



The Magdalena Curse

F.G. Cottam

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This title tells the story of a boy doomed by a prophecy and a father who will risk anything to save him. It is an epic confrontation between good and evil by the highly praised author of 'Dark Echo'.

The Magdalena Curse Details

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Author : F.G. Cottam

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From Reader Review The Magdalena Curse for online ebook

tattooedReader13 says

Loved it! A bit on the gruesome side, but a really good listen, very engaging and absorbing. I walked over 14 miles last week so that I could listen and fall deep into the world Cottam created. I was sad when it ended and I realized that I have now listened to all of his books on audible.

Remittance Girl says

I listened to The Waiting Room by this author and really enjoyed it. The Magdalena Curse is not quite as well paced as The Waiting Room and I'm seeing some patterns in the author's style. That being said, it was an engaging and exciting story.

Cottam's got a wonderful talent for the fresh, unclined premise. This book, like The Waiting Room, is a nice blend of the historical and the modern with a generous helping of the creepy supernatural thrown in, and the author is a satisfyingly thorough researcher, so the historical elements sit well in the story.

Again, his main protagonist is ex-SAS with a penchant for poetry. His lead female character has the same beautiful, capable, hidden-paranormal-talent trope as well. That's not a bad combination, but it does mean that I felt a little like I was reading a book in a series. That being said, his secondary characters are always nicely rounded.

My biggest problem with this book was that the showdown came a little late and was over quite quickly. I think he could have drawn out the final conflict a little longer. It felt like he was in a bit of a hurry to end the novel.

The narration by David Rintoul was excellent and very well suited to the story.

Angela says

Ex-military man, Mark Hunter, has taken his ten year old son, Adam, to live in Scotland following the tragic deaths of his wife and daughter. The hope is that they will both recover from this bereavement to some extent, but events from the past disrupt these plans in a terrible way.

Adam Hunter is being tormented by dreams, during which he is heard to speak in ancient languages and to use voices other than his own. His father is frantic to find help for him and calls in the local doctor, Elizabeth Bancroft. She eventually comes to the conclusion that Adam has been possessed by something truly evil.

Mark Hunter sets out on his quest to save his son. He follows trails and clues which he hopes will lead him to the enigmatic Mrs Mallory, the strange and beautiful woman who laid a curse upon his family years earlier. During this time, he encounters some extremely odd creatures....and people!

I have only read one other title by F.G. Cottam entitled Dark Echo and I think he followed a similar pattern in the writing of this book. Again, he has set his chilling tale against a believable background with believable characters; this makes the paranormal events of the story even more spine-chilling. I do think with this genre,

one needs to suspend belief for a while in order to fully appreciate the story. There may have been a few unanswered questions, but on the whole, I really enjoyed reading The Magdalena Curse. I will certainly look for more of this author's work.

Tracy Terry says

A total 'scaredy cat' when it comes to 'horror novels'. I very nearly didn't get beyond chapter one as I found it so scary but I'm so glad I did for though eerie in places, I ultimately found The Magdalena Curse to be more chilling, more of a tale of the supernatural, than what I personally think of as a 'horror' story.

Only a star away from a 'It Was Amazing'/'I Loved It' rating, there was only one or two (possibly three) slight niggles that did ever so slightly mar my enjoyment.

A bit like in English pantomime when the 'baddie' appears and the audience shouts 'he's behind you' so every time Mrs Hall was featured it was with the words 'far more good than bad'. Oddly humorous to begin with but after a while the 'joke' wore thin and became annoying, those few words detracting from what was otherwise an unearthly character.

Then there were the use of italics which were not only incredibly small but typed in a very light print. Perhaps something integral to the story, perhaps, and I feel this is more likely the case, not. Its just frustrating that I may have missed out on something vital.

Then, and I'm still debating with myself whether this was a good thing or a bad thing, there was the fact that we never really got to know just what either Mrs Hall 'far more good than bad' or indeed Mrs Mallory were. Perhaps merely old women skilled in the art of hypnotism? Maybes gypsies well versed in the art of curses? Vampires, Witches?

Anyway,

A book I can clearly imagine being read around the campfire. Incredibly atmospheric - whatever Mrs Hall/Mallory were or were not - the way in which the Hunter's story tied in with Elizabeth's very clever. The somehow old fashioned feel despite the very modern setting only adding to the chill factor.

