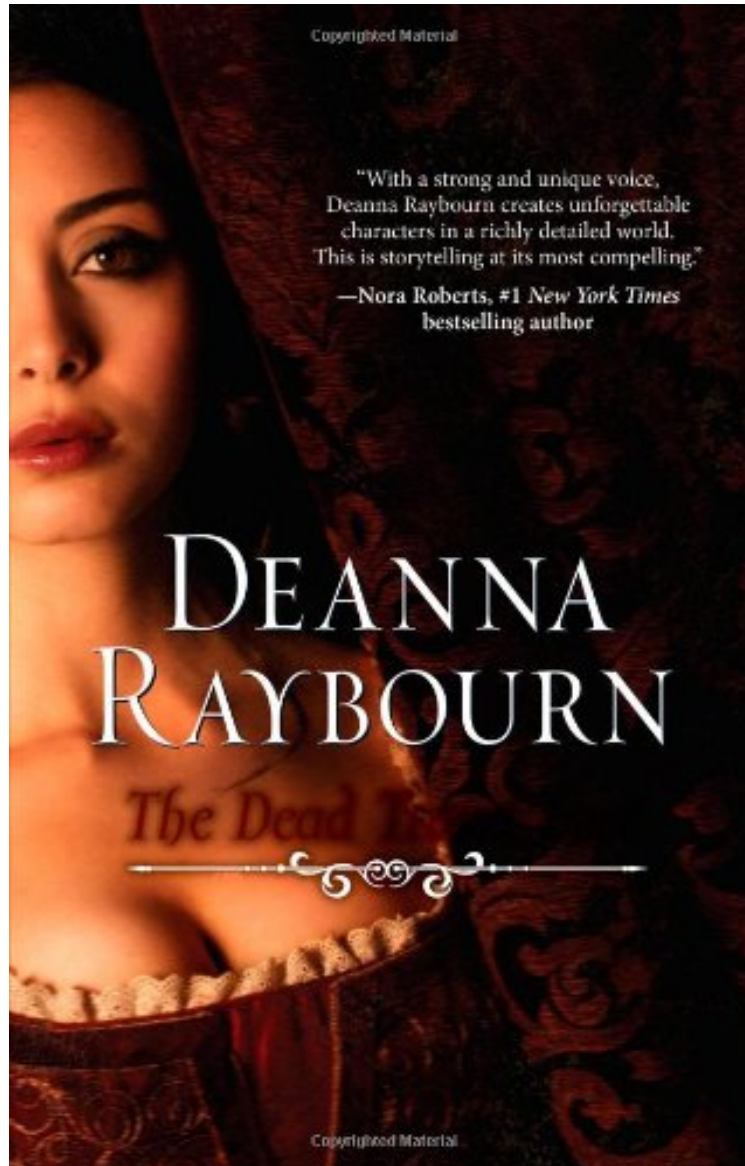


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## The Dead Travel Fast

*Deanna Raybourn*

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**Deanna Raybourn : The Dead Travel Fast** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dead Travel Fast:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. brief reviewBy haf3I enjoy this author's humor, and especially her gift for creating the tall dark hero with a past. Her character embodiment is very good, with even minor players being drawn carefully and with sufficient depth. She creates complex, engaging plots and is quite good with historical accuracy, though occasional small errors do creep in. Still, these are not enough to disrupt the enjoyment of the

