



Fearie Tales: Stories of the Grimm and Gruesome

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Two hundred years ago two brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm, collected together a large selection of folk and fairy tales and published them as Kinder- und Hausmarchen (Children's and Household Tales). So successful was the first collection of 88 stories that they kept adding more to subsequent editions. Since then, the tales of the Brothers Grimm have been translated into upwards of a hundred different languages and are known and loved throughout the world. Now award-winning editor Stephen Jones has tasked some of the brightest and best horror writers in Britain, America and Europe with reinterpreting some of the traditional Hausmarchen, putting a decidedly darker spin on the classic stories.

Fearie Tales: Stories of the Grimm and Gruesome Details

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Stephen Jones (Editor) , Alan Lee (Illustrator) , Ramsey Campbell , Neil Gaiman , Tanith Lee , Author : Garth Nix , Robert Shearman , Michael Marshall Smith , more... Markus Heitz , Christopher Fowler ...less

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From Reader Review Fearie Tales: Stories of the Grimm and Gruesome for online ebook

Mauojenn ~ *Mouthy Jenn* ~ says

What a lovely wonderful book filled with **TERROR**.

I just ate this book up. Most I had heard of or read before, but there were a few shiny new pennies in the mix. Worth the read if you love short scary storied right before bed. :)

Cheryl says

Dark Fantasy short story anthology based on the fairytales of the Brothers Grimm. Although there were a few stories I thought were just OK, most of the stories get a 3 or 4 star rating. Lots of unique, creepy stories that are definitely not for children. Recommended.

Gergana says

Find My Name by Ramsey Campbell (3.5/5)

A nice story to open up the anthology, not too scary, modern. It is not extreme it it's horror elements and yet gives you a pleasant shiver/ It doesn't really deviate much from the original fairy tale. I am not sure why it was paired up with Grimm's *The Willful Child*, since it is obviously a retelling of Rumpelstiltskin.

Down to a Sunless Sea by Neil Gaiman (4.5/5)

I had previously read this story in Neil's short story collection *Trigger Warnings*. It was nice to re-read a favorite story even though I was a bit disappointed that, it being the reason I bought the book, it wasn't something new.

Crossing the Line by Garth Nix (5/5)

Hands down my favorite story in this collection! I am not a fan of westerns usually, but the plot as well as the characters were superb. Overall, I feel that the western-elements and the fairy tale/fairy land elements did not clash and fit well together. The ending, while predictable, was also satisfying. Garth Nix proves yet again that he can tell a good story and create a world, even in just a few pages.

Open Your Window, Golden Hair by Tanith Lee (3/5)

Nice creepy story, some well-executed foreshadowing. Not really original since interpreting fairy tales in that way has been done may times. The reader inevitably guesses the ending on the second page.

Peckish by Robert Shearman (4/5)

I loved the beginning of this one. I was a bit bothered by the lack of context we were given about the family. The fact that the author choose a German name and heritage seemed to play no role at all, which disappointed me since I love finding symbolism in names. The writing style was too graphic at time and I found myself revolted to the point that I skimmed some paragraphs, but at the end it was a really good story. The ending definitely won me over.

Look Inside by Michael Marshall Smith (1/5)

No, just no. I am sorry I don't understand this story and how it correlates to the Brother Grimm' one before it.

Fräulein Fearnott by Markus Heitz (4.5/5)

Yes! I like this interpretation! And the heroine won me over from the start. I loved the German setting and the mention of Faust and the ending, even though some might find it clichéd.

The Ash-Boy by Christopher Fowler(3/5)

A bit too gruesome for me, but still not bad. A tad bit too long, since the first part is basically a well-known over-exploited Cinderella story.

The Changeling by Brian Lumley(1.5/5)

Couldn't even finish it!

The Silken Drum by Reggie Oliver(3.75/5)

Loved the Japanese mythology in this one.