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Mary says

It only takes a couple of visits to convince Dr. Elizabeth Bancroft that Adam Hunter is not just having nightmares - he is a child possessed. His father is desperate: adamant that his son's affliction is the result of a curse he incurred in the depths of the Amazon rainforest many years ago. Mark Hunter would do anything to protect his son Adam, but he knows that the roots of Adam's terror lie in Mark's own past, deep within the jungles of the Amazon.

Twelve years ago in Bolivia, Mark Hunter had been part of a misguided military operation that went terrifyingly wrong, leaving only two men alive to face the macabre events that followed. Two women held the key to Mark's future - one was more bad than good; one was more good than bad. Both of these women had dark and dangerous, very powerful abilities - and Mark had incurred the wrath of one of them who was

capable of wreaking an unholy vengeance.

To save his son's very soul, Mark Hunter will travel from a sleepy village in the Scottish Highlands to a fortress high in the Alps, in search of this mysterious woman, hoping against hope that she will help him break the curse that ensnares Adam. He will leave his son in Elizabeth's care - who is about to discover there are equally dark secrets on their doorstep...and in her blood.

I really enjoyed reading this book. It was very unusual, interesting and well-written. It was a very involved plot, but I was captivated by the story's creepiness. I give this book an A! and have already placed three more of F. G. Cottam's books on my Wish List.

Hylary Locsin says

Originally posted on my blog: <http://libraryladyhylary.blogspot.com> ! Check it out for more reviews!

Fifteen years earlier, Colonel Mark Hunter was a newlywed sent on a covert mission from his London home to the rainforests of Bolivia. Expecting to uncover and destroy a drug trafficking facility, what he and his comrades actually discovered in the jungle was something far more sinister. An evil sorceress protected by an army of undead soldiers murdered his fellow soldiers, and cursed Hunter, promising that his offspring would commune with the dead. Now, Mark is retired and living in Scotland with his ten-year-old son Adam, his wife and daughter recently killed in an accident. Adam is an exceptionally bright child, but has recently become afflicted with terrifying nightmares. Although he knows in his heart that his son is possessed as a result of the curse, Mark calls upon local doctor, Elizabeth Bancroft, to try to determine if there is a medical cause of Adam's illness. Elizabeth is no stranger to the idea of curses, having come from a family long associated with witchcraft. Elizabeth herself doesn't believe in magic, but the more she learns about Adam, the more she is convinced that there is something truly evil at work. Determined to save his son, Mark searches for a way to end the curse. In trying to find a cure, however, Mark begins to uncover the truth about what is afflicting Adam, and how his presence in Bolivia fifteen years earlier was no accident at all.

Always creating an intriguing mixture of historical fact and fiction, veteran author F.G. Cottam offers up yet another nail-biting novel in the same vein as his previous two works, *The House of Lost Souls* and *Dark Echo*. Cottam's novels usually contain more than a little macabre details, and *The Magdalena Curse* is no different. Although somewhat toned down from his other two works, some of the grisly details make this novel appropriate only for the older teen and adult audience. For readers who want something spooky and suspenseful, however, this, like Cottam's other novels, is an excellent choice. The details of what exactly is transpiring in *The Magdalena Curse* take awhile to unravel. Is Adam possessed? If he is, who or what is possessing him? How can the entity be stopped? These are all questions that the reader journeys through, all with an edge-of-the-seat quality that makes the novel difficult to put down. Cottam's mixture of historic references makes the story even more intriguing, especially in generating interest in learning more about various locations, poets and songs. Overall, *The Magdalena Curse* is a scary and entertaining novel that fans of suspense are sure to enjoy.

I really enjoy F.G. Cottam's novels, and *The Magdalena Curse* was no different. His writing style and ability to create suspense and mystery is excellent. I was really intrigued by each of the characters in the book, and found it really difficult to put down, wanting to learn their fates. I always like Cottam's inclusion of historical or cultural references and how they tie into the story so well. I can't wait to read his next novel once it is published in the United States. F.G. Cottam definitely ranks high among authors I would recommend to older teens or adults who want an entertaining and spooky read!

