

The Night Strangers: A Novel

By Chris Bohjalian

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The Night Strangers: A Novel By Chris Bohjalian

From the bestselling author of *The Double Bind*, *Skeletons at the Feast*, and *Secrets of Eden*, comes a riveting and dramatic ghost story.

In a dusty corner of a basement in a rambling Victorian house in northern New Hampshire, a door has long been sealed shut with 39 six-inch-long carriage bolts.

The home's new owners are Chip and Emily Linton and their twin ten-year-old daughters. Together they hope to rebuild their lives there after Chip, an airline pilot, has to ditch his 70-seat regional jet in Lake Champlain after double engine failure. Unlike the Miracle on the Hudson, however, most of the passengers aboard Flight 1611 die on impact or drown. The body count? Thirty-nine – a coincidence not lost on Chip when he discovers the number of bolts in that basement door. Meanwhile, Emily finds herself wondering about the women in this sparsely populated White Mountain village – self-proclaimed herbalists – and their interest in her fifth-grade daughters. Are the women mad? Or is it her husband, in the wake of the tragedy, whose grip on sanity has become desperately tenuous?

The result is a poignant and powerful ghost story with all the hallmarks readers have come to expect from bestselling novelist Chris Bohjalian: a palpable sense of place, an unerring sense of the demons that drive us, and characters we care about deeply.

The difference this time? Some of those characters are dead.

From the Hardcover edition.

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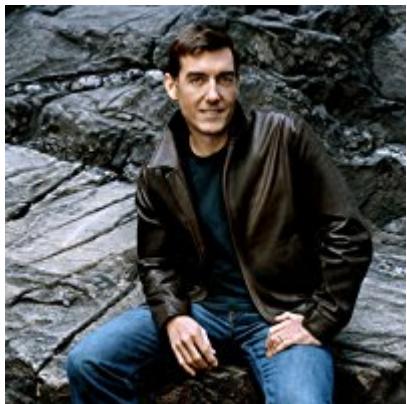
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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Guest Reviewer: Justin Cronin on *The Night Strangers* by Chris Bohjalian



Justin Cronin is the bestselling author of *The Passage*, as well as *Mary and O'Neil*, which won the Pen/Hemingway Award and the Stephen Crane Prize, and *The Summer Guest*.

To put the matter succinctly: The first chapter of Chris Bohjalian's *The Night Strangers* is so riveting, I dropped the book in the tub.

I spent the next half-hour running a hair-dryer over its soaked pages. By the time the task was complete the book was as swollen as a Reuben sandwich. It was clear to me that if the first twenty pages were any indication, I'd better read the rest somewhere safe and secure, with neither water nor fire, and while I was at it, some good soundproofing, lest I freak out my children by shrieking like an acrophobe on a roller coaster.

I wasn't wrong.

Describing Bohjalian's thirteenth novel isn't a simple matter. Its dovetailing plots are so seamlessly interwoven--as tightly screwed together as the thirty-nine carriage bolts sealing the mysterious door in the Linton's (very creepy) basement--I don't want to give too much away.

But it's also a challenge to summarize because *The Night Strangers* is so many novels at once, as all good novels must be. It's a psychological thriller. It's a domestic drama, the story of a family coping with the aftermath of dislocation and disaster. It's a book about a specifically American locale, in this case a small town in a remote corner of New Hampshire. It's a classic New England ghost story, and a hell of a good one. (It also won't make you want to get on an airplane anytime soon, though there I go, telling too much.)

I've been following Bohjalian for some time. Always I've come away from his novels replete with admiration--and not a little envy--for his skill and versatility, book after book. His psychological acumen is downright Flaubert-esque, most notably (and remarkably) in his creation of female characters. But Bohjalian is a reader-friendly writer, too. His novels are compulsively discussable, the kinds of tales that employ specific human dramas to probe larger ethical issues. They make you think. They are, in every sense, "what would you do?" books, and the answers are never simple.

If there's a core to Bohjalian's work, though, it's the cultural divide between the modern scientific world

and--for lack of a better term--the spiritual world and its ancient practices. His novels are populated by the likes of dowsers (*Water Witches*), the practitioners of traditional female-assisted birth (*Midwives*), homeopaths (*The Law of Similars*), even a shape-shifter (*Trans-Sister Radio*).

