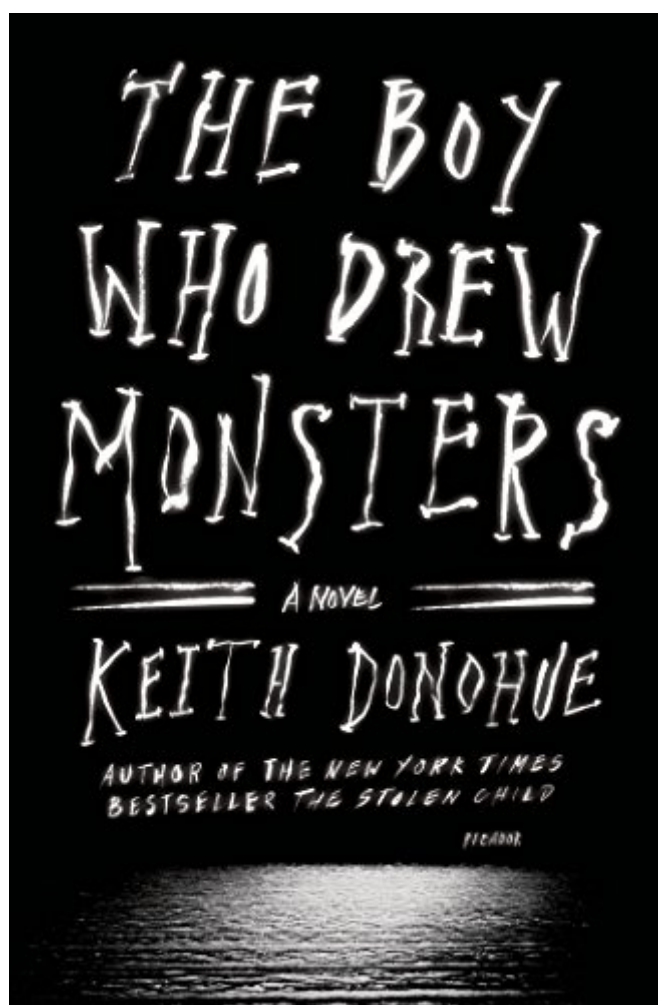


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The Boy Who Drew Monsters: A Novel



Synopsis

From the New York Times bestselling author of *The Stolen Child* comes a hypnotic literary horror novel about a young boy trapped inside his own world, whose drawings blur the lines between fantasy and reality. Ever since he nearly drowned in the ocean three years earlier, ten-year-old Jack Peter Keenan has been deathly afraid to venture outdoors. Refusing to leave his home in a small coastal town in Maine, Jack Peter spends his time drawing monsters. When those drawings take on a life of their own, no one is safe from the terror they inspire. His mother, Holly, begins to hear strange sounds in the night coming from the ocean, and she seeks answers from the local Catholic priest and his Japanese housekeeper, who fill her head with stories of shipwrecks and ghosts. His father, Tim, wanders the beach, frantically searching for a strange apparition running wild in the dunes. And the boy's only friend, Nick, becomes helplessly entangled in the eerie power of the drawings. While those around Jack Peter are haunted by what they think they see, only he knows the truth behind the frightful occurrences as the outside world encroaches upon them all. In the tradition of *The Turn of the Screw*, Keith Donohue's *The Boy Who Drew Monsters* is a mesmerizing tale of psychological terror and imagination run wild, a perfectly creepy read for a dark night.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This was a good book that could have been great. I'm a huge fan of great horror, but rarely horror for horror's sake. A story needs to have depth, it needs to have a heart and a mind, and it needs to have great characters for me to love it. *The Boy Who Drew Monsters* was something I discovered on one of my more random adventures in a bookstore, where instead of go to my usual authors (Stephen King; Neil Gaiman; the classic sections for Poe and such), I search for something completely new. The title and cover of this book intrigued me immediately, and I bought it after the awesome description and the hook of a first line: "In the dream house, the boy watched for the monsters under his bed." In short summary, the book is about a troubled child, Jack Peter, whose crippling fear of the outside world has turned him into a recluse at way too young of an age. His parents are troubled, his best friend is a bit frightened of him, and then Jack Peter turns his strangeness to the paper when he begins drawing monsters, and the power of his pictures soon blend the lines between reality and fantasy. It's a great premise, but sadly, that premise is what kept me reading more than anything else. Donohue is a very good writer, but there was something very stiff feeling about his writing, and I was taken out of the trance of reading way more often than I wish I had been. The dialogue just didn't feel right from any character to the point that sometimes I would sort of laugh through my nose, or read it aloud to myself in an attempt to convince myself that it was better than it had sounded in my head, only to end up thinking to myself: "Come on, that's not how people talk."

Just in time for Halloween reading season comes a fine blend of psychological and supernatural horror from Keith Donohue. Donohue has already achieved fame with great literary/fantasy novels like *THE STOLEN CHILD* and *THE ANGELS OF DESTRUCTION*, and also has a Ph.D. in English with a specialization in Irish literature. His latest effort definitely shows signs of classic British/Irish horror tales. While *THE BOY WHO DREW MONSTERS* has already been compared to supernatural classics like Henry James' *THE TURN OF THE SCREW* and Shirley Jackson's *THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE*, I found it to be uniquely modern and stand on its own merit as a psychological masterwork. The central figure is 10-year-old Jack Peter Keenan, who battles with a severe form of Asperger's that includes a major case of agoraphobia. The first was inflicted upon him at birth, while the second came following his near drowning in the ocean behind his home located on the coast of Maine. However, it is not Jack's handicap that impacts the book. Rather, it is the unique power he has to bring to life whatever he puts on paper. He has gone through many different phases or obsessions in his life, with the latest being drawing. The only issue for those close to him is that he

likes to draw monsters. Jack's best friend and neighbor, Nick, becomes aware of Jack's supernatural ability and is deeply concerned --- especially when he finds a copy of a recent drawing of a particularly frightening half-man/half-monster. It isn't so much the depiction of this horrible creature as it is the phrase emblazoned on the paper that states DRAW MORE MONSTERS. Jack's parents, Holly and Tim, do not know what to do with Jack and hope the fear of going outside of the house will pass.

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