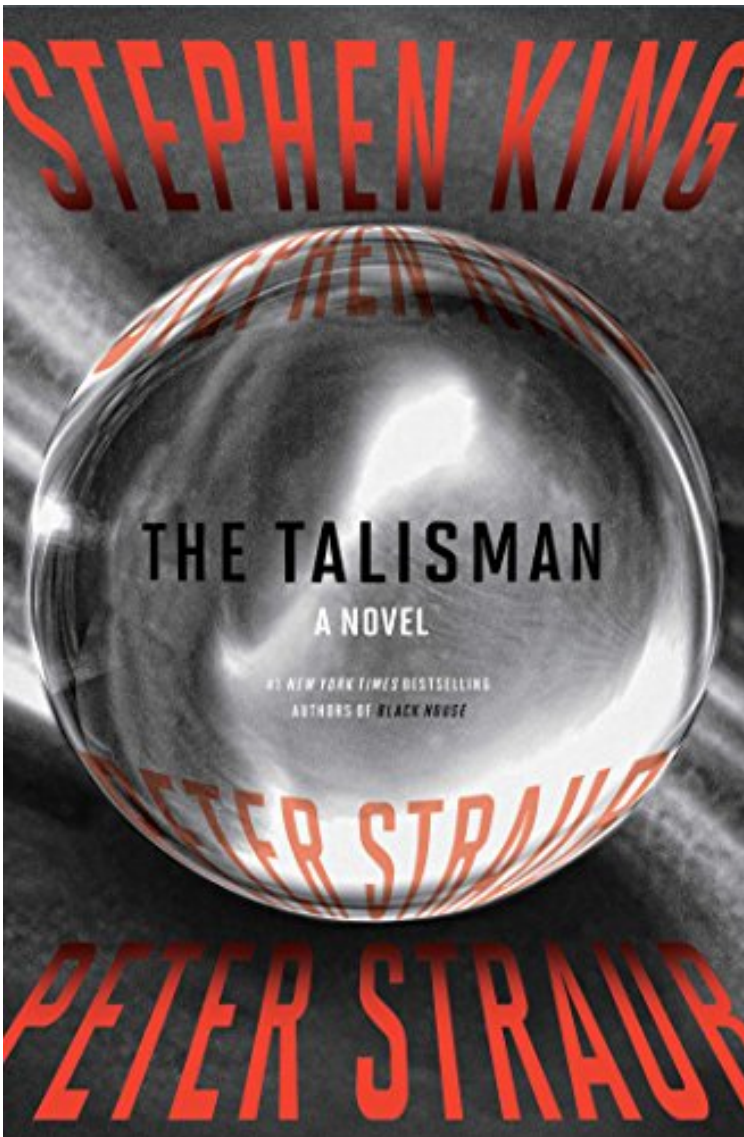


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The Talisman: A Novel



*Par Stephen King, Peter Straub
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Description : Description du produitTo coincide with the publication of Stephen King and Peter Straub's extraordinary new thriller, BLACK HOUSE, here is the story that started it all.On a brisk autumn day, a twelve-year-old boy stands on the shores of the gray Atlantic, near a silent amusement park and a fading ocean resort called the Alhambra. The past has driven Jack Sawyer here: his father is gone, his mother is dying, and the world no longer makes sense. But for Jack everything is about to change. For he has been chosen to make a journey back across America--and into another realm.One of the most influential and heralded works of fantasy ever written, The Talisman is an extraordinary novel of loyalty, awakening, terror, and mystery. Jack Sawyer, on a desperate quest to save his mother's life, must search for a prize across an epic landscape of innocents and monsters, of incredible dangers and even more incredible truths. The prize is essential, but the journey means even more. Let the quest begin. . . .