Claire says

Don't get me wrong. I try to be fair when rating the books I read: if a book wasn't great, I look for redeeming features that made the experience a whole lot better. There are so many wonderful books out there, why waste your time on a story you just don't fall in love with?

I really enjoyed *The House of Lost Souls* and was eager to try another of F G Cottam's books. I wish I hadn't picked this one.

The story started out well, a group of soldiers cursed, and a very wicked witch with a grudge to blame for it. The curse afflicted each of the soldiers in varying but equally horrifying ways. For Mark Hunter, the punishment was that his only son, Adam was possessed.

The modern-day setting seemed an odd choice but I persevered. But then it all started going downhill and, I'm sorry to say, never recovered.

For me, there was far too much focus on the attractive young doctor, Elizabeth Bancroft, and too little on the poor boy struggling with possession. The possession manifested itself in dreams and then whilst Adam was awake, giving him premonitions of a very nasty creature with malevolent intentions, but the story didn't seem to focus very much on this.

At times, the internal narrative of the characters was way too formal and stilted. People just don't think like that, especially the protagonists who were supposedly pretty down-to-earth. The result was that I couldn't keep myself immersed in the story because I was constantly reminded that it was a constructed piece of writing.

Despite a sorely sagging midsection, the pace picked up again right at the end. Good versus evil; a battle of wills. But the story was drawn together unconvincingly in a couple of lines and then just stopped. I was expecting something way more exciting, or at least a climax worthy of all the clue-dropping and build-up Cottam had used to bring the reader to this point.

It made me a little bit mad at myself for reading the whole book. My advice: save yourself from this experience, read *The House of Lost Souls* and leave this one on the shelf.

Kelly Roll says

I found this as a book on tape. I had read one of Cottam's earlier books so I thought I'd give this one a try. I found it to be truly suspenseful and at times even frightened me. There were a couple of occasions where I just wanted to sit in my driveway and wait until the CD I was listening to finished. I had a few minor quibbles, but overall really enjoyed this book.

Blair says

This is the third of F.G. Cottam's books I've read and enjoyed; his second, *Dark Echo*, ranks as one of my all-

time favourites, and while *The Magdalena Curse* didn't quite live up to that, it was still a great read. Plot-wise and stylistically, it's similar to the author's previous novels, but this isn't really a problem for me as I love his writing and the resemblance means this book has the same good points as the others - it's tremendously atmospheric, fast-paced and exciting from start to finish. It's genuinely quite scary in places (the scene in which a possessed Adam first addresses Elizabeth in particular), but never in anything other than a pleasurable spine-tingling way, and it never becomes ridiculous or unbelievable, despite the fantastic nature of the plot. I really like Cottam's female characters too - they're strong and really well-written, which I've found is a rare quality in books of this genre, especially those by male authors. A couple of bad points; while I really liked Mark and Elizabeth (and Adam, for that matter), I couldn't feel the same affinity with them as I did for *Dark Echo*'s Martin and Suzanne, and I think this was because the book was written in third rather than first person narrative. I think the characters would have benefited from more exposition at the start - though the way the story immediately plunges the reader into the action is attention-grabbing, the lack of personal background at the beginning prevented me from really caring about the protagonists until part-way through.

Also, this is nothing to do with the book itself, but it's a pity that it seems to have been released without much fanfare - I didn't read any reviews and only found out it existed via Goodreads. I've always been surprised that *Dark Echo*, which is immensely readable, wasn't a huge commercial success, when many more successful books in a similar vein are (to my mind at least) not as well-written or thrilling. Anyway, I'll definitely be getting my hands on *The Waiting Room* as soon as possible!

Vicky cleveland says

I liked this book, initially, but about half way through, that changed. It's a good story but I didn't find the writing particularly good and thought the modern setting a slightly odd choice. The main characters are one dimensional and cliched. We're told more than once for instance that the male lead, Mark, had "never known a moments fear in his life". Some of the dialogue was extremely stilted and jarred with the references to Jeremy Clarkson and *Girls Aloud*. For instance, the main character, 30-something Elizabeth says this "There was a weapon...It looked like a cleaver. Though the butcher wielding this tool would have needed to be a giant to have done so, such were it's monstrous dimensions" Who talks like that?

And why are they always printing emails out to read them? At one point Elizabeth prints 2 copies of the same email so her and Mark can both read it. Weird!