The Night Strangers follows this tradition, but with a dark twist. The witches of Bethel, New Hampshire are decidedly of the sinister variety—albeit more likely to sell real estate and wear stylish leather skirts than fly around on brooms and don pointy hats. Beneath the town's charming rural surface of gingerbread Victorians, maple sugarhouses, and fiery foliage lurks a conspiracy of evil reminiscent of Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown." How evil? Suffice it to say that when somebody drops by to welcome newcomers to the neighborhood with a plate of vegan brownies, they should think twice before taking the first bite.

But to say anything more would be to reveal too much. Fans of his fiction, as I am, will know *The Night Strangers* is pure Bohjalian. Newcomers will come away wanting more. And if you read it in the bathtub, consider yourself warned.

Review

"*The Night Strangers* boasts all the trappings of a classic gothic horror story, reminiscent in places of the spousal secrets in Nathaniel Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown,' the thrills of 'Rosemary's Baby,' and the psychological frights of Daphne du Maurier. . . A perfect book for Halloween. . . That thump thump you hear as you read is only your heart leaping from your chest." -- **Keith Donohue, *The Washington Post***

"Bohjalian flings himself into a full-blooded romance with the paranormal. In doing so, he earns a place alongside Stephen King as the master of the Halloween beach book. This ghost story is expertly and, at times, beautifully written, deliciously creepy, and, like a bag of trick-or-treat loot, silently calls out to you when it's languishing on the night table." -- **Julie Wittes Schlack, *The Boston Globe***

"This unsettling latest from master storyteller Bohjalian will keep you up at night." -- **Lisa Kay Greissinger, *People Magazine***

"Bohjalian combines modern-day horror with supernatural horror to create a double-whammy of otherworldly fear. But despite the modern trappings, this is a blood-splattered, old-fashioned ghost story. And there's no guarantee of safe passage in the end." -- **Amy Driscoll, *The Miami Herald***

"Echoes of *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Shining*. . . Read if you dare, but keep an extra light on, and make sure your seat is in the full upright and locked position." -- **Patty Rhule, *USA Today***

"Shades of *The Shining* make for a haunting tale. . . A modern-day ghost story worth losing sleep over." -- **Family Circle**

"You will close the book's covers totally satisfied, aware that this masterful storyteller has done it again." -- **Seattle Times**

"*The Night Strangers* has all the hallmarks of a good ghost story, but. . . Bohjalian has put his own 21st-century spin on the supernatural genre in his frightening new novel." -- **Christian DuChateau, CNN**

"After losing passengers in a forced landing, a pilot seeks respite by moving his family to New England. But the house is haunted and local witches won't leave them alone. Good 'n' spooky." -- **Good Housekeeping**

"Put a haunted man in a haunted house. . .and you have a Halloween hair-raiser. But it's more than that. Bohjalian, with a dozen well-received novels to his credit, understands trauma: how long it takes to recover from unimaginable pain, and how people who have never experienced it rarely understand." -- **Tim Clark, *Yankee Magazine***

"Compelling. . .a ghost story in the tradition of such classics of the genre as 'The Turn of the Screw' and 'The Haunting of Hill House.'" -- **James D. Watts, *The Tulsa World***

"Bohjalian has crafted a genre-defying novel, both a compelling story of a family in trauma and a psychological thriller that is truly frightening. Fans of Alice Sebold's *The Lovely Bones* and Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye* and *The Robber Bride* will find similar appeal here." -- **Library Journal [Starred Review]**

"A gripping paranormal thriller. . .Meticulous research and keen attention to detail give depth and character to [the] eerie world. . .Bohjalian is a master, and the slow-mounting dread makes this a frightful ride." -- **Publishers Weekly**

"A page-turner of uncommon depth. Guilt, egotism, and fear all play parts in this genre-bending novel." -- **Booklist [Starred Review]**

"Compelling. . .a practical magick horror story." -- **Kirkus Reviews**

About the Author

CHRIS BOHJALIAN is the critically acclaimed author of fourteen books, including the *New York Times* bestsellers *The Double Bind*, *Secrets of Eden*, and *Skeletons at the Feast*. His novel, *Midwives*, was a number one *New York Times* bestseller and a selection of Oprah's Book Club. His work has been translated into more than twenty-five languages and two of his novels have become movies (*Midwives* and *Past the Bleachers*). He lives in Vermont with his wife and daughter.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jason Villalobos:

The publication with title The Night Strangers: A Novel possesses a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of gain after read this book. This specific book exist new information the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to you to learn how the improvement of the world. This particular book will bring you throughout new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

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