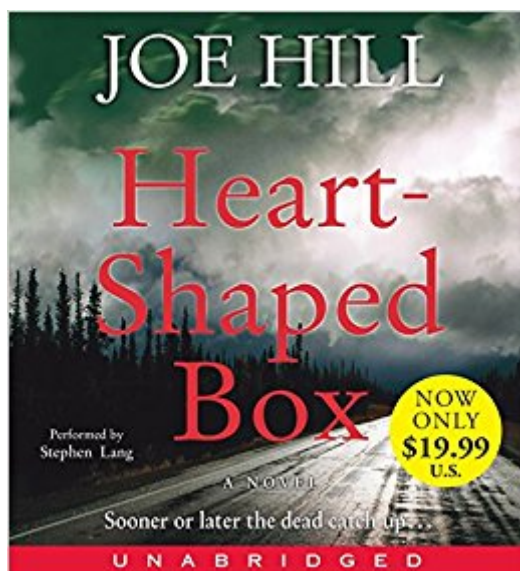


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# Heart-Shaped Box Low Price CD



## Synopsis

The remarkable debut novel by a new master of dark fantasy...Heart-Shaped Box  
Judas Coyne is a collector of the macabre: a cookbook for cannibals...a used hangman's noose...a snuff film. An aging death-metal rock god, his taste for the unnatural is widely known. But nothing he possesses is as unlikely or as dreadful as his latest discovery, a thing so terrible-strange, Jude can't help but reach for his wallet. I will sell my stepfather's ghost to the highest bidder....For a thousand dollars, Jude will become the proud owner of a dead man's suit, said to be haunted by a restless spirit. He isn't afraid. He has spent a lifetime coping with ghosts of an abusive father, of the lovers he callously abandoned, of the bandmates he betrayed. What's one more? But what UPS delivers to his door in a black heart-shaped box is no imaginary or metaphorical ghost. It's the real thing. And suddenly the suit's previous owner is everywhere: behind the bedroom door... seated in Jude's restored vintage Mustang...standing outside his window...staring out from his widescreen TV. Waiting with a gleaming razor blade on a chain dangling from one hand....A multiple-award winner for his short fiction, author Joe Hill immediately vaults into the top echelon of dark fantasists with a masterwork brimming with relentless thrills and acid terror.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Do you sleep with the light on? Are you in the habit of checking your doors and windows before you go to bed? Maybe even checking under your bed? If you are about to crack open Joe Hill's chilling thriller Heart-Shaped Box, you might want to rethink your nighttime habits--Hill's story about an

aging rock star (with a penchant for macabre artifacts) who buys a haunted suit online will scare you silly. But don't take our word for it. We asked bestselling authors (and masters of dark terror tales themselves) Scott Smith, and Harlan Coben to read *Heart-Shaped Box* and give us their take. Check out their reviews below, and you might want to pick up a nightlight while you're at it.

--Daphne Durham Guest Reviewer: Scott Smith  
In 1993, Scott Smith wowed readers with his stunning debut thriller, *A Simple Plan*. Thirteen years later, he spooked us again with *The Ruins*, a horror-thriller about four Americans traveling in Mexico who stumble across a nightmare in the jungle. The set-up for Joe Hill's novel, *Heart-Shaped Box*, is appealingly simple. Jude Coyne, an aging rock star, buys himself a dead man's suit. He acquires it online, lured by the promise that the dead man's ghost will be included in his purchase. Jude thinks this is a joke, of course. He also assumes the seller is a stranger. We soon discover that he's wrong on both counts, however, and from this point on the story moves with an exhilarating urgency. Jude wants the ghost gone; the ghost wants Jude dead. We watch, chapter-by-chapter, as they battle for survival. "Watch" is the appropriate word, too, because this is an extremely visual book. Hill's prose is lean and precise, and he renders Jude's world with impressive confidence. It feels solid, every detail both correct and fresh. And this physicality provides a firm platform for the book's otherworldly happenings, which seem all the more frightening for being so securely grounded. Hill has a flawless sense of pacing. His narrative never flags, nor does it ever move so quickly as to outrun itself. And one can sense his literary ambition pushing at the margins of the genre. There are times when his writing, for all its spare efficiency, seems to jump away from him, stopping one small step short of poetry. An e-mail to Jude from the ghost (trust me, it's not as absurd as it sounds) could even pass for something ee cummings might've written, in an especially morbid mood. And toward the end of the book, when Hill describes a trip down death's "night road" in a '65 Mustang, the passage has a startlingly lyrical beauty. The story's horror ultimately has as much to do with Jude Coyne's past--his mistakes, abandonments and betrayals--as with anything supernatural. Jude has caused a lot of pain over the years, moving through life with a carelessness that verges on the callous. His battle with the ghost brings this behavior into sharp relief, forcing him to reflect upon his own capacity for cruelty. This dawning self-awareness leavens the book's bleakness and gore (and it is delightfully gory in places) with an unexpected sweetness. Despite our initial impression, Jude is gradually revealed--both to himself and the reader--as an essentially decent, even kind man. It's this kindness, this fledgling ability to love and be loved, that will ultimately be of crucial consequence in his death struggle with the ghost. And it's what makes Hill's debut not only well-written and terrifying, but also--as it draws to its close--surprisingly moving. So go ahead, take a chance, and open his *Heart-Shaped Box*. I

