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## **Tales of the Vampires** Joss Whedon , Jane Espenson

Tales of the Vampires presents stories ranging from medieval times to the Depression to today, all intricately woven around Joss Whedon's central story about a group of young Watchers in training. Not to be missed is Buffy's rematch with Dracula and Angel's ongoing battle with his own demons. Wrapped in a haunting cover by Hellboy creator Mike Mignola, these diverse tales flesh out the history and the world of Joss Whedon's unforgettable creations and fill the void left by the Buffy TV show better than any other writers ever could.

## **Tales of the Vampires Details**

Date : Published December 14th 2004 by Dark Horse Books (first published November 2004)

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Author : Joss Whedon , Jane Espenson

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# From Reader Review Tales of the Vampires for online ebook

## PurplyCookie says

Featuring stories taking place in the Buffy universe with various writers and artists, of which I'm not a fan nor a follower, " **Tales of the Vampires**" may come off as a mixed bag at first, but there is a whole lot here to admire.

This graphic novel anthology of a dozen original vampire tales is loosely joined by a framing story in which a group of youngsters listens to a shackled monster. Illustrated in a wide range of gorgeously executed styles, the tales vary in both length and age appropriateness.

"Spot the Vampire" is suitable for very young vampire fans, "Father" has a little blood and a lot of melancholia, and "Jack," while tame for graphic novel Ripper stories, is appropriately scary. Then there's "Taking Care of Business," which hovers between funny and haunting. "Father" weaves a tale of a young man and his ageless vamp father. "The Problem with Vampires" shows the reader a pre-Buffy Spike and Drusila, while "Antique" which finds Buffy herself face to face with Dracula in an attempt to save a brainwashed Xander. "Numb" is another Angel redemption yarn that's been done before and done better.

Each story offers a tight plot, well-balanced visual and textual interplay, and sympathetic characters.

### Book Details:

Title Tales Of The Vampires (Buffy the Vampire Slayer Comic)

Author Joss Whedon

Reviewed By Purplycookie

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## Barrett says

Hit or miss. It's fine as a collection of vampire stories, but it doesn't add much to the Buffyverse.

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## Kori ? says

A lot of the stories were a kind of meh. But I'll read anything that is part of the Buffyverse though. It would have been better without the Angel story too. If you can find this discounted somewhere then grab it up. My review and rating is biased because I am a huge Buffy fan.

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## Jenny GB says

Nice assortment of vampire stories, but it's not as good as the Tales of the Slayer.

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## J-Lynn Van Pelt says

You don't have to know the lore of Buffy the Vampire Slayer to appreciate this interesting look at Vampires. But, for avid Buffy fans there are plenty of inside references to keep you interested. *Tales of the Vampires* is a collection of fascinating vignettes about various vampires told through very different art forms. Some stories are dark and mysterious, some moving flashbacks of our favorite soul-filled vampires, and even one goofy riddle. The individual stories are tied together under the pretense of a captured master vampire telling vampire history to watchers-in-training while plotting an escape and feast. The Buffy references take place after the series finale and show her traveling the world with the other slayers taking out vamps. While I tend to favor graphic novels that have one story, this collection kept me interested and amused throughout.

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## YoSafBridg says

### *Dracula said what, and when was that?*

Have you ever thought that you read a book and when someone is talking about it--like major plot elements, concepts, themes, or characters you have absolutely no memory of them? That was my experience recently when i, in one of my Buffyobsession throes was checking out some of the slayer timeline sites and saw some references to a story in the graptic novel *Tales of the Vampires* by Joss Whedon, Ben Edlund, Jane Espenson, Brett Matthews, and Drew Goddard. Now all the slayer timelines i've found are incomplete as far as i'm concerned so i'm working on one of my own (among my many other projects)--anyway i'm thinking i don't remember that story and i did read that book--didn't i? So i go pull it off my shelf--start rereading it and in fact i never did finish it--the story in question really isn't that great (or that memorable in fact--maybe i just blocked it out) But overall the collection itself is pretty good--now if they would just get those watchers' journals out!