Prsentation de l'diteurThe iconic, extraordinary (The Washington Post) collaboration between #1 bestselling author Stephen King and Peter Straub an epic thriller about a young boys quest to save his mothers life. Why had twelve-year-old Jack Sawyers mother frantically moved the two of them from Rodeo Drive to a New York City apartment to the Alhambra, a fading ocean resort and shuttered amusement park in New Hampshire? Who or what is she running from? She is dying . . . and even young Jack knows she cant outrun death. But only he can save herfor he has been chosen to search for a prize across an epic landscape of dangers and lies, a realm of innocents and monsters, where everything Jack loves is on the line.ExtraitThe Alhambra Inn and GardensOn September 15th, 1981, a boy named Jack Sawyer stood where the water and land come together, hands in the pockets of his jeans, looking out at the steady Atlantic. He was twelve years old and tall for his age. The sea-breeze swept back his brown hair, probably too long, from a fine, clear brow. He stood there, filled with the confused and painful emotions he had lived with for the last three months--since the time when his mother had closed their house on Rodeo Drive in Los Angeles and, in a flurry of furniture, checks, and real-estate agents, rented an apartment on Central Park West. From that apartment they had fled to this quiet resort on New Hampshire's tiny seacoast. Order and regularity had disappeared from Jack's world. His life seemed as shifting, as uncontrolled, as the heaving water before him. His mother was moving him through the world, twitching him from place to place; but what moved his mother?His mother was running, running.Jack turned around, looking up the empty beach first to the left, then to the right. To the left was Arcadia Funworld, an amusement park that ran all racket and roar from Memorial Day to Labor Day. It stood empty and still now, a heart between beats. The roller coaster was a scaffold against that featureless, overcast sky, the uprights and angled supports like strokes done in charcoal. Down there was his new friend, Speedy Parker, but the boy could not think about Speedy Parker now. To the right was the Alhambra Inn and Gardens, and that was where the boy's thoughts relentlessly took him. On the day of their arrival Jack had momentarily thought he'd seen a rainbow over its dormered and gambreled roof. A sign of sorts, a promise of better things. But there had been no rainbow. A weathervane spun right-left, left-right, caught in a crosswind. He had got out of their rented car, ignoring his mother's unspoken desire for him to do something about the luggage, and looked up. Above the spinning brass cock of the weathervane hung only a blank sky."Open the trunk and get the bags, sonny boy," his mother had called to him. "This broken-down old actress wants to check in and hunt down a drink." "An elementary martini," Jack had said. " 'You're not so old,' you were supposed to say." She was pushing herself effortfully off the carseat."You're not so old."She gleamed at him--a glimpse of the old, go-to-hell Lily Cavanaugh (Sawyer), queen of two decades' worth of B movies. She straightened her back. "It's going to be okay here, Jacky," she had said. "Everything's going to be okay here. This is a good place."A seagull drifted over the roof of the hotel, and for a second Jack had the disquieting sensation that the weathervane had taken flight."We'll get away from the phone calls for a while, right?" "Sure," Jack had said. She wanted to hide from Uncle Morgan, she wanted no more wrangles with her dead husband's business partner, she wanted to crawl into bed with an elementary martini and hoist the covers over her head. . . .Mom, what's wrong with you?There was too much death, the world was half-made of death. The gull cried out overhead."Andelay, kid, andelay," his mother had said. "Let's get into the Great Good Place."Then, Jack had thought: At least there's always Uncle Tommy to help out in case things get really hairy.But Uncle Tommy was already dead; it was just that the news was still on the other end of a lot of telephone wires.2The Alhambra hung out over the water, a great Victorian pile on gigantic granite blocks which seemed to merge almost seamlessly with the low headland--a jutting collarbone of granite here on the few scant miles of New Hampshire seacoast. The formal gardens on its landward side were barely visible from Jack's beachfront angle--a dark green flip of hedge, that was all. The brass cock stood against the sky, quartering west by northwest. A plaque in the lobby announced that it was here, in 1838, that the Northern Methodist Conference had held the first of the great New England abolition rallies. Daniel Webster had spoken at fiery, inspired length. According to the plaque, Webster had said: "From this day forward, know that slavery as an American institution has begun to sicken and must soon die in all our states and territorial lands."3So they had arrived, on that day last week which had ended the turmoil of their months in New York. In Arcadia Beach there were no lawyers employed by Morgan Sloat popping out of cars and waving papers which had to be signed, had to be filed, Mrs. Sawyer. In Arcadia Beach the telephones did not ring out from noon until three in the morning (Uncle Morgan appeared to forget that residents of Central Park West were not on California time). In fact the telephones in Arcadia Beach rang not at all.On the way into the little resort town, his mother driving with squinty-eyed concentration, Jack had seen only one person on the streets--a mad old man desultorily pushing an empty