By the Weeping Gate by Angela Slatter (4.5/5)

Another unexpected like for me. Went into it expecting to hate it since I have read some rather awful interpretations of *The Robber Bridegroom*. While it deviated quite a lot from the original, it gave me the overall feeling of the fairy tale. The characters of the sisters were really well-done too.

Anything to Me Is Sweeter Than to Cross Shock-Headed Peter by Brian Hodge (2.5/5)

This story is obviously not in it's rightful place here since it's a sequel/retelling of *Struwwelpeter* and not of a Grimm' fairy tale. It was pretty basic in it's plot. The characters are the ones we know from the original, except the are more...human?.... in a way. More fleshed out, rather than just caricatures of children.

The Artemis Line by Peter Crowther(1/5)

Another one I was unable to finish. Read like a horror movie from the 90s that I've been invited to watch with the whole family on Halloween and scares everyone, but me.

The Silken People by Joanne Harris(2/5)

I see Joanne Harris has read Christina Rosetti's poem *The Goblin Market* and decided "Gee! That would make a great fairy tale. Now how do I make it cheesy and dull?"

Come unto Me by John Ajvide Lindqvist

This one I didn't even bother with, since it started in a rather dull way. The writing didn't appeal to me either. I am not rating it since I didn't get to form an opinion on it.

Vivienne says

This collection places each Grimm tale before the contribution by a prominent writer, which re-imagines the story. The fifteen authors invited to contribute include Neil Gaiman, Joanne Harris, Tanith Lee, Ramsey Campbell, Christopher Fowler, Brian Lumley, Garth Nix, and John Ajvide Lindqvist.

Stephen Jones' Introduction sets the scene giving some background on the Grimm tales and how the anthology was conceived. He also noted the recent interest in the darker side of the Grimm tales as expressed

in the TV series *Once Upon a Time* and *Grimm* and films such as *Hansel and Gretel: Witch-Hunters*.

Most of the stories stood out for me and provided some genuinely hair-raising and gruesome moments. Only one story fell flat for me. The Grimm stories included reminded me of the power of the source material.

Alan Lee's black and white illustrations sprinkled throughout the text were brilliant with special mention for his haunting cover painting.

D.M. says

The concept behind this anthology is so obvious, it seems impossibly unlikely it hasn't been done before (perhaps even by this editor): get a handful of proven writers of fantasy fiction and task them to write their own versions of classic fairy tales, or fairy tales of their own. When I saw this book had both Neil Gaiman (a favourite of both my wife and mine) and John Ajvide Lindqvist (a favourite of my wife), it seemed a natural for me to check it out.

Most of the other writers herein are unfamiliar, but the tone is properly set by the familiar Ramsey Campbell with his take on Rumpelstilskin, 'Find My Name.' He manages a fine balance between the real and the fantastic, setting the story in modern life but with the familiar magical presence. But from that propitious beginning, the quality comes and goes for the rest of the volume. The only story I simply couldn't finish was Markus Heitz's 'Fraulein Fearnott,' thoroughly informed by the ancient 'The Boy Who Would Know Fear.' Though I've always enjoyed the slightly slapstick tone of the original story, Heitz approaches his update with an absence of humour and a surfeit of gore. It reached a ridiculous peak that just completely put me off, so I just skipped the second half of it.

Gaiman's entry is an atmospheric little seaward narrative, but one I'd already read (or heard?) courtesy of Gaiman himself online and thus a bit of a disappointment (since it's tagged on the book as 'new,' and may well have been at publication).

The majority of the other stories sit pretty firmly in the good-story-poorly-told camp. The sole standout for the book is absolutely Lindqvist's, although it does rely a bit too strongly on an at least passing familiarity with Swedish folklore (an explanation is provided too late in the post-tale author bio).

The stories here are interspersed with stories from (a strangely late version of) the Brothers Grimm collections; Jones himself points out the versions he's chosen to use are lesser translations/adaptations, but offers no explanation for the choice. These originals lose little in the choice, particularly if one isn't familiar with the earlier versions. Also found throughout are handsome (though largely just evocative rather than depictive) black and white illustrations from Alan Lee, an old hand at fairy illustration.