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## Sarah Goodwin says

Really love this collection, the only thing that lets it down is the Dracula story, and maybe the Angel one as well (I am not a fan of Angel particularly) the rest are all interesting and well told stories.

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## Aaronlisa says

Tales of the Vampire:

I like how the overall series is set up - i.e. an ancient vampire telling potential Watchers stories about vampires. However, when you read it and work out the dates and the plot twist at the end, doesn't actually match up with the stories. However this is kind of explained but I am not sure I found it overly satisfactory. Also can I just say the though that this is the way the COuncil trains children to become Watchers is rather brutal but makes sense in the way we see the Council treat Slayers on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Still... these people should not be entrusted with children.

I am going to try to break down the individual tales with my thoughts:

*Father*: I liked the art of this one. It reminded me quite a bit of the old Warren comics from the 1970s. I also liked the story. It wasn't your average vampire story and I liked it and liked how it fit into the Buffyverse.

*Spot the Vampire*: I liked the art for this shorter story. It really kind of gave me a 1950s/1960s storybook vibe. It was clever and fun.

*Dust Bowl*: This one was creepy. A vampire tale set in the 1930s during the depression and during a dust storm. I really liked the art on this one.

*Jack*: Once upon a time, I was fascinated by Jack the Ripper and back when I was much younger, I read quite a few fictional short stories and stories based on the case. Some were rather good and have stayed with me over the years. Others were not so good. This one is in the rather good category. The idea that the Ripper is a vampire is not a new one. However this story is really well done. I would have liked to know the Inspector more or even seen more of the character. I also love the way the story is drawn and inked. Overall this is one of my favourites in the collection.

*stacy*: I am unsure about this one. Part of me likes how you're lead to expect one thing but then something else happens. I feel that for Whedon, it's a bit a twist that's been done one too many times.

*Some Like it Hot*: I like it but I would have liked to know what happened after the last panel.

*The Problem with Vampires*: OK I love Spike & Drusilla, I was always disappointed that they didn't continue that pairing on either series. But to have a well done Spike/Drusilla story sign me up. To have it explain what happened in Prague, even better. I have three favourite stories in this collection and this is the second one.

*Taking Care of Business*: Ok it's not one of my three favourites but this story was just awesome. It's what every good collection of horror stories need. A more light-hearted tale. It's one of the better stories in this book.

*Dames*: I really liked the art in this one. The story was just kind of meh but it worked in it's own noir way.

*Antique*: Ok I have a soft-spot in my heart for this one. The only reason it's not a favourite is because I want more of the bromance between Xander and Dracula. I know it's supposed to be comical but the last panel kills every single time.

*Numb*: I liked this story about Angel. It's really well done.

*Tales of the Vampires*: This is my third favourite story. I like Edna, even before we learn who she is. I like her and would love to see more of her.

Overall this book is a 4. It's a good collection of vampire stories.

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## **Jordan says**

I've mentioned my fondness for anthologies before, right? Good, no need to retread that. I mentioned that I

like how they free writers to explore background characters and the worlds created by popular franchises? Ok, no need to say that again either. Did I mention how I enjoy the wide variety of artistic styles in a comic anthology? I did? Oh. Well, looks like this introduction is almost entirely redundant then....In that case, without further ado, let me introduce *Tales Of The Vampires*. As with the previously-reviewed *Tales Of The Slayers*, the writers of the show *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* team up to tell a wide variety of tales from the Buffyverse. This time, instead of focusing on the Slayer end of things, we are treated to a slate of tales about particularly interesting vampires throughout history. Some are familiar, like Spike & Drusilla or Angel. Others we have never met before now, but are destined to leave their mark on the Buffyverse nevertheless.

