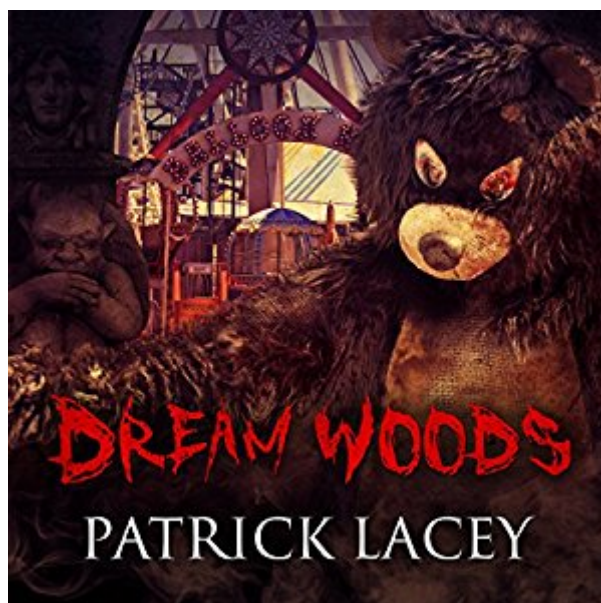


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# Dream Woods



## Synopsis

When Vince Carter takes a shortcut to work, he notices a billboard that nearly sends him into an oncoming van. The ad is for Dream Woods, New England's answer to Disney World. It closed decades ago, but now that it's back in business, Vince is eager to take his whole family, hoping the magic he remembers will save his failing marriage. His wife, Audra, isn't so sure. She's heard the rumors of why the place closed. Murder. Sacrifice. Torture. But those are just urban legends. Surely there's nothing evil about a family tourist attraction. The Carters are about to discover that the park's employees aren't concerned with their guests' enjoyment. They're interested in something else. Something much more sinister.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 5 hours 47 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Patrick Lacey

Audible.com Release Date: December 20, 2016

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B01MSZZS2R

Best Sellers Rank: #313 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Horror #1778 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers #3102 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Horror

## Customer Reviews

Patrick Lacey brings us a fearfully favorite theme: amusement parks. Amusement park horror, when properly done, will rip away some part of your inner child and Patrick Lacey delivers. The story is built around the characters and the strong psychological and sociological turmoils of the characters. The characterization, action, and tension are all very well rounded into a wonderfully horrific story that bends the genre just a tad with a refreshing twist. The story is dark and gruesome in some places, simply twisted in others. The ending is delicate and deceptive and leaves you exhausted. I give this 4 out of 5 stars for one flaw that troubled me throughout the book. The presentation of diabetes type 2 in one of the main characters was off. If you are familiar with diabetes, know that it is not terribly well done in the book and get on with it because the story is worth the bump.