I have to say I'm relieved this was only a library book, as I'd regret it as a purchase. I was, however, able to read the entire thing (with that one exception) and to enjoy most of it. A less particular reader would likely find much here to commend a read, though.

Katie Lawrence says

This was way too creepy for me. I never would have picked it up if I hadn't been assigned to review it for the Library Journal. With that said, some of the stories were disturbingly fascinating and I enjoyed the format with each story preceded by a fairy tale that inspired it. I did not read this book at night because it was too scary haha. Horror fans would enjoy this I think.

Marijana says

Samo su me tri prije oduševile i uspele da prenesu duh bajke i da uplaše - "Down to a Sunless Sea", "Peckish" i "The Silken People". Zbirka je koncipirana tako da pre svake prije savremenih autora ide bajka braće Grim (kod mnogih prije nisam uočila da su baš te bajke bile uzor).

Wendy says

Fearie Tales returns fairy tales to their roots, reminding us that these stories were originally not intended for children - unless you want to scare the crap out of them and make sure they don't do as their told lest the monster in the closet eat their toes. Like the Brother Grimm, this anthology collects fairy tales, specifically focusing on the darker aspects. The original stories are juxtaposed with variations by some of favourite authors including Garth Nix, Neil Gaiman, Michael Marshal Smith and more. I wouldn't necessarily say the stories are as gruesome as the cover suggests. "Haunting" is a more effective word that describes some of my favourite tales, such as *Open Your Window*, *Golden Hair* by Tanith Lee, a disturbing take on the story of Rapunzel. When paired with the absolutely creepy illustrations by Alan Lee, I may have found myself checking under the bed once or twice while reading this...

With thanks to Jo Fletcher Books for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Tez says

When I was younger and more patient, I'd read every story in an anthology. Now, as a grumpy old woman, I only read the stories by authors whose work I've enjoyed previously, or is on my wishlist. Such is the case with *Fearie Tales*...

In *Come Unto Me*, John Ajvide Lindqvist has created a wonderfully Gothic, scary read, featuring a type of fairytale character I've never before encountered. There's some freaky shiz going on here, and it's fascinating stuff. Best of all, it tides us over until the author's next novel is released in English, whatever and whenever that may be. Bring it on!

Annemieke / A Dance with Books says

3,5 stars.

Fearie Tales is an anthology of short stories written by various authors, mostly inspired by the Brother Grimm's fairy tales. I have to say that I do like the set-up of this book. The edited Brother Grimm fairy tales interspersed in this book set the dark tone. I do also like the addition of a bit of information on the authors after each short story. It is just nice to be able to read a bit on who these stories are coming from if you want to decide if you want to read more from them.

The illustrations by Alan Lee are amazing to look at and are certainly a great addition to many of the stories. They add to the dark and horror feel. There aren't too many illustrations throughout the book. Honestly I think there aren't enough.

My favorite short stories: Peckish, Look Inside, The Ash-Boy, The Artemis Line

It is difficult to rate an anthology. There will always be some stories that you will like and some stories that you will dislike. The rating was therefore mostly based on my overall feeling of this book. For me the stories itself were three stars overall but the drawings do add to the book so I upped it to 3,5.

Below this I have noted down some small thoughts on each story.

Find my Name by Rebecca Campbell

What I found interesting in this short story was the play on Rumplestiltskin. The overall story with the main character however did not completely pull me in. It was a good read but not one that I will remember in a few months.

Down to a Sunless Sea by Neil Gaiman

One of the short stories in this book, I found it a bit disappointing. I got the overall idea of the story but I got nothing very thrilling from it.

Open your Window, Golden Hair by Tanith Lee

As the title suggests, this story was inspired by Rapunzel. I really did think this was a great idea. However, for the most part the story felt long-winded and it took any feeling of suspense out of the story for me.

