



# A Head Full of Ghosts: A Novel

By Paul Tremblay

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**A Head Full of Ghosts: A Novel** By Paul Tremblay

## **WINNER OF THE 2015 BRAM STOKER AWARD FOR SUPERIOR ACHIEVEMENT IN A NOVEL**

A chilling thriller that brilliantly blends psychological suspense and supernatural horror, reminiscent of Stephen King's *The Shining*, Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*, and William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist*.

The lives of the Barretts, a normal suburban New England family, are torn apart when fourteen-year-old Marjorie begins to display signs of acute schizophrenia.

To her parents' despair, the doctors are unable to stop Marjorie's descent into madness. As their stable home devolves into a house of horrors, they reluctantly turn to a local Catholic priest for help. Father Wanderly suggests an exorcism; he believes the vulnerable teenager is the victim of demonic possession. He also contacts a production company that is eager to document the Barretts' plight. With John, Marjorie's father, out of work for more than a year and the medical bills looming, the family agrees to be filmed, and soon find themselves the unwitting stars of *The Possession*, a hit reality television show. When events in the Barrett household explode in tragedy, the show and the shocking incidents it captures become the stuff of urban legend.

Fifteen years later, a bestselling writer interviews Marjorie's younger sister, Merry. As she recalls those long ago events that took place when she was just eight years old, long-buried secrets and painful memories that clash with what was broadcast on television begin to surface—and a mind-bending tale of psychological horror is unleashed, raising vexing questions about memory and reality, science and religion, and the very nature of evil.



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## **A Head Full of Ghosts: A Novel By Paul Tremblay Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“*A Head Full of Ghosts* scared the living hell out of me, and I’m pretty hard to scare.” (Stephen King)

“Paul Tremblay’s terrific *A Head Full of Ghosts* generates a haze of an altogether more serious kind: the pleasurable fog of calculated, perfectly balanced ambiguity.” (*New York Times Book Review*)

“...progressively gripping and suspenseful — (Tremblay’s) ultimate, bloodcurdling revelation is as sickeningly satisfying as it is masterful.” (NPR Books)

“Tremblay expertly ratchets up the suspense until the tension is almost at its breaking point.” (Kirkus Reviews)

“[B]rilliantly creepy.” (Library Journal)

“The novel is stylishly written and well-conceived.” (Booklist)

“Gripping and truly scary, this book feels of the moment in a way few thrillers do.” (B&N Reads)

“[A] scary story, indeed.” (BookPage)

“A mind-bending tale of psychological horror is unleashed, raising disturbing questions about memory and reality, science and religion, and the very nature of evil.” (Buzzfeed)

“[A] creepy, interesting read, great for horror fans.” (SFRevu)

“Crackling with dark energy and postmodern wit...[this] superb novel evokes the very best in the tradition—from Shirley Jackson to Mark Z. Danielewski and Marisha Pessl—while also feeling fresh and utterly new. Deeply funny and intensely terrifying, it’s a sensory rollercoaster and not to be missed.” (Megan Abbott, author of *The Fever* and *Dare Me*)

“Loved it. Highly recommended for anyone who loves engrossing literary horror-undertones of *The House of Leaves* (but far more accessible) and *The Exorcist*, and redolent of Shirley Jackson.” (Ellen Datlow)

“Dark, brilliant, and impossible to predict, [this] is more than a perfect horror story. It’s a smart and savage look at American culture in all its madness, and the price girls are forced to pay by a society obsessed with spectacle and sin.” (Cara Hoffman, author of *So Much Pretty* and *Be Safe I Love You*)

“A genuinely scary, post-modern homage to classic horror that invokes Stanley Kubrik and Shirley Jackson in equal measure, but also manages to innovate on nearly every page. [It] is unlike any horror novel you’ve read, and yet hauntingly, frighteningly familiar.” (Sara Gran, author of *Claire DeWitt and the City of the Dead* and *Come Closer*)

“*A Head Full of Ghosts* doesn’t end just because you close the book. Some horror, it bleeds through the pages, gets onto your hands, stays with you. You’ll be thinking about this one long after you’ve read it.” (Stephen Graham Jones, author of *Demon Theory* and *Ledfeather*)

