



Faces of Fear

John Saul

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Fifteen-year old Allison Shaw may not be beautiful, but she doesn't really care. She is happier hanging with her friends and playing sports than admiring herself in a mirror. But when her mother, Risa, marries the premier plastic surgeon Conrad Dunn, he moves them from Santa Monica to his enormous home in exclusive Bel Air.

Everywhere Allison and her mother look beautiful people have benefited from Conrad's skillful knife. With her new friends' encouragement, Allison and her mother reluctantly agree to her sweet sixteen-gift from Conrad: breast implants.

Risa begins to realize Conrad's obsession with his deceased wife. She discovers not only his fixation with the beautiful dead Margot, but other dark, murky secrets begin to surface, as well, pointing to a more sinister agenda. What else does he have in mind for her daughter? Is it too late to save Allison from the scalpel of her ever so charming husband?

Faces of Fear Details

Date : Published August 12th 2008 by Ballantine Books (first published January 1st 2008)

ISBN : 9780345487056

Author : John Saul

Format : Hardcover 324 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction, Thriller, Suspense, Mystery

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From Reader Review Faces of Fear for online ebook

Philip says

Really enjoyed reading. Good mystery and thriller.

Lori says

I listened to the unabridged audio version of this novel. There were 8 CDs. I really enjoyed the story (the plot, the suspense, the characters, etc.) until I got to CD #7 which I guess one could call this to be 7/8ths into the novel. That is where it fell apart for me. The reason being that it was too far-fetched. Realistic to a certain point (with a plastic surgeon trying to make a 16-year-old look like his beloved, late wife). Then the details, that I will leave out for other readers, that became detailed toward the end of the novel simply seemed too sci-fi. Also, possible but just a little over the top or a lot over the top. I'm glad I enjoyed most of this novel and I love John Saul as a writer so this will not dissuade me from continuing to read his novels.

Maicie says

library. audio book.

So-so story. I was annoyed with the narration. If you can't 'do' voices, don't. The women characters all talked in the soprano range; the men in the bass range. And the teens all talked baby talk. Very distracting.

Pam says

AUTHOR: Saul, John

TITLE: Faces of Fear

DATE READ: 10/09/14

RATING: 4/B

GENRE/PUB DATE/PUBLISHER/# OF PGS Horror-Suspense/2007/Random House/394 pgs

SERIES/STAND-ALONE: S/A

TIME/PLACE: Present/Southern California

CHARACTERS: Alison Shaw 15-yrs old; Risa Shaw: mother & realtor; Michael Shaw; Alison's father and newspaper journalist; Dr. Conrad Dunn; plastic surgeon & Alison's step-father

FIRST LINES: Alison Shaw felt good. Really good. She made the final turn around the smooth cinder track w/ long, easy strides.

COMMENTS: It's been awhile since I've read a John Saul book but I have read most of them over the years. Most of them involve the supernatural and are classified as horror and some are more suspenseful than horror but have elements of horror. Faces of Fear has undertones of horror -- certainly this book can instill fear & terror by what is going on. Alison is an average girl living in Santa Monica -- a nice area of S. CA, but in comparison to Beverly Hills it is low key. She has her friends here and enjoys her school but when her parents separate -- her father leaves her mother for another man, her world is changed. Her parents

eventually realize they are better suited as friends and divorce. Her mother is a career woman and becomes involved w/ Dr. Dunn -- a very famous plastic surgeon to the area's celebrities. When they marry, Alison starts at a new school The Academy and moves into a mansion in Beverly Hills. She is not so sure about all of this but is soon adapting and accepting of this different lifestyle ... even going as far as to want breast augmentation for her 16th birthday. Her friends from before are horrified but the current ones have all had multiple surgical enhancements. At this time there is a serial killer in the area who is honing in on one feature of each woman he kills. One murder involves the removal of the ears, another a nose and so on. There are several things very unnatural and disturbing about these killings -- in addition to the surgical removal of one body part there is also the removal of certain glands. There is no doubt that Dr. Dunn is somehow involved but the suspense and surprise lies in who his accomplice is and then even more so in the true identity of this person and also in what the intentions were to for these body parts. A good read and a reminder why I have enjoyed reading Saul over the years.

Jessica Saam says

Allison Shaw is a teenage girl who's parents divorce after her mother finds her father having an affair with a man. Soon after, her mother marries Conrad Dunn, a wealthy and prestigious plastic surgeon. Allison is uprooted from her surroundings and moves into a massive home and begins attending an exclusive private school. Meanwhile a serial killer is murdering women in a gruesome fashion and stealing their body parts.