Crossing the Line by Garth Nix

This story started out with extremely long sentences in the first two pages. As in a good paragraph long. It made it very hard for me to get into the story as I had to reread these sentences a few times. It also was of a western setting which is not a setting that really appeals to me. The ending to the story though I found interesting and remarkable.

Peckish by Robert Shearman

Inspired by Hansel and Gretel, this story took a decisive creepier and darker turn than the original. It felt like this was something that could have happened though to those two. The story creeped me out, spoke to my imagination but also made me curious at every point as to which path it was going to take.

Look Inside by Michael Marshall Smith

What spoke to me the most in this story was the voice of the main character. It pulled me in and made me smile at moments. The idea of this story was also interesting and the somewhat open ending was creepy.

Fraulein Fearnot by Markus Heitz

There were parts that I did like about this story. One being that it took place in Germany and that I had a clearer idea of the surroundings. However I could not get into this story. As the original fairytale, The Story of the Youth who went forth to learn what Fear was, it was quite long. The main character did not speak to me. The main character didn't feel like she could feel more than excitement, even after accidentally killing people. Even if she had that syndrome that did not make her feel fear, it felt weird that she would not at least feel guilt or sorrow. Still I found it interesting that this syndrome was mentioned at the end.

The Ash-Boy by Christopher Fowler

Inspired by Cinderella, this short story seems to start just as the fairy tale with only slight differences. However where Cinderella more of a happy ever after (with a grimm punishment), this ending turned quite gruesome. It is certainly that what made this story stand out to me. Especially the last paragraph.

The Changeling by Brian Lumley

This story had very little that appealed to me. I had no connection with the main character. Actually, I quite disliked the tone of the main character. As for the more fantasy aspect of the story, this also did not work for me.

The Silken Drum by Reggie Oliver

Interesting idea. I could see how it would end very quickly though and it took away the feeling of anxiousness within the story you are meant to feel with the main character.

By the Weeping Gate by Angela Slatter - DNF

Regrettably I have to say that for some reason I could not get into this at all and I did not finish it.

Anything to Me is Sweeter, Than to Cross Shock-Headed Peter by Brian Hodge

What is most gruesome about this story is that I can see some twisted individuals in our world actually do this to their own children. That is what makes this short story most chilling to me.

The Artemis Line by Peter Crowther

Probably the longest short story in this anthology. I had my doubts about this as I feared my attention would waver from it as it often does with these longer ones. It felt a little weird that it was divided into a prologue and a few chapters. In parts it worked, in other parts it didn't. It took a bit for the story to get going and in parts it was a little confusing. However this story still stands out to me because of certain elements. The ideas about the faeries and their changelings, Carol, the scarecrows. It also ended with an open ending, making me curious for something to actually be continued in this world. I'd love to learn more about these scarecrows!

The Silken People by Joanne Harris

I was slightly curious about this because I just bought one of her books. It was almost like a very sweet story, with the exception of the ending. It had almost the feeling of the Grimm stories that sometimes could end horribly.

Come Unto Me by John Ajvide Lindqvist

The last story in this anthology read easily. Creepy in its own way. I honestly wanted to smack both Eric and Robert. Stupid guys.

Kazima says

Some stories were better than others of course, but what I especially loved was the way this collection was put together. First reading the original Grimm's tales, and then following them up with at least one modern take on the tale gave reading this book a nice balance and rhythm. I also liked that the modern fairy tales were not just modern retellings, but all new tales *inspired* by the classic tales

??? ??? says

Leah says

Not just for horror fans...

Stephen Jones is a multi-award-winning writer and editor of horror stories and anthologies. For this one, he has asked some of the best of today's horror writers to come up with a modern spin on some old folk and

fairy tales – most but not all are taken from the Grimms’ collections. These are not in the main re-writings of the old stories but instead are imaginatively inspired by some aspect of them. Some are in traditional fairy tale settings and some in the modern day. The stories range from only a few pages up to almost novella-length, and a short author bio is given at the end of each.

