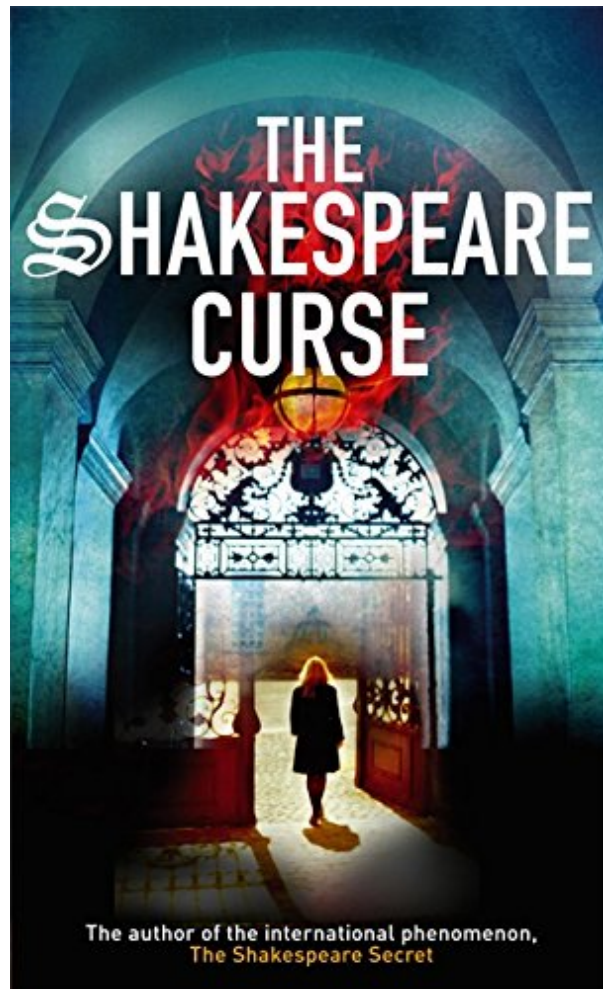
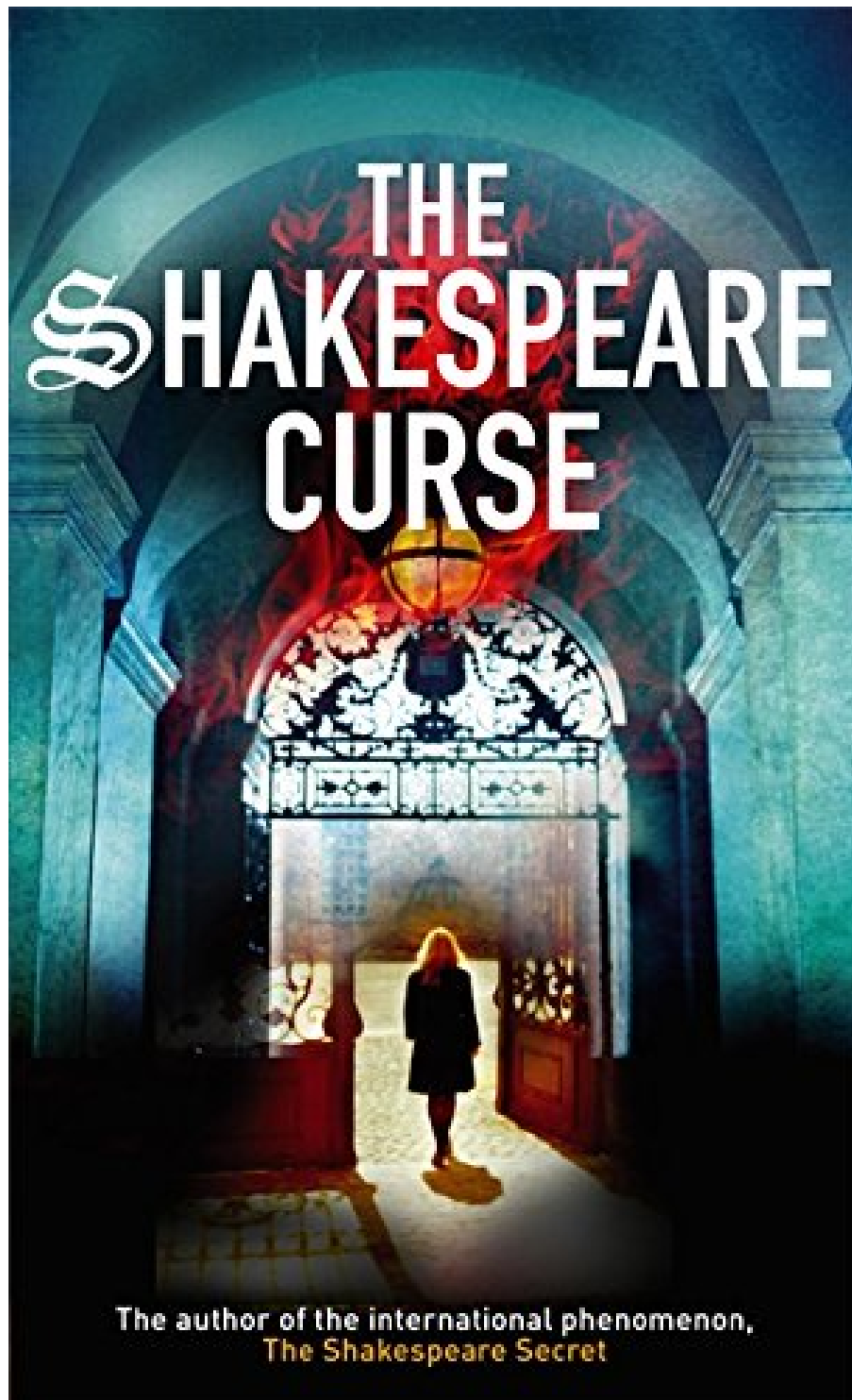


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## Review

If Dan 'Da Vinci Brown were a better writer, he might have come up with The Shakespeare Curse' Morning Star

## About the Author

J L Carrell has a PhD in English and American literature from Harvard and has taught the History and Literature programme at the prestigious university - as well as directing Shakespeare for Harvard's Hyperion Theatre Company.

