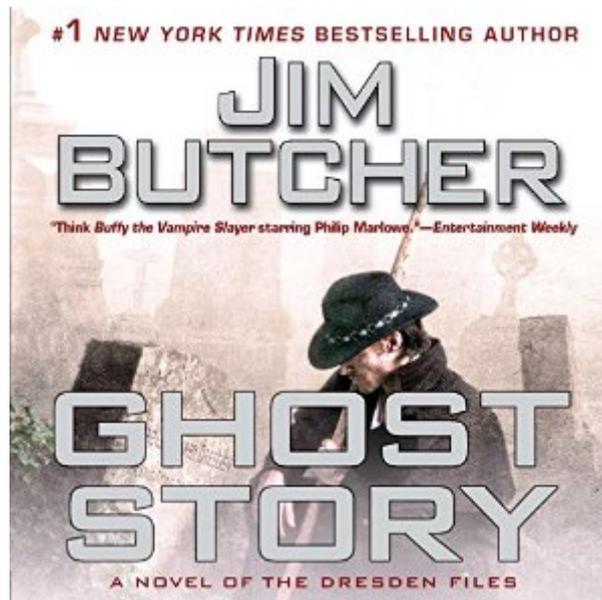


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Ghost Story: A Novel Of The Dresden Files



Synopsis

When an unknown someone shoots him and leaves him to die, Harry Dresden hopes he might be heading to a better place. Unfortunately being dead doesn't make Harry's life any easier. Trapped between life and death, he learns that his friends are in serious trouble. Only by finding his murderer can he save his friends and move on - a feat that would be a lot easier if he had a body and access to his powers. Worse still are the malevolent shadows that roam Chicago, controlled by a dark entity that wants Harry to suffer even in death. Now the late Harry Dresden will have to pull off the ultimate trick without using any magic - or face an eternity as just another lost soul....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jim Butcher is one of those authors I count on. Usually his books are like the reading equivalent of a weekend at a five-star hotel with a personal chef and a cabana boy. GHOST STORY was more like a weekend at a four-star hotel with a nice dinner out. Not bad - not even close to it - just not the same superlative wonderfulness that Butcher usually delivers. In GHOST STORY, Harry is forced into a passive role. The title is literal: he's a ghost. He can't do much of anything. He has to stand by and let other people act, or, if he's lucky, persuade them to act according to his instructions. In terms of Harry's character development and moving the series forward, I think this is exactly what Harry needs. For example: there's a sideplot with a gang of kids who are ordered to do a drive by shooting on Murphy's house. Harry ends up hanging out with the top kid, learning about his situation, and then working to change it by rustling up some caretakers and competent adult

supervision. He achieves a better, more humane result than he would have found if he'd been able to jump in and fight, like he usually would. In general, Harry is forced by his circumstances to do a lot of listening, waiting, and reflecting. Harry's always been a smart, thoughtful guy but not someone who dwells unduly on the past. I think that being forced to change his tune is good for him as a person and ultimately for the series - but, just like having Harry be so passive, it's not great for the reading experience. I think half of GHOST STORY might be flashbacks. Taking a stroll down memory lane with Harry is enjoyable...but it's still a STROLL, and Harry Dresden books are usually a lot more like, I don't know, a freight train crashing down Mount Everest.

Six months have passed since Harry was shot and fell into Lake Michigan and much has changed in that time. The spell he'd done to kill the Red Vampire King and all the vampires with him that had kidnapped his daughter, Maggie, wiped out almost every Red Vampire in the world. Only the very young and very weak managed to survive and it left a huge power vacuum throughout the world. Not only is there a lot of fighting and shifting territories, but monsters have arrived from other dimensions to grab their piece as well. But Harry has had no awareness of any time passing when he finds himself in a ghostly version of Chicago and he's offered a choice of passing over or being given the chance to go back and find his killer which would also save the lives of three people close to him. Of course he chooses to help his friends, but it's rather difficult without a body, the use of magic or the ability to communicate most of the time. This is a very different Harry Dresden story than what we are used to. The other books were loaded with action, tension, magic and Harry was always hurt. There is some action but not nearly as much. Harry eventually learns how to use magic against other ghosts, but when it comes to the fighting between those still living, Harry is just a bystander who can't do anything. A good portion of the story has Harry contemplating and reevaluating his past actions and how they affected others. And without the ability to immediately attack or defend, Harry learns to see the reason behind the actions of others and the result is a somewhat gentler man who is willing to extend a hand to help the misguided. Harry's death--his body was never recovered--has greatly affected those closest to him.

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