Each new story is preceded by a version of the original story that inspired it and, although I can’t find anything in the book to confirm this, I assume these original stories have been re-written or at least re-edited specially for this book, probably by Jones himself, since no-one else is credited for it. And very well re-written they are too, in standard modern language but without the intrusion of anachronistic modern slang. Although they’re really only there as a taster and prompt for the new stories, I found these versions of the originals a pleasure to read in themselves.

The meat of the book however is in the new stories. As with any anthology, both approach and standard varies a little from story to story, but overall I found all of the stories to be above average for the genre and some are really excellent. Some of my favourites were Neil Gaiman’s entry, Down to a Sunless Sea – not a supernatural story as such, but spun very imaginatively from the old tale of The Singing Bone; Michael Marshall Smith’s clever and amusing twist on The Three Little Men in the Wood; Brian Lumley’s Lovecraftian tale of an aeons-old alien; and Angela Slatter’s brilliantly scary story of a brothel-keeper’s daughters – a take on The Robber Bridegroom.

I’ve only highlighted these three, but could easily have picked another half-dozen or so that I also greatly enjoyed. And amongst the names that might only be familiar to horror fans, there are some that are known much more widely - Gaiman, of course, Christopher Fowler of Bryant and May fame, and Joanne Harris, best known perhaps for Chocolat.

Yes, there are a few less good stories in the book, or at least that appealed less to me, but I thoroughly enjoyed the collection as a whole. Some are scary, but there’s no gore-fest or chainsaw massacre in here – the horror is in the atmosphere created by some fine writing and a lot of inventiveness. A word of caution - Jones makes it clear that this book is aimed at adults, not children, and I would endorse that. But I certainly don’t think they’re only for dedicated horror fans either – this quality of writing and imagination deserves a wider audience than that. Highly recommended.

NB This book was provided for review by the publisher, Quercus.

www.fictionfanblog.wordpress.com

♥ Ashleigh ♥ contrary to popular belief i'm not actually mad! says

,Well that was not as good as i had hoped, nor was it all that scary. The Ilistrations on the other hand, were absolutely fantastic, they made the book much more pleasant and spooky. kudos Alan Lee for a job well done!!

otherwise there were a few good stories, that i rather enjoyed but the rest left something to be desired.

The Stories i thought deserved a 3.5+ rating:

Peckish by Robert Shearman

Inspired by Hansel and Gretel.

Fraulein Fearnot by Markus Heitz

Inspired by The Story of The Youth Who Went Forth.

The Ash-Boy by Christopher Fowler

Inspired by Cinderella.

The Silken Drum by Reggie Oliver

extremely well written and encapturing story. I'll have to read more by this author.

The Robber Bridegroom

Which i believe was an original, but i can't say for sure at this time, as i don't have the book on hand.

By the Weeping Gate by Angela Slatter

Abrupt end, otherwise good.

Come Unto Me by John Ajvide Lindqvist

Inspired by Rumplestiltskin

that was a really good and depressing and suspenseful and hopeful. all the feels.

The rest of the short-stories:

Find my Name by Rebecca Campbell

Down to a Sunless Sea by Neil Gaiman - i was highly disappointed in this one, as i have been eagerly looking forward to getting my hands on some of Gaimans work, and this just didnt do it for me.

Open your Window, Golden Hair by Tanith Lee

Crossing the Line by Garth Nix

Look Inside by Michael Marshall Smith

The Changeling by Brian Lumley

Anything to Me is Sweeter, Than to Cross Shock-Headed Peter by Brian Hodge

The Artemis Line by Peter Crowther

The Silken People by Joanne Harris - actually this one wasnt that bad, just not as good as the others.

plus some of the originals weren't as fearsome as i have previously dreaded (secretly hoped for) though definitely darker compared to the modern story-tellings.

Over all, I'm glad i read it, even if i wasnt as stoked with the book as a whole as i thought i would be. As my review doesnt go into much detail, beyond what i did and didnt enjoy i would recommend reading this review, by Annemieke. We have some opposing opinions but overall i like what this person has to say.

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