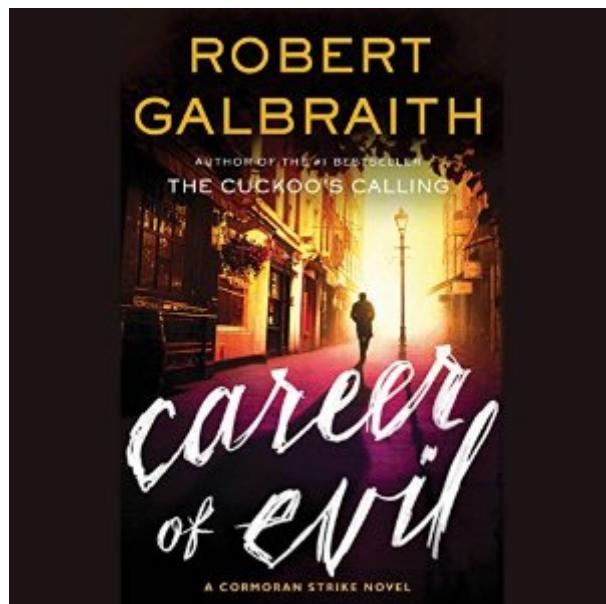


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Career Of Evil



Synopsis

Audie Award, Mystery, 2016 When a mysterious package is delivered to Robin Ellacott, she is horrified to discover that it contains a woman's severed leg. Her boss, private detective Cormoran Strike, is less surprised but no less alarmed. There are four people from his past whom he thinks could be responsible - and Strike knows that any one of them is capable of sustained and unspeakable brutality. With the police focusing on the one suspect Strike is increasingly sure is not the perpetrator, he and Robin take matters into their own hands and delve into the dark and twisted worlds of the other three men. But as more horrendous acts occur, time is running out for the two of them.... *Career of Evil* is the third in the highly acclaimed series featuring private detective Cormoran Strike and his assistant, Robin Ellacott. A fiendishly clever mystery with unexpected twists around every corner, it is also a gripping story of a man and a woman at a crossroads in their personal and professional lives.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 17 hours and 58 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Hachette Audio

Audible.com Release Date: October 20, 2015

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B014JXQMEG

Best Sellers Rank: #74 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers #286 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature #362 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Crime

Customer Reviews

Another good addition to the series. There's a lot to like about *Career of Evil* but, unfortunately, a few major shortcomings. Without spoiling anything, this time out our hero is trying to nab a serial killer with a taste for dismemberment. It might be one of three suspects Strike has a history with, or perhaps another unknown killer. The plot has been detailed by others at length, so I'll just offer some thoughts about the pluses and minuses: The Good: - Robin, one of the most interesting and likable characters JKR has ever created, co-stars in the novel and her identity is superbly defined -

Strike's backstory is addressed in more detail, and it's very compelling - The settings are vividly depicted, with excellent descriptions of sites all over seedy and posh London and Northern England - Heavy topics like rape, child abuse, and mental illness are thoughtfully considered and woven into the narrative without being overly preachy - The relationship between Robin and Strike continues to develop in a complex, unpredictable way - The dialog is consistently excellent and realistic - Much less emphasis on Strike's disability, which plagued the last novel - The reveal, unlike the first two novels, is not an endless explanatory monologue -- it's thankfully short and sweet**These positives far outweigh the following negatives, definitely making *Career of Evil* a worthwhile read.