DREAM WOODS (Sinister Grin Press) is the latest release from horror newcomer, Patrick Lacey. This book revolves around the Massachusetts theme park, Dream Woods. The park was the highlight of so many kids in its heyday. After a number of horrible incidents, the place which earned the new moniker, "Scream Woods", is shut down. The park is left to rot and disappear. Years later, when Vince Carter drives by and sees the park has re-opened, he romanticizes the best week of his childhood and imagines a family trip to Dream Woods could be just what he and his wife need to bring them closer. Vince, his wife, Audra, and their twin pre-teens set out for a week that nobody wants any part of but Vince. Audra dreams of a time before the boys when Vince and her were just a couple of punk rockers against the world. The boys, Tim, a diabetic who is the center of the family's attention due to his disease, and Andrew, who is understandably jealous about being the constant second fiddle, add another layer of emotion and drama to the story. The Carters are in for a heck of a vacation. Lacey sets this wonderfully crazy story up with the flare of one Bentley Little. Constantly intriguing and engaging, keeping reality tipped off kilter at all times, resulting in a near-permanent unsettling state for the reader, this author knows how to pull your strings. I mentioned Little--at times, it feels like this could have easily been titled, The Amusement Park. While the execution isn't quite at the level of Mr. Little, it does show that Patrick Lacey means business. Lacey creates a cast of very real, well-rounded characters, and moves the story at a wonderful pace that makes it hard to put DREAM WOODS down. The violence is fantastically crafted and the story itself is a lot of creepy fun. "The Director" makes for a wonderful antagonist, unfortunately, he is overshadowed by the Dream Woods mascot, Sebastian (the bear on the cover-- a creepy creation in his own right). On the nitpicky side of things, I would love to have seen Lacey swing his horror hammer even more wildly in this one. He set up a lot of great scenarios, but never quite delivered the knock-out blow I was expecting. It felt, at times, like he was holding back. It's not easy to kill our characters, but I think it often gives horror stories (especially), a more realistic feel to them. While not everyone makes it out alive here (actually, quite a few people die), I didn't like Lacey's choice at the end. It felt like someone got to be bad person through most of the book and then was given a free pass. I don't want to give it away, so whether that makes sense to you or not, it is what it is. Overall, I believe DREAM WOODS is a fantastic piece from an author with an immensely bright future, and judging from Lacey's two previous releases (A DEBT TO BE PAID and the excellent collection, SLEEP PARALYSIS), this is just the tip of the iceberg. Lacey is set to open

up the throttle and run us all down. And I'll be in the middle of the road eagerly waiting. I give DREAM WOODS 4 stars!

My first Patrick Lacey and wow was it a great read. Every other Haunted Theme Park book I have read was a huge let down to me, because the ones I have read went completely off track and usually most of the book was about everything except the Park. Dream Woods take just the right amount of time to set up before you are thrown into a crazy world of a Dark and Demented Amusement Park.

Know that feeling you get when you step off an intense amusement park ride--off balance, as though the ground is rocking beneath you? DREAM WOODS is that feeling in novel form. It's essentially the story of a family coming apart at the seams--Vince and Audra Carter are a thirty-something couple who have left the punk rock scene behind for the Suburban Dream, though Audra is less than thrilled by her new life; their twin sons are polar opposites of each other--Tim is a frail and sensitive kid cursed with diabetes, and Andrew is boiling over with rage at his perceived 'unfavorite' status. The plot of the novel--the Carters go to a newly reopened amusement park possessed by Something Evil--doesn't run parallel to these domestic dramas, but takes root in and grows outward from it, a sure sign of a gifted storyteller. I also liked Lacey's flair for characterization and ability to paint scenes and settings with great imagination and detail. He ends his story in a way that will probably divide readers, but I loved the heck of out it. Here's looking forward to more sugary Lacey goodness in the future!

I really enjoyed this book. The author put a whole new spin on "Haunted Theme Parks" and it was a doozy. I read a lot of horror and have for many years but this book still had me wondering how in the heck Patrick Lacey came up with such an idea. It was so strange AND awesome at the same time! I look forward to reading more by this author. I also love the cover art!

Don't usually read horror? Dream Woods by Patrick Lacey is the perfect gateway drug. As creatures emerge and as doom peeks its head around the corner, Lacey explores the depth of a failing marriage, chronic illness, and the struggle of letting go of the past. Fans of Channel Zero will love Lacey's Dream Woods, as it delves deep into the human psyche, rips fears wide open, and shreds family bonds to pieces. Much like Candle Cove, the television program in Channel Zero, the theme park Dream Woods is like the embodiment of the dark places the mind goes: jealousy, resentment, hatred (just to name a few). As Dream Woods plays on the

fears and weaknesses of the Carter family, Lacey skillfully reveals how tragedy can both make a family stronger and forever distant. I highly recommend this work to avid readers of horror and anyone that enjoys unique family dynamics, ever-lasting vivid imagery, and a fast-paced thrill ride of emotion.

This wasn't a bad book it was just a tad bit slow in my opinion. That being said, I have purchased Patrick's latest book and look forward to seeing this newcomer grow.

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