On the plus side, it is a page turner, the story was good and I did finish it although the ending left a pile of loose ends for me.

Sara says

An interesting concept, and an engaging read. I felt there were a lot of great threads here, but they never quite got properly tied together for me. Maybe i'm being dense, but I never quite felt like I "got" it. Who was Miss Hall really? What exactly happened with Miss Mallory? It was all just a little too obtuse for me.

Bruce Draeger says

I work for an audio book publisher (AudioGO...formerly: BBC Audiobooks America), so naturally, I do most of my reading via audio books. I travel extensively and getting to listen and drive is great.

The Magdalena Curse was one of our August/2010 titles so I thought I would preview a few CDs to get a feel for the story and narrator, David Rintoul. Well, by the 2nd CD, I was hooked. I found myself lingering in the car to try to squeeze a few more minutes of the story before my next appointment.

I am typically not a "gore" and "scare the hell out of you" book fan. HOWEVER, this book was so well written with a believable and fast moving plot I couldn't stop. It was like a train wreck...you just have to keep looking. And, this book definitely has a Level 10 creepy factor. But, Cottom delivers the story in such a believable plot that you can't just write it off as "make believe". I kept thinking "this could happen"...which makes it even more bizarre.

I was expecting a major "boom" at the end but was given more of a "soft landing" (which was probably good for my blood pressure)...but even so, I was not disappointed. I am looking forward to getting his other titles and I'm sure I will be caught sitting in my car again trying to finish the last CD.

John Wiltshire says

I'm about 20% into this one and very glad I discovered this author with The Colony. Since then I've read The House of Lost Souls and The Memory of Trees, all of which I greatly enjoyed. This book is genuinely creepy - nothing like possessed kids, is there? They're scary enough normal if you ask me. I digress. There's an account of a Special Forces jungle op at the beginning of this novel which is about as accurate as I've ever come across in a novel. Having served a while in Belize, this rang very true. The book is told through two povs, the SAS father of the boy, Mark, and a doctor he calls in to consult on the case, Elizabeth. Mark is all military; Elizabeth has a bloodline taking her back to far more ancient, female powers. The contrast between the two ways of viewing power and influence in the world is fascinating. It's something I've begun to explore in my novels, particularly the latest His Fateful Heap of Days where my military characters begin to realise that there is more to the world than can be defeated by physical power.

This is the sort of book that makes me glad to do so many hours on airplanes. It's just a treat to get strapped in and lose myself in such good storytelling.

As always, I'll update when done.

Finished this one tonight flying back from Auckland. It was a heavy hardback from the library, which is an indication of how gripping I found it: usually I travel light with just a Kindle.

Right to the end the author spun this story wonderfully. As with all horror it's never easy to write a totally realistic and satisfying conclusion and I'd have liked a bit more about the malevolent creature in the house in London, but that aside this was a resounding success.

Recommended.

Nancy says

Adam Hunter lives with his father, Mark, in the Scottish Highlands and is suffering from a curse placed on his father when things went extremely wrong years ago in Bolivia. Dr. Elizabeth Bancroft discovers Adam's bad dreams are the result of possession and the manifestation of the curse.

So we begin the effort to find the answer and eradicate the curse in the capable hands of F.G. Cottam, who is a master of atmospheric terror.

The question is which is stronger as magic meets magic. Is it the black, evil magic which was used in the beginning or it is it benign magic which works to bring good? The struggle is a hard one in this slim, fast-paced book.

I have become fascinated with the books by this author. Having read House of Lost Souls, Brodmaw Bay, The Waiting Room and this one, I am looking forward to Dark Echo and The Summoning. So far, The Waiting Room is an absolute exquisite read and the one I would place at the top of the list for anyone interested in seeing what Cottam can do.

Sue says

F.G.Cottam is becoming one of my new favorite authors. I enjoy his mix of paranormal, thriller and mysterious settings. Being an anglophile, the British Isle settings are a plus too. This outing the hint of horror was slightly elevated from the last two books but nowhere high enough to be off-putting.

I enjoy the author's combination of sometimes formal language and structure describing things and incidents that are truly other-worldly. I also found myself at times reading too quickly to find out what was going to happen next, then slowing myself down to enjoy the details.

Recommended for those who enjoy ghost stories with a touch of the thriller.