“Paul Tremblay is an astonishingly talented writer, but even better, he’s twisted, and fun. *A Head Full of Ghosts* is mind-bending—scary, sad, sweet, funny, sick. . . . Terrifying, hilarious, smart, and satisfying.” (Stewart O’Nan, author of *The Speed Queen*, *The Night Country*, and *A Prayer for the Dying*)

“*A Head Full of Ghosts* is the literary lovechild of Shirley Jackson and William Peter Blatty, a novel that’s as disturbing as the worst nightmare you ever had as a kid, and as impossible to forget.” (Elizabeth Hand, author of *Generation Loss* and *Available Dark*)

“Part psychological thriller, part demonic possession horror, this book is a juicy, fast-paced genre bombshell that just happens to be one of the smartest novels you’ll read this year.” (The Life Sentence)

“*A Head Full of Ghosts* is one of the best novels released this year. . . .Paul Tremblay confirms what we already knew: he’s one of the greatest horror writers today.” (This is Horror (UK))

“This will easily be remembered as one of the most powerfully disquieting and deeply unsettling novels of the year, and may mark something of a turning point in the mainstream horror genre.” (*Shock Totem*)

“By turns horrifying, very funny, melancholy, ironic and, with each page, dazzlingly original, *A Head Full of Ghosts* is a one-book rocket ride through contemporary society where, if Evil doesn’t actually exist in a Biblical sense, we’re just the folks to invent it on our own.” (*The Day* newspaper)

“Tremblay paints a believable portrait of a family in extremis emotionally as it attempts to cope with the unthinkable . . . Whether psychological or supernatural, this is a work of deviously subtle horror.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

#### From the Back Cover

“Terrific. . . . Generates a haze of an altogether more serious kind: the pleasurable fog of calculated, perfectly balanced ambiguity.”—*New York Times Book Review*

The lives of the Barretts, a normal suburban New England family, are torn apart when fourteen-year-old Marjorie begins to display signs of acute schizophrenia.

To her parents’ despair, the doctors are unable to stop Marjorie’s bizarre outbursts and subsequent descent into madness. As their home devolves into a house of horrors, they reluctantly turn to a local Catholic priest for help. Father Wanderly suggests an exorcism; he believes the vulnerable teenager is the victim of demonic possession. He also contacts a production company that is eager to document the Barretts’ plight for a reality television show. With John, Marjorie’s father, out of work for more than a year and medical bills looming, the family reluctantly agrees to be filmed—never imagining that *The Possession* would become an instant hit. When events in the Barrett household explode in tragedy, the show and the incidents it captures become the stuff of urban legend.

Fifteen years later, a bestselling writer interviews Marjorie’s younger sister, Merry. As she recalls those long-ago events from her childhood—she was just eight years old—painful memories and long-buried secrets that clash with the television broadcast and the Internet blogs begin to surface.

“Gripping and suspenseful—[Tremblay’s] ultimate, bloodcurdling revelation is as sickeningly satisfying as it is masterful.”—*NPR Books*

#### About the Author

Paul Tremblay is the award-winning author of *A Head Full of Ghosts* and the crime novels *The Little Sleep* (2009) and *No Sleep Till Wonderland* (2010). He is a member of the board of directors of the Shirley Jackson Awards, and his essays and short fiction have appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* and numerous year's-best anthologies. He has a master's degree in mathematics and lives outside Boston with his wife and two children.

## Users Review

### From reader reviews:

#### **Helen Wright:**

Book is to be different for each grade. Book for children until eventually adult are different content. As you may know that book is very important for all of us. The book *A Head Full of Ghosts: A Novel* seemed to be making you to know about other understanding and of course you can take more information. It doesn't matter what advantages for you. The reserve *A Head Full of Ghosts: A Novel* is not only giving you a lot more new information but also to get your friend when you really feel bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your publication. Try to make relationship using the book *A Head Full of Ghosts: A Novel*. You never sense lose out for everything if you read some books.

#### **Saul Robinson:**

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**Wendy Poston:**

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