



The Skeleton's Holiday

Leonora Carrington

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'Ring for your maid, and when she comes in we'll pounce upon her and tear off her face. I'll wear her face tonight instead of mine.'

These dreamlike, carnivalesque fables by one of the leading lights of the Surrealist movement are masterpieces of invention and Grand Guignol humour.

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The Skeleton's Holiday Details

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Author : Leonora Carrington

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From Reader Review The Skeleton's Holiday for online ebook

Vida says

It's like if a nightmare or dream you had was written down - aptly classed as surreal, very eccentric and just plain weird, with a subtle hint of horror in some stories, and outright horror in others. It's a quick read and an interesting little book to read if you just want to read something quick, e.g. if you are in a reading slump and don't feel like reading an entire novel.

Rucoby says

I enjoyed this collection enough. Three of these fables (in my opinion) are stronger than the others; White Rabbits, The Debutante and The Oval Lady. Beautifully surreal, creepy and even humorous.

Markus says

Short stories of the surreal kind. What's not to love? It's like Lovecraft if he didn't drag on.

Mark says

The skeleton was as happy as a madman whose straitjacket had been taken off. He felt liberated at being able to walk without flesh. The mosquitoes didn't bite him anymore. He didn't have to have his hair cut. He was neither hungry nor thirsty, hot nor cold. He was far from the lizard of love. For some time, a German, a professor of chemistry, had been eyeing him, thinking he might convert him into delicious ersatz: dynamite, strawberry jam, garnished sauerkraut. The skeleton knew how to give him the slip, by letting fall a young zeppelin bone, on which the professor pounced, reciting chemical hymns and covering the bone with hot kiss.

The skeleton's lodgings had an ancient head and modern feet. The ceiling was the sky, the floor the earth. It was painted white and decorated with snowballs in which a heart beat. He looked like a transparent monument dreaming of an electric breast, and gazed without eyes, with a pleasant and invisible smile, into the inexhaustible supply of silence that surrounds our star.

Owen Townend says

This was a bizarre little collection.

I can't say I always followed or even saw the worth of more than half of these tales but, against all odds, a handful won me over with their fairytale logic and dark whimsy.

I haven't previously read Carrington's work before but, if these tales are in any way a fair representation of her literary oeuvre, I can't say I ever would again. These stories are far too self-involved and borderline nonsensical for the average reader. Then again I do realise that she is widely known as a surrealist artist.

If you don't mind acutely mad and incomplete narratives, this might prove enjoyable.

Notable Stories

- White Rabbits - a disconcertingly credible nightmare: who wouldn't trust a stranger with cute little bunnies?
 - The Debutante - reminiscent of Little Red Riding Hood though the Wolf is a Hyena and a friend to the girl.
 - The Seventh Horse - there is a striking revenge tale here though it's rough and ends much too early.
-

P.S. Clinen says

Weeeeeeeird.....

Rhys says

A magnificent little collection of surrealist stories by a writer better known as a painter (and an amazing one at that!). These fables prove that a good story doesn't necessarily need complex characterization or plot or even rational development of any kind. The tales are almost like her paintings: mysterious, magical, disturbing and utterly unpredictable.

rosamund says

I admire Leonora Carrington's paintings for their atmosphere, imagination and evocation of fantasy. The very short stories contained in this small volume are similar -- her imagery is captivating and unsettling, and her stories lack internal logic, but are disquieting and memorable. My favourite of these is "The Seventh Horse" -- I don't really understand what the heck is going on in it, but the imagery is very successful. I also admire "White Rabbits" for its extremely unsettling quality. I didn't really follow "The Skeleton's Holiday" -- it was simply too short to explore its idea. I enjoyed these as an insight into Carrington's prose, but I don't know if I would seek out more of her stories. A little goes a long way.

Nabilah Firdaus says

Another great author to be explored. A mesh of normality and surrealism, with dreamlike and creepy plot that makes your hair stand on end. Out of seven stories, four stories will definitely stay with me - a secret concealed by a woman who demanded decomposed flesh meat from her neighbour, a story of a filial child who couldn't stand the disgrace brought by his uncle and aunt upon his family, a story of a hyena tearing off a maid's face and pasted it on its face and lastly, a story of a thin and tall lady who was too old to play with

‘horses’.

Incredibly dreamlike, detailed in parts, creepily operating on its own logic. A great read.

Actual rating: 3.5 stars for *The Skeleton Holidays* by Leonora Carrington!

Callum McLaughlin says

I'm a big fan of Carrington's surrealist artwork, but it seems surrealist writing simply doesn't work quite as well for me. The first story, *White Rabbits*, was brilliantly creepy, and *The Debutante* very striking in its sinister absurdity, but the other 5 stories did nothing for me, sadly, and I don't think they'll stay with me.

Lauren (Cook's Books) says

I am very sick and on the good good (tesco cold & flu caps) and this was the weirdest fucking trip you could ever experience

Miss Bookiverse says

This collection contains 7 of Carrington's surrealist short stories. I had never read surrealist literature before and while reading this collection my recurring thought was "OMG, WTF did I just read?" It's like Alice in Wonderland on mind-enhancing drugs: weird, colorful, often brutal, sometimes ridiculous, sometimes melancholy. Anything is possible and sometimes it's hard to follow (or find) the actual storyline. But it's still so much fun because it's so unique and reminded me of twisted fairy tales and I'm sure a lot more could be gained from some in-depth analyses.

My favorite story was *The Debutante* about a young woman and a hyena attempting to switch places. The only thing that bothered me was how in *White Rabbits* (view spoiler)

Gemma says

I veered between liking and loving it. I do have a leaning towards the surreal, absurd or just plain bonkers, so this sort of collection was right up my street.

Amy says

I need to read everything by Leonora Carrington

Kirsty says

Leonora Carrington's *The Skeleton's Holiday* is one of the books which I have been most looking forward to in the Penguin Moderns series. I read her novel, *The Hearing Trumpet*, last June, and very much enjoyed its brand of absurdity. The titular story was written as part of a collaborative novel in 1939, and the other stories - 'White Rabbits', 'Uncle Sam Carrington', 'The Debutante', 'The Oval Lady', 'The Seventh Horse', and 'My Flannel Knickers' - have all been translated from their original French by the likes of Marina Warner and Carrington herself. The writing here is characteristically Carrington's; each tale is filled with oddity, and surprises the reader at every grotesque turn. Throughout, Carrington has a wonderful knack of vividly setting scenes, and her prose is at once odd and beguiling. There is a dark, startling humour throughout, and an otherworldly sense to her stories. The author clearly had such an imagination; this collection has left me eager to read more of her work.
