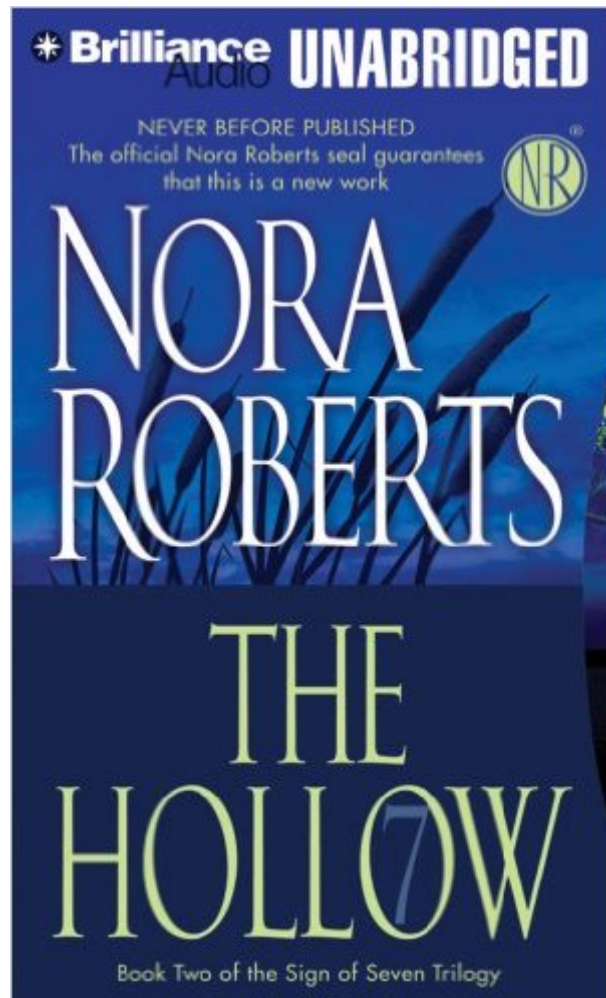


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# The Hollow



## Synopsis

For Fox, Caleb, Gage and the other residents of Hawkins Hollow, the number seven portends doom - ever since, as boys, they freed a demon trapped for centuries when their blood spilled upon The Pagan Stone. Their innocent bonding ritual led to seven days of madness, every seven years. And now, as the dreaded seventh month looms before them, the men can feel the storm brewing. Already they are plagued by visions of death and destruction. But this year, they are better prepared, joined in their battle by three women who have come to The Hollow. Layla, Quinn, and Cybil are somehow connected to the demon, just as the men are connected to the force that trapped it. Since that day at The Pagan Stone, town lawyer Fox has been able to see into others' minds, a talent he shares with Layla. He must earn her trust, because their link will help fight the darkness that threatens to engulf the town. But Layla is having trouble coming to terms with her newfound ability - and this intimate connection to Fox. She knows that once she opens her mind, she'll have no defenses against the desire that threatens to consume them both.

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Brilliance Audio; Unabridged edition (May 6, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1423337751

ISBN-13: 978-1423337751

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.8 x 5.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars. See all reviews (332 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,839,711 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #175 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > ( R ) > Roberts, Nora #1216 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy #1507 in Books > Books on CD > Romance

## Customer Reviews

This second book picks up the story two weeks later. Fox tries to help Layla hone her senses, so they can present a united front, and be as useful as Cal, Quinn, Sybil, and Gage is with their gifts. Since they sense things in the present, he knows how important it is for them to be at full strength when the demon next makes an appearance. Fox felt fortunate for the two-week lull in activity, but knew that had come to an end when he and Layla were attacked by a swarm of crows in the middle of Main Street. Layla got to see first hand the healing powers Fox possessed when his pecking

wounds healed almost instantly. As the group tries to figure out more about the puzzles from the past, the demon escalates the attacks. Instead of just focusing on one person, they are all in jeopardy at any given time. They realize that his strength is nothing like anything that they have ever encountered in the past, but that makes sense now that they know this cycle of seven is the final showdown. The creepiness just gets better with each book. I enjoyed this second installment in the trilogy, and don't like having to wait until the end of the year for the conclusion with Gage and Sybil though. This book was Layla and Fox's story, but again as in the last book, all characters had a strong presence, which really adds a strong element.

I was so looking forward to this book and the wait seemed like forever. I did enjoy the first book, but this was soooooo slow. And, it took forever for anything to get going. Yes, we know the two main characters will fall madly, madly in love, but that didn't need 318 pages to happen. The first book had a lot of excitement, this was a romance novel with a bit of spooky-doings -- bit being the keyword. I will wait yet again for the next one to come out -- too long by the way, you forget what happens in the first one. I do love trilogies, but next time will wait and buy all three at once. Hope the next one has more pizzaz.

This book was at least better than the first book, which isn't saying much. My favorite line is Gage's, "Are we going to talk it (evil demon boy) to death?" Well, apparently so, because, mostly, all our six happy friends do is sit and talk . . . and talk . . . and talk. Then there's a demon attack, and then they talk some more. The three women all have demon blood in them, and not a one of them turns evil. They discuss how it's a possibility, but does it happen? Of course not. The only interesting story will likely be Gage's in the third book. The other five characters are all nearly interchangeable and I never really could make myself care about any of them. The dialog tends to be corny, unbelievable and hard to follow--who's talking, incomplete sentences. And I'm sorry, but there's not much plot--Evil demon boy does nasty stuff and guy #2 and girl #2 get together because it's their book, so they have to. I'll read the third book, but then I'm done. No more Nora paranormal romance stories for me.

Listened to the entire trilogy on audiobooks and love all Ms. Roberts's work, however this trilogy was at times just too weird and somewhat confusing in parts. Unlike other of her trilogies, the ending on the first two segments were more of a cliff hanger, and I don't care for those. The narration for this particular segment was the worst I have ever listened to and I listen to audiobooks every day.

This was delivered by a female narrator who sounded as though she had her hand over her mouth the entire time, and there was absolutely no change in inflection between characters so you had a hard time knowing who was talking. The entire narration was one monotone. The narrators on the first and third segment were done by males and were excellent. Narration here gets one star.

I have read everything Nora Roberts has written, even some of her very early work. Through it all I have seen the progression of her work as a product of her own evolution and growth as an author and the times surrounding her work. I have always enjoyed her voice, style, and imagination, but lately her work has become so much less than she is, I believe, capable of. The Sign of Seven trilogy is, in theory, an interesting and fun idea, however it just didn't reach early Nora Roberts standards. There was little, if any, character building or progression. The backdrop, the mystery, was very well done and engaging, however the protagonists were cardboard cutouts. You never get a sense of who they are, what they want, why they are together, or even what makes them different from the other characters around them. This is such a shame. Usually I do not write reviews as I much prefer the idea of letting everyone choose their own books and love them or hate them on their own, but in this instance, in my sorrow and disappointment at the level of workmanship being put out by one of my favorite authors, I felt compelled to share my opinion.

We are long time fans of Nora's work. A new entry from her is a reason to buy a book, an intellectual, emotional and sometimes spiritual generator. Imagine our excitement when The Sign of Seven Trilogy hit the shelves. The plot in Blood Brothers had left us a little flat, but surely the plot would quicken and the characters would rise in The Hollow. Alas. We've been to The Hollow and it is only that. The formulaic writing, vapid characters and uninspired prose left us wanting - no more. We won't be helping ourselves to a third serving.

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