Joss Whedon and Alex Sanchez start us out this time with the frame story for the anthology, *Tales Of The Vampires*, about a group of young Watcher trainees being taught not to underestimate their foes by listening to a captive vampire tell tales of his fellows. This tale is told in starts and stops in between the other tales of the miniseries. We then travel to Prague in *The Problem With Vampires* by Drew Goddard and Paul Lee to discover just what happened to Drusilla prior to her arrival with Spike in Sunnydale at the beginning of Buffy Season 2. Whedon then teams up with Cameron Stewart to tell the story of *Stacy*, a young girl who is attacked by a vampire only to find everything she ever wanted in the darkness. Jane Espenson and Scott Morse bring us *Spot The Vampire*, a fun little rhyming puzzler in the classic seek-and-find genre. Brett Matthews and Vatche Mavlian take us to 1888 Whitechapel, as a detective with a secret attempts to track down the infamous *Jack* the Ripper. Jane Espenson then teams up with Jason Alexander to tell the tale of a young man raised by his vampire *Father*. Drew Goddard and Ben Stenbeck then take us to just before the start of the Buffy Season 8 comic series, as Buffy confronts the legendary Dracula in an attempt to reclaim Xander from his entranced servitude in *Antique*. Jane Espenson and Jeff Parker transport us to 1933 Kansas, at the start of the *Dust Bowl*, for the tale of a young farmboy trying to figure out the rules of his new condition. Ben Edlund handles both writing and artistic duties for *Taking Care Of Business*, chronicling the meeting of a vampiric ex-Inquisitor priest who believes he's still doing God's work with a pudgy young man claiming to be God himself! Sam Loeb and Tim Sale then give us *Some Like It Hot*, about a vampire who finds a way to walk once more in the sunlight. Brett Matthews and Cliff Richards then take us back to flesh out the Buffy Season 3 episode Amends as Angel battles his personal demons in *Numb*.

From a writing perspective, I enjoyed Joss Whedon's frame story *Tales Of The Vampires* even if it happened long before all but like two of the stories it was supposedly framing. I admit the ending too me somewhat by surprise, too. *The Problem With Vampires* deserves mention both for Drew Goddard's writing, which was excellent enough that I could actually hear Spike and Drusilla saying their lines, and for the art. But I'll get to that in a minute. He also actually made me feel sorry for Dracula in *Antique*, which was an unexpected bonus. I also very much liked *Stacy* (again by Whedon) and identified strongly with the character as a confirmed sci-fi/fantasy geek myself. At least, you know, until she turned vampire....The pseudo-children's poem *Spot The Vampire* was very well done, so kudos to Jane Espenson. Speaking of Espenson, both her other tales here were stellar. *Father* was poignant, and *Dust Bowl* was a great story of a young vampire figuring out the rules of his new existence without any help from anyone else. Brett Matthews failed to surprise me with *Jack*, but I have a stubborn weakness for Jack The Ripper stories for some reason. Only, I thought Jack the Ripper was supposed to have been Lothos, the Big Bad from the movie? Merrick definitely implied as much. His writing on the Angel-centric story *Numb* was spot-on though. Ben Edlund's *Taking Care Of Business* proved to be a delightfully quirky tale, one I greatly enjoyed. Artistically, Paul Lee's work on *The Problem With Vampires* deserves mention for managing to capture Spike and Drusilla so perfectly. The style Vatche Mavlian adopts for *Jack* isn't exactly my favorite, but I must say that it fit the tale perfectly. Cliff Richards perfectly captured Angel for *Numb*, which isn't to be taken for granted.

CONTENT: Violence, as you would expect from this series. Vampires drink from victims, sometimes with graphically-depicted results. Others are turned. Some are staked, which isn't as gory given their tendency to crumble to dust. Mild profanity. Some sexual innuendo, but nothing too explicit. You can decide for yourself whether Buffyverse vampires are occultic, but you shouldn't be surprised that they show up here. They're in the bloody title, after all....

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### **Sam Quixote says**

"Tales of the Vampires" is a collection of short comics about... that's right, wombats! Actually its vampires. But there's a twist and it is that each story takes a different look at the vampire, usually giving them human characteristics such as love, sacrifice, suffering, and humour.

I liked the atmospheric "Dust Bowl" story for the setting of a remote farmhouse and wandering vampires and the "Jack" story set in Victorian London casting a new light on the Jack the Ripper mystery. Fans of Joss Whedon's "Buffy" series will enjoy the various stories with Buffy and those characters in them and I recognised a few from when I was a fan of the TV show back in the late 90s.

