ForeWord Reviews

GENERAL

Inside a Haunted Mind
K. Patrick Malone
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"My skin crawls even to write about it," says Malone's protagonist, Terry Chagford.

These words will ring true for all who delve into the mentally unhinging world of small town police chief Chagford in K. Patrick Malone's suspense thriller *Inside a Haunted Mind*. Feeling he has been a failure throughout his life, and haunted by his inability to rescue a little girl from a fire years ago, Chagford looks to redeem himself by keeping alive—at all costs—one Martin Welliver, a stranger who has just bought an isolated house on the outskirts of town. But the cost of Chagford's redemption is beyond anything he could have ever imagined, for shortly thereafter, both men are stalked by the house's malevolent spirit that has been resurrected after Welliver moves in; the first occupant of the house in more than fifty years. Chagford starts to better understand what is happening only after Grace Coutraire, the town's librarian, reveals her past and tells him what she herself had discovered about the original occupant of the house. He soon figures out, however, that no amount of understanding will stop the evil presence and its intentions to kill both Welliver and himself. There is a piece of the puzzle that Chagford, clinging to the edge of sanity, must find before it is too late and the evil moves on to somewhere—and someone—else.

Malone's first book reads as if he has written several successful books already. Riveting from the start, his use of mixing past and present events in Chagford's "mental therapy" diary and the vivid descriptions of townspeople Chagford cares for, make the reader feel as if they were experiencing with him the ever-increasing tensions, terror and horror of events as they unfold. Malone's powerful descriptions keep the reader thoroughly engaged: "I saw his face, red eyes, blazing blood red eyes looking at me and his mouth…was all twisted, drawn back in a horrible, snarling grimace…Oh, God! It was the man from the dream." And one may get so lost in this story of "A Journal Found" that the conclusion to Mr. Carruther's story, which brackets it, comes as somewhat of a shock. One factor that ultimately gives this story its desperate tone—almost missed due to its subtleness—is Malone's uncanny ability to portray Chagford's downward spiral toward insanity. It is as if he himself has experienced what it is like to be

“inside a haunted mind.”

The book is an excellent work, but only those able to handle graphic descriptions of depraved violence should enter Malone’s world of terrifying horror.