

Shadow Child

Joseph A. Citro

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To outsiders, the deep, impenetrable forest that blankets Vermont's Green Mountains gives the state its peaceful and verdant mystique, but those same dark woods hide a secret from pre-history that reaches menacingly into the present. Joseph A. Citro's widely read publications about the more haunting history, legends, and lore of New England have earned him a reputation as an expert on themes of the supernatural. In this book (first published in 1987), however, he deftly melds real-life ancient ruins, a keen eye for the social fabric of small-town Vermont, and a soaring imagination to fashion a gripping tale of a family's life-or-death struggle to save their farm from an enemy far more devastating than banks, taxes, or land developers.

Eric Nolan is a man already too familiar with death. His brother's long-ago disappearance, the loss of his parents, and his wife's recent demise in an auto accident have left him near the edge physically and emotionally. In desperation he returns to his boyhood haunt, the family farm in rural Antrim, Vermont, now occupied by his cousin, Pamela, her husband, Clint, and Luke, their four-year-old son. But any solace Eric might find there is short-lived. Something terrible is going on in the woods on Pinnacle Mountain and it seems to be centered around a mysterious stone structure that, a local historian believes may be the relic of an ancient race.

The mystery deepens as people begin to vanish one by one, first a village policeman, then a local hermit, a researcher, and finally Clint himself. As baffling and violent incidents continue it becomes harder to deny that a powerful and malevolent force is at work in the Green Mountains, a force that has targeted young Luke. Though it defies Eric's every rational instinct, he must ultimately confront a reality he can neither accept nor deny. As he and the others struggle to quell the rising tide of evil, the siege escalates to a brutal battle for life itself. Citro twists every shock possible out of this finely crafted gothic thriller that tests the limits of legend and belief.



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