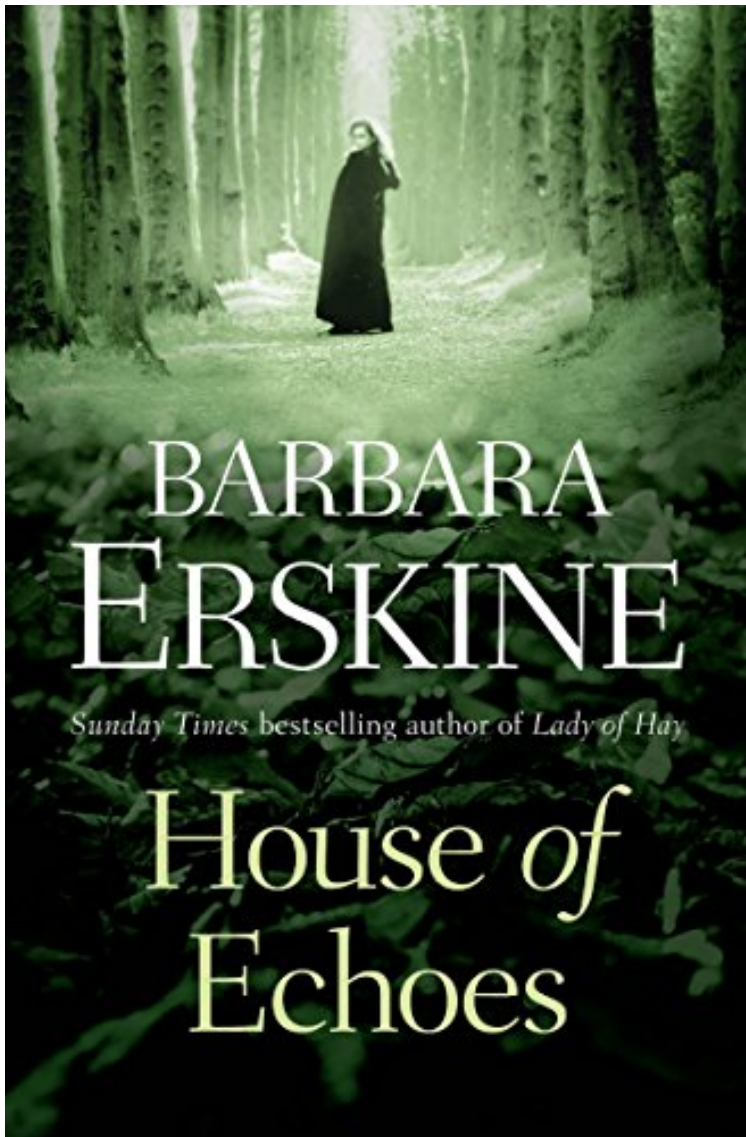


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House of Echoes



Par Barbara Erskine
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWhen Joss, an adopted child, discovers that her real mother has left the beautiful family home, Belheddon Hall, to her, she is thrilled, until she discovers that the Hall is haunted by a presence which will not tolerate husbands or sons living in the house.Joss Grant is eager to begin a new life when she inherits Belheddon Hall. She brings her husband, Luke, and their small son, Tom, to the dilapidated house, and sets about discovering her family roots.But not long after they move in, Tom wakes screaming at night. Joss hears echoing voices and senses an invisible presence watching her from the shadows. Are they spirits from the past? As she learns, with mounting horror, of Belheddons tragic history, she realises that both her family and her own sanity are at the mercy of a violent and powerful energy that seems beyond anyones control.From Publishers WeeklySupernatural chills and romantic sighs are Erskine's

(Midnight Is a Lonely Place) stock in trade, but this outing finds her deficient in both categories. She concludes her latest romance-cum-spook story with a book review praising a first novel by protagonist Jocelyn "Joss" Grant for "leaving the reader clinging to the edge of his chair," but that's wishful thinking as far as this novel is concerned. Adopted as a baby, Joss tracks down her biological mother and learns she has inherited an ancient house in Essex. Ignoring the villagers' superstitious warnings, she moves into Belheddon Hall with her husband, Luke, and her two-year-old son, Tom. Unfortunately, the ensuing strange phenomena—roses left on pillows, and ghostly giggles—frighten Joss more than the reader. Then bruises appear on Tom's arms. Joss suspects ghosts, but Luke suspects Joss. Determined to discover the house's secrets, Joss researches her blighted family tree only to find that no male heir has ever inherited Belheddon. The problem, it turns out, stretches back to the 15th century, when a powerful witch, who lived in the house, cast a spell on King Edward IV that caused him to fall in love with her daughter, Katherine. Over 500 years later, the spell still binds an armor-clad King Edward, who spends eternity making love to all of Katherine's descendants (including Joss), while the bitter Katherine menaces the men of Belheddon. Just when Joss is on the verge of losing her sanity, a village psychic conveniently breaks the ancient curse with surprising ease, forcing an ending that is as illogical as it is happy. Literary Guild/Doubleday Book Club featured alternate. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. Booklist

Faced with financial ruin, Jocelyn and Luke Grant at first view the surprise inheritance of an Essex manor house from Joss' birth mother as a godsend. But who really sent the centuries-old house where boyish voices echo, drifts of icy rose petals appear and then vanish, and a chilling shadow threatens the safety of Luke and his toddler son? When Joss' second child is born, also a boy, it becomes apparent that only the males in the Grant household are threatened, and suspicion falls on Joss. To clear her name and save her family, she must confront and defeat a powerful, ancient presence. Without being overly graphic or ghoulish, Erskine's third novel of the supernatural provides a sensual, shivery thrill ride through a classic English country house. Roberta Johnson