a groundskeeper for a place called Craven Manor. The barest of directions are left for him, and Daniel probably would have not given it another thought if not for his cousin suddenly complaining about him "not contributing enough".

Coates continues to use some great scenes to further characterize the individual people in this novel. Now, she adds the most perfect balance of atmosphere to immerse the reader completely into the story unfolding. Once we *see* Craven Manor in our minds, there is no going back. I found that I didn't want to leave this novel for even a moment.

*"... The manor wasn't a cheerful place . . . But it felt secure . . . "*

The balance of human, supernatural, and environmental surroundings make for the perfect combination here. Craven Manor-- *"... A manor to strike fear into people who saw it . . . "*--is a major presence--almost a

character all of its own. The neglected--yet somehow still striking-ediface stands as a testament to the past that never really . . . *left*.

***"Things that die here have a tendency to linger."***

The twists and revelations create a story that keeps you riveted to every page. The emotional pull of not only Daniel, but of the other characters and elements, intensifies as the story goes on and more of the historical events are slowly revealed.

***"Ghosts are real . . ."***

Darcy Coates has written a story that stuck with me long after I finished my first reading. This is most certainly a book I see myself returning to in the future for re-reads.

***". . . I've found that death and I don't agree too much . . ."***

The mystique, characterizations, revelations, rumors, unlikely friendships, and betrayals were especially "*real*" feeling to me, and I give the author a great deal of credit in coming up with a tale that seems so "new", when the vast majority I read often appear as variations of the same theme.

***". . . Sometimes, a drastic loss can herald a new start . . ."***

Highly recommended!

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## **aPriL does feral sometimes says**

‘Craven Manor’ is a terrific ghost story! I know many will enjoy the spooky atmosphere of the haunted mansion where the main character, twenty-ish Daniel Kane, meets the peculiar, um, *people*, who change his life.

Daniel is broke. He lived on the streets for a short time after his grandmother died. Six months ago, his cousin Kyle offered him a room in his apartment if Daniel pays rent. It isn't much - the neighborhood is poor and the six-story apartment building is a little more than ‘gently used’, but it is better than the street.

Kyle is obviously a douche bag, but Daniel is not very bright, in my opinion. In my reading of him, Daniel seems to me an innocent, someone who cannot imagine people do bad things unless they were forced to it. Plus, he loves cats and shares his lunch with the homeless. Kyle holds no respect for Daniel, but Daniel does not seem to know this. Kyle also is a petty criminal and a bully, but Daniel is unaware of this for a long time. Readers will certainly see it, though.

Daniel takes work wherever he can - cleaning bathroom floors, or any janitor work, if even for a day only. He is out every day asking local business owners if they need someone. Finally, a mysterious envelope with Daniel's name on it is shoved under Kyle's apartment door. It is a job offer!

Long story short, Daniel takes the job despite his misgivings. He might be a simple and honest person, gentle reader, but there are all kinds of weird stuff going on with this job! The wealthy owner, Bran, of a local mansion, Craven Manor, hires him to be a groundskeeper and gives him a cottage on the property to live in.

But there is nothing normal about the Manor - the Manor's interior looks like no one has been there for two hundred years, yet it is full of antiques. The house is in the middle of a huge country estate with an overgrown forest all around it. Wild bushes, trees and undergrowth are all about the broken-down manor, covering all of the paths, gardens and outbuildings. Daniel never sees Bran - never has met him - is Bran living in the tower? - but he always sees a skinny ragged cat following him when he explores the dirty Manor or when he picks up his envelope of instructions or pay on a foyer mantelpiece. Daniel gets his work instructions only from handwritten notes. There is no electricity, but Daniel is too poor to own anything except the clothes on his back, so no problem there.

His first project is to clean up a crypt on the grounds. A crypt! A young girl is buried there - Annalise, perhaps a tragic death, since she died so young.

Bran's rules:

*No strangers are allowed onto the property.*

*Do not enter the tower.*

*Do not leave the groundskeeper's cottage between midnight and dawn.*

*Draw your curtains.*

*Keep the door locked.*

*If you hear knocking, do not answer it.*

Daniel is curious and more than a little spooked - the notes, the seemingly abandoned property, the dark forest - but he is overwhelmingly grateful for the little cottage!

Until one night:

"The happy glow lasted until shortly after midnight, when something started tapping at his door." pg. 52

Oh oh.

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Daniel eventually learns more about Annalise, Bran and the history of the Manor. It isn't a nice story, gentle reader, but you probably figured that out. The novel is very atmospheric, with some brief graphic violence. The scary mystery builds slowly toward a frightening grande finale, and all the while poor Daniel doesn't know who the good guys are for a long time. Not knowing who to trust leads Daniel to a decision with terrible consequences....and not just for him!

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**Matt Rudy says**

**I can't believe this book is nominated for a Goodreads Choice Award. It was a very average story.**

I decided to edit this review a little bit after talking to a few people and after thinking more about the story. Things make a little bit more sense to me now, but I'm still not sold on this book.



The story starts out with Daniel getting a job offer to be the groundskeeper for Craven Manor. He decides to take the job because he really needs the money. Little does he know this manor is very haunted. He begins to see ghosts, hear weird sounds and he starts to get bad vibes from Craven Manor...

**This book made no sense to me for multiple reasons.**

I still don't get the characters initial reason for taking this job. I also don't get the relationship between Kyle and his cousin. I feel like the author was trying to make some big twist in her book, but I felt like they were a little out there.

**There are only a couple of pros about this book.**

- 1) I feel like Daniel is a very likable guy so I dig that.
- 2) The book did have a couple of creepy parts.

I would not recommend this book to anyone, but I would love to hear more opinions about it. If you want to read a good **Darcy Coates** book then I would suggest **Hunted** .

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**Inn Auni says**

Daniel was a good guy in his early 20's but down on his luck when it come to securing a permanent job. His cousin wasn't helping either, trying to evict him in a subtle way. So, Daniel had no other way but to accept a job offer as groundkeeper at a creepy abandoned mansion.

From the get go the setup was creepy. You knew something was waiting for Daniel. You knew something was going to happen. But you couldn't help but root for Daniel.

The ghost in Craven Manor can be equalized as the one in Hogwarts, more towards fantasy rather than horror.

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**Ellen Gail says**

Two sad lil stars for what I genuinely thought would be pretty good.

I think I have a problem. (Well, I actually have many because, life you know?) But I have a book problem when it comes to Darcy Coates. I read *Hunted* last year and it was SO GOOD! And I think that's part of my problem. It exceeded expectations and I keep wanting her other books to wow me the same way. Both *The Carrow Haunt* and *Craven Manor* are fine ghost / haunted house stories. I didn't hate them. But when I KNOW she's capable of more exciting and creative books, it's frustrating to read one that just coasts along.

Which is what *Craven Manor* does. It's technically okay, I can't call it bad. It's a fast read and there's an occasional spook, but the story itself is GhostStory101. Balls to the wall predictable.

Like it checks ALL of the horror movie cliches:

- ghost of a child
- strange noises
- forbidden doors not to be opened
- ignoring blatant signs / warnings
- characters making dumb choices despite knowing better
- predictable location (why can't we have a haunted roller coaster or a ghostly townhouse in the city?)

So I can't say I hated *Craven Manor*, but I sure as heck didn't love it. I've definitely encountered worse main characters and less entertaining plots, which is faint praise, but it's all I've got.

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