think you'll be happy you did. --Scott Smith    Guest Reviewer: Harlan Coben

Harlan Coben is the author of the beloved Myron Bolitar series about a wisecracking sports agent, as well as stunning stand-alone novels like *The Innocent* and his breakout thriller *Tell No One*. His new novel *The Woods* releases on April 17, 2007. You, dear reader, are obviously somewhat versed in making online purchases, so today, immediately after you click on the yellow "Add to Shopping Cart" on the top right hand corner of this page, why not do an online search and buy something totally unique? Like, say, a vengeful ghost. That is what rock-star Judas Coyne does, thinking it will be a laugh, fun for his "sick-o" collection of such things. It seems a random buy, but Judas soon learns that it is anything but. This particular ghost is one Craddock McDermott, step-father to recent suicide victim and boy, is he cranky. He demands revenge for his step-daughter's death, which he blames on Judas's shabby treatment of her. Or is he after something else? There are readers who will give you a better plot summary. Don't read them too closely because Joe Hill provides plenty of fun surprises. *Heart-Shaped Box* is a true spine-tingler. I don't use that hyphenated word much anymore. We have seen and read it all, haven't we? But right away, in the first chapter, there was a subtle line that made the hairs on the back of my neck go up in a way I haven't experienced since I first discovered great horror as a teenager. Hill writes with a sure hand. The prose is compelling. Like most memorable tales of horror, this book is more about redemption than scary moments--though *Heart-Shaped Box* has plenty of scares. They are visceral, shocking and very well done. The characters are flawed and real. The father-son relationship adds texture and surprising poignancy. So here's the thing. My guess is, you won't find a ghost to buy online, but if you read the *Heart-Shaped Box*, you will be getting something that will haunt you and startle you and stay with you and yes, visit you in your dreams. Sleep well, dear reader. --Harlan Coben

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--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Starred Review. This first novel by Hill, the second son of Stephen King, provides the perfect raw material for Lang to create an auditory world so convincing that the listener will feel as if they have seen a film by the time they are through. The complex plot can be simply stated: as a lark, retired heavy metal star Judas Coyne buys a haunted suit online. The ghost turns out to be the very angry stepfather of an ex-groupie/lover of Coyne's who killed herself after he sent her away. The relentless ghost is there to kill Judas and anyone who tries to help him. Lang's superb narration is nearly hypnotic in its calm delivery, perfect as backdrop for the action and horror that surrounds it. His Coyne is reminiscent of John Goodman, deep and understated, with a foundation of confidence

