

ayers for the dead

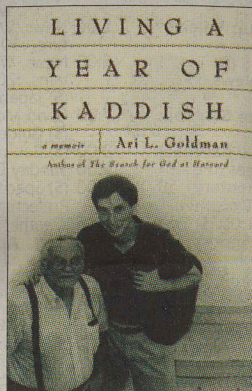
Kaddish

pp, \$22

orning News

Times reporter, now journalism professor at university, Goldman made a previous book, *The Gard*. This is a more in-depth of his own search, found in Orthodox Jewish tradition.

the morning after his Goldman to fulfill a Jewish Kaddish, an affirmation of his entire first year following. Here he shares his importance of praying with



others rather than alone, and of the minyan itself—the minimum of 10 worshippers required for communal recitation of this powerful prayer.

In sharing his sorrow with sincere sympathizers at a synagogue, Goldman finds peace: “The riches...do not need to be probated in court. There is no estate tax,” he concludes. “I have received a tradition of ritual practices, ethical principles, and sacred texts worth more than material possessions.”

(Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.)

social history. child labor force grew requirement that workers daily life. People could began to provide published from coal. coal has always been ative and destructive,” both immense wealth

warmth, then killed us n to generate the environment in Pittsburgh and d for better air quality. with our destiny. n a decade was a state innesota, ends by look- l warming, concluding r our very climate by ise effect. r an indictment nor an l, we would have lan- y, tedium and oppres- ld,” Freese contends. d a more gradual and e took.”

—Sandy Bauers
Philadelphia Inquirer

gamble. But the results are highly rewarding, an entertaining, informative and dramatic yarn, full of twists and turns and sweaty palms, read all the more convincingly by an author who’s not just acting the part.

—David Tarrant
The Dallas Morning News

BOOK

The Dante Club
By Matthew Pearl
Read by Boyd Gaines
Simon & Schuster Audio
4 cassettes, 6 hours (abridged)

AUDIO

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Lowell are such a part of our American cultural history that it’s easy to see them only as textbook lessons, forgetting they really existed.

In his debut novel, *The Dante Club*, author Matthew Pearl never forgets to let the humanity shine through these historical figures. The lives of the 19th-century poets and Harvard University professors Longfellow, Holmes and Lowell, plus that of publisher J.T. Fields, are not only authentically depicted, but Pearl makes them out to be pretty good sleuths, too. *The Dante Club* also does

This ‘Ring’ doesn’t shine

The Ring

By Koji Suzuki
Translated by Robert Rohme
and Glynne Walley
Vertical, 286 pp, \$24.95

By Lauren Gard

Special to The Daily Yomiuri

If you enjoyed the 1998 Japanese film *Ringu* or the subsequent 2002 U.S. movie *The Ring*, you may be eager to get your hands on the new translation of the best-selling novel by Koji Suzuki that started it all.

Don’t bother. If you haven’t seen either film, head straight to the video store. The book will leave you wondering what all the fuss was about.

Kazuya Asakawa is a newspaper reporter whose curiosity gets him entangled in a horrific web—and he’s got just one week to escape with his life.

After his teenage niece dies of a sudden heart attack, Asakawa discovers by chance that another teen died the same way at precisely the same moment. He suspects he’s got a mystery on his hands. Little does he know how right he is.

A bit of digging uncovers two more identical deaths, and soon he has their cause in his hand. It’s an unlabeled videotape filled with nonsensical, frightening images and an odd Japanese dialect he can’t fully make out. One part is clearly comprehensible, though: Anyone who views the eerie montage without performing the charm spelled out at the end will die in one week.

Asakawa is out of luck, though, as the directions for lifting the curse have been erased—a practical joke by his niece and her three friends, who watched the video and were soon six feet under.

With the help of a strange friend from his high school days and another reporter, Asakawa begins to unravel the mystery. But time is running out.

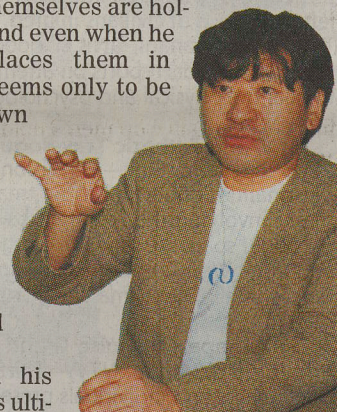
The biggest flaw in this story is the characters, who never quite come to life and are unlikeable from the start. Despite the author’s attempts to render them increasingly sympathetic as the book wears on, we never care much about what happens to them. Asakawa is cold to his wife and daughter (who themselves are hollow characters) and even when he inadvertently places them in harm’s way he seems only to be thinking of his own fate.

His high school friend Ryuji Takayama comes off as a total jerk (who once confessed that he had raped several women), though his brash fearlessness ultimately serves as a perfect counter to Asakawa’s far weaker nature.

The tone of the story is way off. The writers try hard to sound modern and hip, but end up with a text that sounds unnatural and childish. Ryuji responds to Asakawa’s unconvincing pleas to save his family by saying: “Leave it to me. I’ll be responsible for saving wifey and babykins.” Gag!

The Ring’s saving grace is a well-constructed, fast-paced plot that twists and turns in just the right places and will carry readers through to the last page despite the one-dimensional characters. And at certain points along the way, the book does manage to fulfill one very important horror novel function: to be as scary as hell.

It will have readers peeking around shower curtains, double-checking door locks—and immediately upgrading to DVD players.



Koji Suzuki

NEW PAPERBACKS

BY COLIN DONALD

Brideshead Revisited

By Evelyn Waugh
Penguin, £6.99

Silvery new edition to mark the centenary of Evelyn Waugh (1903-1966), this is the most popular and most controversial of his comic novels, rightly proclaimed on the new cover as “The Oxford novel.” It is possible to love this story about the decline of a great Catholic aristocrat.

mary of the massive amount of epigraphic and archaeological research, while eschewing the romanticism that has misled previous generations of scholars, is nevertheless a powerful stimulus to imagining the sheer scale and glory of these amazing buildings. It is also able to focus on the everyday life of a vanished world, thanks to the pictorial genius of the master craftsmen who adorned the buildings, bringing Angkorian civi-