I have to say I hated how stereotypical the characters all were. Conrad Dunn was an arrogant and vain man. Risa Shaw played the clueless wife. The girls at Wilson Academy were shallow and fake. Cindy was the jealous former best friend. Even Tina Wong was characterized as the typical hungry borderline unethical news reporter thirsting to get ahead. All of the characters seemed to lack real substance. I also hated the fact that getting plastic surgery at fifteen was portrayed as normal. No one, besides Allison's father and her best friend Cindy, even batted an eye at the idea of her getting a breast implant.

Now on to the positive. The story was fast paced, and there was some very tense scenes. Although I guessed the culprit to the crimes rather early on, I was still eager to find out how the story would play out. Although this wasn't my favorite book, I did enjoy the conclusion and I would read the author again.

Laurie says

Faces of Fear was an average book for writer John Saul. Although I have not read many of his books, this book seemed to lack the luster of some of his other works. In Faces of Fear, Alison Shaw and her mother Rita are left reeling after the departure of Rita's husband who suddenly reveals to them that he is a gay man in love with someone. While their relationship remains amicable, both are left hurting and looking to put their lives back together. Enter Conrad Dunn, a prominent and wealthy plastic surgeon who becomes involved with Rita shortly after the suicide of his beloved wife Margot. A quick courtship results in marriage and Conrad begins to offer services to Alison to improve her appearance. Although Alison was always content with being plain, she eventually relents and Conrad begins to attempt to transform her. Unfortunately his plans are tainted leaving Alison and her family in a battle for their lives. The characters in this book are spectacular; however the action seems to be written from a standard plotline. Woman remarries evil man and the daughter is left in a perilous situation. The twists and turns are numerous but expected leaving little to the

imagination for anyone familiar with this genre. While the style of writing was solid, I was disappointed by this book. I expected more from a seasoned writer with Saul's reputation.

Sara says

This was a good suspense/thriller it had me guessing all the way through the book.

Lorraine says

This book actually kept my interest. Good plot with interesting characters. Very vague information on the character of Daniel/Danielle. Overall enjoyed this book.

More comments on this book

Lorraine- Eve it's not a dream it's a nightmare at times. And he doesn't understand either, Mom. But our wedding vows says till death do us part. He does try and for that I love Him.

Suzanne- Good read, a few lame, cheesy parts but overall a quick and easy read. You will be happy with your husband after you've read this book. LOL

Eve- OK My husband is perfect, what about yours? LOL Oh! I think that was a dream I had? But I love Him!

Mom- My husband is not perfect he doesn't understand anything, but I am not perfect either. We love each other very much.

Louise- Good Book. My husband isn't perfect, but he's good to me and makes me happy. LOL

Dustin Crazy little brown owl says

Faces of Fear by John Saul, read August 2008

Saul's 35th Novel! Plastic surgery, My Space and homosexuality, oh my! Other themes in this book include: wealth, perfection, teens, online predators, self, perception, image, change and ego. This was not bad for a John Saul novel, not bad at all! Right away I found the story intriguing and Saul was able to keep my interest throughout the book, although as the story went on, it became just a little unbelievable. The one thing I am impressed with more than anything is this book's ending! I've been a Saul fan for over a decade (since I first read *The Blackstone Chronicles: The Serial Thriller Complete in One Volume (Blackstone Chronicles)* as a teenager), and this ending was not typical off the wall John Saul; the ending was normal with a nice conclusion to the story.

This book was originally "The Face of Fear" but Saul changed the title slightly so it wouldn't be confused with a Dean Koontz book by the same name. I would still rank *The Homing* and *The Manhattan Hunt Club* higher on the list of Saul's best, but I think fans will enjoy this story of "The Frankenstein Killer"!

Jennifer (INnerSANITY) says

Well.. This book.. I don't know.. It didn't feel like a John Saul book to me.. I've been on a spree of his books.. Just recently having read Devils Labyrinth, House of Reckoning, Suffer the Children, and I enjoyed those books.. This just didn't seem like the same weirdly intriguing paranormal thriller with twisted kids I'm used to from him.. The idea of plastic surgery being the norm for teenage girls IS twisted.. But I found it over the top.. I mean is it really like that in the glamour and glitz lifestyles of the rich?? In any case.. I found the book quick paced.. A fast read.. Which is what I expect and like from John Saul's books.. It was just gruesome enough and suspenseful.. Who was killing these poor women.. What was going to happen to Allison.. That poor dog!!! So overall I did enjoy it enough to want to know what happened.. But it wasn't my favorite of his..