narrative, and the connection between her protagonists is strong and well-conceived. As a criticism, I would note that sometimes she lets tiny details slip enough to later contradict or change them, but again, these are rare and small issues and in general I have found her a very good writer whose work I bought up and am moving through at a solid pace. Well done and an excellent find. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Old Style Gothic Mystery By C. L. Brown Edinburgh, 1858- Theodora LeStrange finds out after her grandfather passes away that her inheritance is meager due to his debts. Theodora's sister and her husband try to convince Theodora to come live with them, but she declines as they have five children to raise and cannot really afford another person living with them. Theodora is determined to make her own way in the world as a writer. When a letter arrives from Theodora's friend Cosmina inviting her to come to Rumania, Theodora gladly accepts the invitation. Her publisher and beau, Charles Beecroft is less than happy to hear that Theodora is going to Rumania as he had hoped that she would accept his marriage proposal. He is glad to hear, however; that she is starting a new novel and it will be complete by the time she leaves Rumania. Theodora arrives at a crumbling but majestic castle high up in the Carpathian Mountains. She is transfixed by the beauty of the surrounding area and intrigued with the legends of vampires and werewolves. The inhabitants of the castle are certainly a peculiar lot. Theodora's friend Cosmina, although welcoming is frightened by something at the castle but will not reveal her fears. Cosmina's aunt, Countess Dragulescu is not in good health and the servants are nervous and afraid. The one person who truly captures Theodora's imagination is the master of the castle, Count Andrei Dragulescu. He is handsome and mysterious. Theodora bases the hero of her novel on the count. A few weeks after Theodora arrives a servant girl is found dead, her body seemingly drained of blood. Everyone at the castle is in a state of panic and some whisper that the murder was the work of a vampire. Theodora cannot believe that the murder was committed by a vampire and not a human being. Her main suspect is Count Andrei but her feelings for him complicate matters. Are the legends she hears true or is someone trying to make her believe them to distract her from discovering the real killer? The Dead Travel Fast is the first book I have read by Deanna Raybourn. After reading this novel, I will certainly read her historical mystery series. I enjoy gothic novels but not many authors write them anymore. As in most gothics, this book is written in the first person point of view. Theodora LeStrange is an unconventional heroine for the Victorian period as she wants independence as an author and does not want a husband. Count Andrei makes her reconsider her plans but not before both of them change and come to a realization of what they truly want in life. Count Andrei sets out to seduce Theodora and is sometimes a little cruel concerning the feelings of others. Theodora is a better person than the count. The book is primarily a mystery as the romance in it is light. I liked the setting of this novel; the Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania. Transylvania is the perfect location for a gothic novel. One negative factor about this book is that the pace slows down near the middle, however, it picks up again. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A disappointing book from an otherwise good author By L. J. Roberts First Sentence: All proper stories begin with the words Once upon a time.... Theodora Lastrange travels to a castle in the Carpathian Mountains at the invitation of her school-days friend, Cosmina. There she finds an old castle, an aristocratic family, and a count to whom she is inexplicably and inexorably attracted. She also finds superstition and dark tales of werewolves and is involved in the destruction of an alleged vampire. My feelings, about this book, changed almost page to page and my rating oscillated from "Good" to "Not Recommended." My problem wasn't that this was very different from the Lady Jane Grey series; I was prepared for this to be completely different. I like gothic. When done well, it can be wonderful. When done badly, it crosses over into being melodramatic. For much of this book, I found the latter to be true. My problem was the writing itself. Parts of the story are very good; wonderfully written, touching, emotionally and thoroughly engrossing. However, in other parts of the story, I found myself rolling my eyes and wondering what Ms. Raybourn had been thinking. It is difficult when you read first for character, and the only character you really feel any affinity for is a secondary character, Charles. I truly disliked that the protagonist was named Theodora Lastrange; how cliché can one possibly be. It may be a small thing, but was so trite; it nearly caused me to stop reading immediately. Than rather than Ms. Lastrange being gutsy and independent, there was a wimpishness about her, particularly in her attraction to the Count. Even with my issues with the characters, it was the plot which let me down. The plot was rife with anachronisms, clichés and coincidences. However, on the plus side, there were some scenes that were very well done, I personally like the inclusion of references to and the poetry of Baudelaire, Les Fleurs du Mal being a particular favorite of mine, and I particularly appreciate her explanation for some of the "supernatural" events. All this being said, it wasn't a terrible book. Unfortunately, it wasn't a good book either. Having read Ms. Raybourn's other books, I believe much of my disappointment comes from knowing she is a much better writer than this would indicate. THE DEAD TRAVEL FAST (Gothic/Susp-Theodora Lastrange-Transylvania-Victorian/1858) - Okay Raybourn, Deanna - Standalone Mira, 2010, Trade paperback - ISBN: 9780778327653

A husband, a family, a comfortable life: Theodora LeStrange lives in terror of it all. With a modest inheritance and the three gowns that comprise her entire wardrobe, Theodora leaves Edinburgh—and a disappointed suitor—far behind. She is bound for Rumania, where tales of vampires are still whispered, to visit an old friend and write the book that will bring her true independence. She arrives at a magnificent, decaying castle in the Carpathians, replete with

eccentric inhabitants: the ailing dowager; the troubled steward; her own fearful friend, Cosmina. But all are outstripped in dark glamour by the castle's master, Count Andrei Dragulescu. Bewildering and bewitching in equal measure, the brooding nobleman ignites Theodora's imagination and awakens passions in her that she can neither deny nor conceal. His allure is superlative, his dominion over the superstitious town, absolute—Theodora may simply be one more person under his sway. Before her sojourn is ended—or her novel completed—Theodora will have encountered things as strange and terrible as they are seductive. For obsession can prove fatal...and she is in danger of falling prey to more than desire.

From Publishers Weekly Excitement, danger, and romance await independent, headstrong writer Theodora LeStrange when she flees 1858 Scotland and miserable spinsterhood for the wilds of Transylvania, joining a childhood friend who will soon be wed. Ensclosed in a crumbling castle steeped in sinister legend, Theodora finds herself drawn equally to its gloomy atmosphere and its rakish master, Count Andrei Dragulescu. Rita Award-winning author Raybourn (the Lady Julia Grey series) delightfully evokes the language, tension, and sweeping grandeur of 19th-century gothic novels. Theodora is a delightful heroine, so much so that cruel, petty, misogynistic Andrei never really seems worthy of her. The book unfortunately drags during the middle, and its leading man's motives are confused throughout, but Raybourn's intriguing treatment of vampire legends will delight fans of the genre. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Author Theodora LeStrange leaves Victorian Scotland for a castle in Transylvania to visit her childhood friend Cosmina, and work on her new novel. Arriving in Transylvania, Theodora finds herself drawn to the handsome Count Andrei Dragulescu, Cosmina's cousin and her intended. But Andrei has now refused to marry Cosmina, to Cosmina's relief, allowing Theodora to indulge her attraction to him. The shocking murder of a servant girl shatters the idyllic peace, and the two bite marks on her neck lead Andrei and his mother to fear that his cruel father has returned from the dead as a vampire. As Theodora learns more about the superstitions of the region from a Hungarian doctor who tends to the family, the countess urges Andrei to perform a ritual that will guarantee his father will never rise again, a step Andrei is reluctant to take. Atmospheric and lush, this appealing gothic romance offers more than a few surprising twists and turns. -- Kristine Huntley About the Author New York Times bestselling author Deanna Raybourn graduated from the University of Texas at San Antonio with a double major in English and history and an emphasis on Shakespearean studies. She taught high school English for three years in San Antonio before leaving education to pursue a career as a novelist. Deanna makes her home in Virginia, where she lives with her husband and daughter and is hard at work on her next novel.