

THE GHOST WRITER - SYNOPSIS

Edgar Johnson is the ghost of a disillusioned author and librarian. Initially neither Edgar, nor the reader, are unaware he is dead. He believes he is haunted by ghosts who, he discovers, are the spirits of minor characters of major novels. These ghosts demand he writes, and gets published, the stories that they never had. His own story is told partly by the narrator, and partly in his journal. It is learnt that his soul lies in the unpublished manuscripts that line the walls of what appears to be his house, but is, in essence, purgatory. The manuscripts haunt and taunt him.

When learning he is a ghost, the reader is first told that Edgar committed suicide. Near the end of the novel, it is revealed that one of the fictional characters (**Father Ferapont**) caused his death. The incident involved the saving of the life of another character, **Annie Pilsner**, part of a thread that binds all the characters together.

His writing starts well, and a publisher (later to be a love interest for Annie) agrees to take his “explorations in literature” as a book of short stories. Things turn dark when he meets father Ferapont (from *The Brothers Karamazov*). Ferapont, congenitally mad, vainly seeks a time when he was sane, and it cannot be written.

A second plot follows **Richie Richards** a young, streetwise, ‘medium for the millennials’ as he moves from small theatre entertainer to perform at Wembley. Richie’s plot introduces Annie Pilsner as a Ghost Writer to write a book about him. Richie’s career brings in sub plots and twists and turns and points to how Edgar will be freed. Richie is an immensely likeable character who brings light to balance the Edgar and Ferapont darkness.

Eventually, when it seems he will be locked forever enduring Ferapont’s torture, Edgar escapes. But this leaves him “lost in limbo”. At the same time Richie is performing at Wembley.

In a climactic final chapter Edgar is “brought to the light” by Richie and “moves on”, free at last. Richie initially seems to have failed at Wembley, however the dramatic events of Edgar ‘passing on’ are captured on social media, and he is invited to appear in Las Vegas.