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A brutally murdered body is discovered on a remote Scottish hillside - with a mysterious ancient knife beside it. The victim was a beautiful young woman, throat slashed by an unknown assailant. The circumstances of the murder suggest ancient Pagan sacrifice. Then a trench on that same hill is found filled with blood. The shocking discoveries all seem to be linked by the ancient curse of Macbeth. From the streets of New York to the twisting corridors of Hampton Court Palace to a remote loch in the Scottish Highlands, the race is on to stop a deadly modern serial killer who will do anything to uncover priceless ancient treasures...A thrilling, action-packed page-turner, The Shakespeare Curse blends present-day crime with fascinating revelations from the life and work of Shakespeare. It is one of the most eagerly-awaited novels of 2010.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Haunt Me Still is US title

By Gregory Hanthorn

Buyer beware -- this book has been released in the US as Haunt Me Still. Readers familiar with the wide variety of superstitions and stories associated with Maccers/The Scottish Play/The Cursed Play/etc. should enjoy the manner in which those superstitions time travel in this mystery. A solid follow up to Interred With Their Bones.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Iconoclastic, tense but unachieved

By Dr Jacques COULARDEAU

No surprise of course in the field of Shakespearean folklore: the curse of Macbeth. Nothing new under the moon and some good old witchcraft under the sun or in the night.

The novel is well built and associates in the most wicked way white witchcraft, the good one, black witchcraft, the evil one, jealousy and revenge among actors of the 19th century as well as the 20th and even the 21st centuries. Macbeth is a perfect occasion for all those to come together and try to re-enact a "missing" version of Macbeth that probably never existed.

That enables the author to bring back up the famous Dr Dee and his camarilla of nice witchcraft but the author did not push the pawn far enough. Witchcraft was a major crime under Henry VIII, and Anne Boleyn was accused of such practices in order for Henry VIII to get rid of her and get her beheaded which was an honor and privilege when the normal punishment should have been burnt at the stake after various ordeals. One person at the time did not forget about it. That was Elizabeth I, her very daughter, and one of her decisions was to decriminalize witchcraft though she maintained stealing or getting unwanted advantages with such practices, provided it was proved not only rumored, a minor crime assimilated to lying and stealing, which it was. James I, the Scottish Stuart, as soon as he ascended the throne re-established witchcraft as a major crime punished by death. Why the author did not mention those facts is beyond me. Witchcraft was a political battle not only in the back corridors of the palaces at the time and England will have to wait for the Glorious Revolution for witchcraft to be finally decriminalized.

The novel is well built as for suspense and twisted developments and it does not take an over-gullible reader to believe the twists in the fabric, nor to see the potential swerves and U-turns the plot may take. Some are quite falling on us by surprise. If you like haunted castles and fiery bleak but dense and dark rituals, you will enjoy every page of this book.

I think though some passages are slightly too slow or at least slower than others and some twists are pre-fabricated. But that is an impression I got four or five times, only. I doubt very much you could get in and get out of the British Museum that easily, especially while stealing a couple of artifacts and killing a couple of people, one in an Aztec ritual.

But there is another thing that bothers me. All the art of Shakespeare is based on numerical keys and particularly three and four; Three and the triple goddess is present several times and not as a symbol of witchcraft or whatever. The moon, one side of the triple goddess, Selene, is the thing Juliet does not want to swear by because it is inconstant and triple of course: waxing, full and waning. Each play seems to have its number. Richard III works on nine, the diabolical number. No surprise. As you like it or A Midsummer Night's Dream works on four with the ultimate four weddings or reunions at the end of these plays, hence eight and the second coming. Three is disruptive and the novel here does not insist enough on that triple goddess.

Actually it works slightly sideways and instead of quoting the triple Goddess Hecate-Selene-Diana it heavily insists on Medea who was supposedly dedicated to the triple goddess in its Hecate (quoted once in the novel but not in connection with Medea) identity. If she had been able to work along that wider line, the author would have understood and used the battle of women for recognition under Elizabeth, completely rejected under the Stuarts, absolutely victimized under the Puritans and finally liberated under Queen Mary II and Queen Anne. The novel definitely misses that historical stake (and not that of witch burning) of Shakespeare's time always present in all his plays even when the woman is the wicked one like Lady Macbeth.

The female characters of that novel are essential but they are altogether definitely of second order and Kate will close the novel on a half expected but unfulfilled reunion with Ben who walks away unreachd. A perfect and final image of female frustration. Shakespeare deserves better.

Dr Jacques COULARDEAU

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Good plot but with little character development

By Bob

This book has a convoluted plot. Although set in the present the style of writing is more 1930s and although the plot is explored at great length (almost 500 pages) it is slow paced.

Without some knowledge of the plot of Macbeth and the associated superstitions surrounding the play this book is not an easy read. My main criticism is that there is little character development and although the plot has great potential without being able to relate to the characters I found it a dull read.

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