Nevertheless...The Bad: - Many of the characters are one-dimensional. While Strike and Robin are increasingly depicted as complicated, multifaceted protagonists, most others are portrayed without any significant depth. The bad guys are REALLY bad; the victims are hopelessly innocent, others just occupy space. Some, like Matthew and Whittaker, are cartoonishly described and Detective Carver is, to put it bluntly, Vernon Dursely - Someone needs to pluck up the courage and let the author know she needs an editor. The book is downright plodding at times. - The basic premise of the plot is forced and improbable (BIID? Really?) - Each chapter leads with lyrics from a Blue Oyster Cult song. These lines figure into the story (sort of), but this silly gimmick gets old fast - The violence (and there is quite a lot) is gratuitously over the top, as if JKR is determined to identify herself as an adult writer - The comic element featured in the first two novels is largely absent in the thirdThe Ugly: - The book features intermittent passages shown from the killer's perspective which are eye-rollingly bad. I hate to say that but it's true. Think of every serial killer you've ever seen in a movie or read about in a book, and that's the stereotype you get -- right down to the killer's referring to a woman as "It" a la Buffalo Bill in *Silence of the Lambs*. These sections are so subpar, so cliched, and so unimaginative that it's hard to believe that JKR wrote them. I suppose they are included to give the narrative an additional angle but, rather than compliment the story's trajectory, they dumb it down. Despite its drawbacks, *Career of Evil* is a very good read. Slow at times, but enjoyable. As said above, the positives outweigh the negatives. In particular, the maturing of Robin's and Strike's characters is a leap forward. I wouldn't be surprised if this book is regarded as the most popular one in the series so far, although the hyper-violent yet cliched serial killer may be off-putting to some.

Robert Galbraith (AKA, J.K. Rowling) has done it again with this third book in her excellent Cormoran Strike series. This time, the story ensues when Cormoran's assistant and detective-in-training, Robin Ellacott receives the severed leg of an unknown woman in a package

delivered to the office. Cormoran and Robin begin their hunt for the killer, but it's hard to know at times who is the hunter and who the hunted. A ruthless killer is out there, and Cormoran's life is not the only one on the line. This story is wonderful blend of suspense, humor, and intrigue as Cormoran and Robin continue their subtle dance as detective and assistant; and perhaps something more. At the same time, tension between Cormoran and the police investigating the crime continues as, unfortunately, his past successes in solving crimes have highlighted their failures. The best thing about every one of these books is that Rowling brings her great gift of storytelling to a new realm of fiction. The characters are vivid, the plots intricate and believable. The worlds Rowling builds are so well woven, you feel yourself pulled into the story. You become one of the characters. To me, it seems the "Harry Potter" series was just the opening act for one of the most gifted writers of my generation..

I do not like slasher-psycho-thrillers, and that is absolutely what this book is. Robin is constantly in danger of falling prey to a machete-wielding psychopath. Enough severed body parts figure in the story to keep the reader constantly on edge. Had I known that this book would be such a departure from the first two books in this series, I never would have purchased it. The plot is convoluted in the extreme, the several unseen suspects are hard to keep straight, and Robin's continuing subservience to the odious Matthew (her fiancé) is tiresome and out of sync with what we otherwise know of her character. I put the book down in either boredom or disgust several times. It took me weeks to finish it, which I eventually did more out of curiosity about where the author was going with it, than out of any feeling of being compelled by interest in the plot or the characters. On the positive side, the plot reveals some important information about Robin's history that helps to explain her otherwise inexplicable devotion to Matthew. These developments open up the possibility that Robin will resolve her frustrating relationship with Matthew, but, sadly, the story does not deliver on that promise. The clue that finally provides the key to the slasher's identity is so obscure that only a specialist in the flora of Cornwall could reasonably be expected to have noticed it. The mystery is solved by an out-of-the-blue brainstorm, rather than developing from any careful detective work. This is dangerously close to the dreaded "Deus ex machina" and is distinctly unsatisfying to this reader, who likes his mysteries to be solved by means of investigative skills. As the plot moves toward its climax, the relationship between Robin and Strike is severely strained by impulsive actions on both their parts. Their mutual over-reactions feel like something out of a teenage heart-throb melodrama, complete with slamming doors and gusts of tears. The conclusion of the book hints at their reconciliation, but in a scene that is such a cliché that I risked damage to

my Kindle when I threw it down in disgust. I enjoyed the first two books in this series, and was deeply disappointed in the direction the author chose to go with this third installment. I doubt very much that I will read another one.

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