shopping cart along a sidewalk. Above them was that blank gray sky, an uncomfortable sky. In total contrast to New York, here there was only the steady sound of the wind, hooting up deserted streets that looked much too wide with no traffic to fill them. Here were empty shops with signs in the windows saying open weekends only or, even worse, see you in June! There were a hundred empty parking places on the street before the Alhambra, empty tables in the Arcadia Tea and Jam Shoppe next door. And shabby-crazy old men pushed shopping carts along deserted streets. "I spent the happiest three weeks of my life in this funny little place," Lily told him, driving past the old man (who turned, Jack saw, to look after them with frightened suspicion--he was mouthing something but Jack could not tell what it was) and then swinging the car up the curved drive through the front gardens of the hotel. For that was why they had bundled everything they could not live without into suitcases and satchels and plastic shopping bags, turned the key in the lock on the apartment door (ignoring the shrill ringing of the telephone, which seemed to penetrate that same keyhole and pursue them down the hall); that was why they had filled the trunk and back seat of the rented car with all their overflowing boxes and bags and spent hours crawling north along the Henry Hudson Parkway, then many more hours pounding up I-95--because Lily Cavanaugh Sawyer had once been happy here. In 1968, the year before Jack's birth, Lily had been nominated for an Academy Award for her role in a picture called *Blaze*. *Blaze* was a better movie than most of Lily's, and in it she had been able to demonstrate a much richer talent than her usual bad-girl roles had revealed. Nobody expected Lily to win, least of all Lily; but for Lily the customary cliché about the real honor being in the nomination was honest truth--she did feel honored, deeply and genuinely, and to celebrate this one moment of real professional recognition, Phil Sawyer had wisely taken her for three weeks to the Alhambra Inn and Gardens, on the other side of the continent, where they had watched the Oscars while drinking champagne in bed. (If Jack had been older, and had he had an occasion to care, he might have done the necessary subtraction and discovered that the Alhambra had been the place of his essential beginning.) When the Supporting Actress nominations were read, according to family legend, Lily had growled to Phil, "If I win this thing and I'm not there, I'll do the Monkey on your chest in my stiletto heels." But when Ruth Gordon had won, Lily had said, "Sure, she deserves it, she's a great kid." And had immediately poked her husband in the middle of the chest and said, "You'd better get me another part like that, you big-shot agent you." There had been no more parts like that. Lily's last role, two years after Phil's death, had been that of a cynical ex-prostitute in a film called *Motorcycle Maniacs*. It was that period Lily was commemorating now, Jack knew as he hauled the baggage out of the trunk and the back seat. A D'Agostino bag had torn right down through the big d'ag, and a jumble of rolled-up socks, loose photographs, chessmen and the board, and comic books had dribbled over all else in the trunk. Jack managed to get most of this stuff into other bags. Lily was moving slowly up the hotel steps, pulling herself along on the railing like an old lady. "I'll find the bellhop," she said without turning around. Jack straightened up from the bulging bags and looked again at the sky where he was sure he had seen a rainbow. There was no rainbow, only that uncomfortable, shifting sky. Then: "Come to me," someone said behind him in a small and perfectly audible voice. "What?" he asked, turning around. The empty gardens and drive stretched out before him. "Yes?" his mother said. She looked crickle-backed, leaning over the knob of the great wooden door. "Mistake," he said. There had been no voice, no rainbow. He forgot both and looked up at his mother, who was struggling with the vast door. "Hold on, I'll help," he called, and trotted up the steps, awkwardly carrying a big suitcase and a straining paper bag filled with sweaters. 4 Until he met Speedy Parker, Jack had moved through the days at the hotel as unconscious of the passage of time as a sleeping dog. His entire life seemed almost dreamlike to him during these days, full of shadows and inexplicable transitions. Even the terrible news about Uncle Tommy which had come down the telephone wires the night before had not entirely awakened him, as shocking as it had been. If Jack had been a mystic, he might have thought that other forces had taken him over and were manipulating his mother's life and his own. Jack S... From Library Journal The first (1984) collaboration between horror/fantasy writers King and Straub, this book has been reissued in multiple formats to coincide with the publication of its sequel, *Black House*. In *The Talisman*, 12-year-old Jack Sawyer takes on a quest in this and a parallel world, the "Territories," to acquire a mystical talisman that will save the life of his dying mother and her "twinner," the Queen of the Territories. Jack "flips" back and forth between worlds during his journey, finding his way through and past representatives of good and evil in both. Award-winning reader Frank Muller continues his long string of superlative performances. This program will generate lots of demand a must for current fiction collections. Also available in the newer, highly compressed MP3-CD format, which requires a CD player that is MP3-compatible or a computer with CD-ROM drive and MP3 player software loaded. Kristen L. Smith, Loras