PJ says

So, earlier this year I started a sort of sabbatical, along with a major drop in income. So when Amazon advertised a big sale on Kindle books I seriously stocked up, my list including just about the whole back-catalogue of John Saul (and Richard Laymon). Sadly, that's meant that I've been trolling through layer upon layer of second-rate horror and thrillers, which are really testing my enthusiasm.

This one, a later-career Saul, is a marked improvement on many of the others. It's pretty slow to get started. And, unfortunately the great mystery is not all that difficult to work out. But it is quite coherent, the premise itself is engaging and interesting, and the characters are better-realised than I've experienced with Saul's work previously.

That said, I think Faces of Fear helped me to a realisation—John Saul is not really a horror or thriller writer. He'd probably argue the point, and I'm sure his publisher's marketing team would take issue. But although the subject matter of Sauls works is consistently gruesome and plants his writing squarely in the horror genre, the reality is that most of the hallmarks of good horror are missing. Atmosphere. Suspense. By the time Faces of Fear has started to move forward with some pace, you've already figured out the killer and the plan, and so then it's really just a matter of waiting to see how things play out.

Not that the writing is bad. Saul writes with much more skill than the vast majority of struggling horror writers out there. It's just that his style is very matter-of-fact. Pedestrian, even. It's there. Some events happen. They are adequately described, but they never lift above the everyday. Like the difference between watching a made-for-TV movie and the work of a skilled Hollywood director.

Faces of Fear is worth a read. But I suspect that a month from now I will have to read back over this review and the book's blurb to remember what it was about.

Donna Hazlett says

Book is actually Dean Koontz's Frankenstein, book 1, Lost Souls. Great Book but a big cliffhanger. I'd have book 2 near by.

Darlene says

Hard to believe that Faces of Fear is John Saul's thirty-fifth novel. He published his first novel in 1977 and about five years later I started reading his books and have been a loyal fan since loving each thrill along the way.

The latest one, Faces of Fear, did not disappoint me whatsoever. It was different from your ordinary thriller as it was more psychological but it was full of suspense and creepiness which is exactly what I've come to expect and look forward to when I crack open the spine of my brand new John Saul book.

This story is mainly focused on Alison Shaw, a teenager who is struggling with coming into being a young woman. She's not beautiful or at least she doesn't think so but most of the time she doesn't care or does she? Her mother, while being a great mom, wants only the best for her daughter and believes that beauty is often the key to success. Eventually Alison's mom marries a famous plastic surgeon and from that point on things take on an extremely creepy tone.

Now Alison is living in a rich neighborhood and finding out that with a stepfather who is a great plastic surgeon, almost anything is possible and even expected. So, begins her transformation into a more beautiful Alison. However, her stepfather Conrad is still obsessed with his late wife and is now obsessed with having Alison look like her. As the story evolves and Alison learns more she becomes increasingly terrified. To top things off, there is a madman on the loose butchering people...

This is a must read for Saul fans and for anybody out for a creepy psychological thriller. On the inside cover, it says that 'Saul proves that there's a fine line between perfection and madness'. What some people will do to achieve that state of perfection is definitely enough to creep me out. Another great novel by one of my favorite authors!

<http://peekingbetweenthepages.blogspot...>

Diane says

This book wasn't bad. It kept my interest and I read it quicky because I wanted to know what woud happen. I had a pretty good idea early on of how everything woud resolve, but thought it possible there could be a twist. The issue of plastic surgery and young girls being so obsessed with perfection, they undergo these surgeries before they're even fully grown (and parents let them) was intriguing and disturbing. The ending was a litte disappointing for me in that I just didn't think it quite made sense. No spoiler, but what was the next step in the plan? For a smart person, it didn't seem plausible that there was nothing more. I thought the author could have developed the mindset and circumstances leading up to the development of the plan in a much more satisfying way.

Sandra says

It was OK.

This book was not one of his best, but not bad.

For me it was hard to get into the book at first. It had a few good moments. The story just lagged for me. But about 60% of the way into the book the story started to pick up and I really got into it. The ending ended up being better than I thought.