Overall though some are ok with some great art, some are poor, it's not a bad collection but not an essential read or particularly engrossing. Fans of Whedon and vampires in general will enjoy it the most but casual comics fans looking for a good read can safely give this a miss.

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### **Nom Chompsky says**

Wish this were longer. Great frame (and payoff), nice varied artwork, and stories on the bad guy side that we aren't privy to often enough. A nice weird peripheral Buffy piece.

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### **Kelley says**

Loved these nontraditional tales of vampires! Jack the Ripper, the preacher vampire, and Edna who became one of Giles' ancestors?! Brilliant!

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### **Avid Reader and Geek Girl says**

I only liked the ones with Spike or Angel

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### **Matthew Lloyd says**

Related reviews: *Tales of the Slayers*

*Tales of the Vampires* is a curious beast. It is difficult to address without comparing it to *Tales of the Slayers*,

although it is generally quite different. It has a much greater sense of overall purpose, stands on its own fairly well, and is linked together by the overarching story of a group of young Watchers listening to tales about vampires from an actual vampire. Unlike *Slayers* not every writer has an obvious connection to the television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, but unlike *Slayers* far more characters from it appear - we see four vampires from the TV series in three separate stories. Does this make *Vampires* better or worse than *Slayers*? I'll admit to preferring *Vampires*, but I think it's the consistency which wins me over as the stories relating to the TV vampires are probably the weakest of the bunch. Each story in *Vampires* really stands on its own, which is a pleasing contrast to *Slayers*, where there is a sense of unity of purpose - the Slayer stands alone, but connected to the line behind and ahead of her; vampires stand as a group, as an army, as "orcs", but each fights alone and in their own interests. I might be reading too much into this, though.

The best story in *Vampires* is the linking story, "Tales of the Vampires". The others suggest interesting ideas and it's interesting to note that the most interesting and exciting stories are those written by the TV writers who have abandoned slayers and known characters to give us vampires isolated from the outside world, such as in "Dust Bowl", or giving us the anti-slayer narrative in "Stacy", by which I mean (view spoiler). A few are just jokes or double-bluffs, a few are fun, none really stands out as an interesting character study or a deep redefinition of what it means to be a vampire. The connecting story, however, does contain an interesting view of what it means to be a Watcher and its twists and surprises are perhaps both the most fun and the most surprising.

The biggest difficulty I have with *Vampires* is that it's very narrowly focused on white, anglophone, usually male vampires in either the 1920s-1940s or around the time of the TV shows, 1997-2004. While Roche claims to be telling the Watcher children of vampires, "even some he claims have yet to be", the story is dated, roughly, to the late 19th century meaning that these stories cannot be those in the volume itself - unless they're *all* about vampires who have yet to be. The exception is "Jack", a moderately interesting twist on an otherwise boring trope, and perhaps "Some Like it Hot". This recent focus isn't too much of a problem, although it does somewhat ignore perhaps the most interesting possibility of the vampire's immortality - the fact that they can live for centuries, cover so much time, do so many different things. Here we're mostly concerned with the creation or destruction of vampires. Only one covers more than a couple of years.

Flaws aside, it's a fun read. You probably want a little knowledge of the world of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* but not much is essential; it does, however, contain spoilers for the last few series of *Buffy* so be wary of that.

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## **Matt Smith says**

As an anthology, this does a fun job of playing with Buffy lore and exploring different little twists and nuggets on vampires.

Of course, as with all anthologies, this lives and dies on the strength of the pieces and certain pieces come out better than others because comparison is inevitable. The Drew Goddard Dracula story was fun (of course, it's the one with Buffy in it). The Christmas time rhyming game was not so much (and it's the one that's most based around "WHAT A TWISSSSST ISN'T THIS TWIST TWISTY") And so on.

This was a book I liked a lot more when I first picked it up years and years ago. Now that I've grown up a bit and can come to things fresh, it's hard to see it as much more than a bit of a diversion that really makes me just want more Buffy because that was always the thing that I wanted out of Buffy: more Buffy, less lore.