with a barely perceptible trace of a Southern accent. Each disk starts with a bit of Nine Inch Nails – a heavy haunting electronica, an ideal tone setter for the journey. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Debut novelist Joe Hill throws out the horror playbook with this modern spin on the traditional ghost story dubbed Heart-Shaped Box. The only thing that aging death-metalist Judas Coyne loves more than sleeping with pretty Goth chicks half his age is collecting macabre memorabilia, from Mexican snuff films to cookbooks for cannibals. Naturally, when Jude's doting assistant tells him about a bonafide ghost being auctioned online in the form of a dead man's garish suit, Jude didn't think twice about this ghastly purchase. No sooner does the suit arrive that he and Jude's latest in a succession of pierced twenty-something admirers he christens by their respective homegrown states are mercilessly terrorized by the vindictive ghost of Craddock McDermott, stepfather of a young groupie that Jude tossed aside before she committed suicide (seemingly over being callously discarded by the self-indulgent rock star). Craddock, a skilled hypnotist and dowser in his former life, uses his amplified powers of persuasion to wage war on Coyne's sanity, by urging him to murder Georgia and his faithful dogs. As Jude and Georgia hit the road with Craddock hot on their heels in his ghostly pickup truck, Jude realizes there's more to this vendetta from beyond the grave than meets the eye...and Jude will be forced to confront not only this sexagenarian poltergeist, but himself as well. Author Joe Hill may be the new kid on the block, but his ability to fashion brisk, tight prose demonstrates both a mastery of the English language and a sheer vivid imagination. By now, most readers are aware that Joe Hill (né Joseph Hillstrom King) is the progeny of undisputed horror master, Stephen King. After reading Heart-Shaped Box, it's markedly clear that when it comes to writing quality horror, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Hill's literary style and hard-hitting voice are remarkable; and his uncompromising, fully-realized characters serve to anchor this paranormal plot firmly in reality. Hill possesses both a clear knack for manifesting complex, tormented characters that stick with readers even when they (the readers) would prefer otherwise, and an aptitude for illustrating just how scrupulous humans can bring devastation to those whom they ought to hold nearest and dearest. Judas Coyne is a standout character – so human in his imperfection and a far cry from the usual clueless horror-fiction protagonist. While

most readers will find it difficult to relate to Jude Coyne, this loathing, out-to-pasture musician is an anti-hero worth rooting for. That goes double for Georgia who's armed with enough spunk and sharp one-liners to make her more than just a shallow ex-stripper with piercings in all the wrong places, but rather a likeable character that one hopes will come out on the side of redemption after this horrifying and painful journey. Heart-Shaped Box doesn't read like a rookie effort. Early passages featuring the ghostly old man with black, scribbled-out eyes lurking in the shadows of Jude's rural New York fief are rife with tension and sure to get under one's skin. This satisfying debut is as hair-raising as it is multilayered. Horror aficionados will definitely want to take a spin on that nightroad!

I've read many horror / suspense stories and seen almost every movie in that genre but I have to say that Joe Hill is one of the best authors I've had the pleasure of being scared by! To say that this story is packed with action and fear would be an understatement. He really had me guessing about the outcome of the main characters' futures as you can never really predict what's coming next. There's no need to compare Mr. Hill to the other great horror authors but he can stand proudly alongside all of them, I think. It's original, frightening, and downright chilling at times but it also contains a faint glimmer of hope throughout. The characters are very original and sometimes make unlikely heroes which made them occasionally hard to cheer for. When purchasing this book, I thought I was taking a chance on an unknown author, at least unknown to me, but it was definitely worth the risk. I hope this author proliferates and writes many more books as this one was most assuredly as excellent as they come.

Jude is a 50 year old plus retired metal musician whose music still is loved by the teen and pre-teen crowd. In turn, he loves them. A lot. And each one for a brief period of time. He seems to focus on those who have been hurt, perhaps by parents, perhaps by society in general. Eventually somewhere in the relationship the girls bore him. He sends them away, but he made a mistake with Anna (aka Florida). She killed herself and Sister Jessica blames Jude. She decides that there must be revenge; Jude must pay with his life. The instrument for vengeance will be the father of Anna and Jessie. But he is dead. No problem, Jessie will just send her father's ghost to Jude; a wrathful father will, for revenge, take Jude's life. When the ghost first appears, Jude is with his latest girl, Marybeth (aka Georgia). She feels an imminent separation is coming, although she is still in love. She becomes an important ally of Jude's in

the fight with the ghost. Other important allies are grandma Bammy, a couple of dogs, and Jude's comatose father. Father Craddock (the vengeful ghost) is not the only ghost popping in and out of the sensibilities of Jude and Georgia. There is also Anna, Craddock's daughter who committed suicide. There is a lot of shifting realities between inhabitants of the dead and the living. The shifting is sometimes aided and sometimes inhibited by music. This is a very fast moving story that demands reader attention. When there are so many strange and weird things happening at the same time, I tend to read faster. That is not something to do with this book. There are many important clues and seemingly off-hand comments that are not hidden in the story, but they seem to occur in the middle of fast action segments. It was easy for me to miss them and I found myself going back to make some connections. And then there is the humor which I found mostly in dialogues. It was quite, and well, understated and dry, or even droll. I frequently stopped just to appreciate some of the humor. After finishing this book, I read the preview pages for other Joe Hill books. I was pleasantly surprised to see that they were not just clones of Heart Shaped Box. This led me to the author pages and more Joe Hill books. I recommend this for the genre "weird."

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