



The Shadow Man of Ichabod Lane

Allen R. Brady

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That thing on the porch won't go away.

I called the police, but I don't think they're coming. They've got their hands full with the Manhattan quarantine, so they can't waste their time on a nothing little town like Otterkill.

That means it's up to me and the neighbors, and there are fewer of us every day. Fewer of us, and more of them. Every person we lose is one more monster to deal with. The Spiller family, the folks from the Retirement Center, even the Mathises' Rottweiler are now stalking the streets, waiting for someone to get too close. A single touch is all it takes.

I don't know which of my neighbors became the thing on the porch, and I suppose it doesn't matter. I've got to get out of here, but the Tarbabies are already showing up in Albany, and Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. There's nowhere left to run, and there's no point in hiding.

Not when the shadows themselves are after you.

The Shadow Man of Ichabod Lane Details

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From Reader Review The Shadow Man of Ichabod Lane for online ebook

Mkittysamom says

The whole idea of "Tarbabies" is scary and funny and really creative. With the huge Zombie kick, a new monster emerges 1/2 "The Blob" and 1/2 Zombie, as described in the novel. We travel along with Josh, Libby aka Pixie, and Banjo (their adopted dog from a neighbor), as they go from Otterkill to Albany, NY to seek out refuge with relatives. Unfortunately they are waylaid by many debacles that are either darn funny or scary! For example, the neighbors...one started a Tarbaby on fire, another chopped his wife's arm off and even a dog became a Tarbaby! One by one careless misstep, relief from pain or an already turned family member causes most people to get gooped. But mostly careless mistakes...like tripping, trying to push the Tarbaby away...getting too close, poking it with a stick, running in the dark (they are black and translucent) or trying to save someone! I guess the Tarbabies are really a tough problem...really how do you kill goop? There is only one way to get unstuck...but you will have to read this hilarious adventure through suburbia, the forest, on foot, in a car or in a hotel...all the way to Albany! I laughed many times as Josh said super funny quips and just his personality as a weenie trying to be a hero!

S. K. Pentecost says

Fun, quick, and engrossing are three of this book's strengths.

Its two biggest weaknesses were a relentless sardonic banter, and a intermittent neglect of Sanderson's Laws of Magic, made all the more infuriating because so much of the book was so clever.

Brady's imagination is impressive, his every(women) are all believably "next door," and his sense of dramatic tension is enviable.

I will definitely be checking out the other two books in this series.

Charles Vrooman says

I decided to try the audible book format for this novel. The reader is none other than Allen Brady, the author. He does an excellent job in reading his book. Since his credits to date are writing plays, he uses a lot of dialogue, which works great for an audio book.

As a novel, I would recommend this book for middle school grade children. Even though it's called a horror novel, I didn't find the blob type monsters very scary. The story was too simple for an adult to enjoy. However, the writing was okay. There wasn't any kind of ending. But I understand there will be a follow-up book.

Alan says

I just recently finished reading *Tarbabies*, by Allen R. Brady. It's an apocalypse told on a local scale. When the protagonist first hears about them in Manhattan, they're considered more of a nuisance than an actual threat. But soon after that, they continue to spread outward from the city. Finally, there's nowhere to go.

What are tarbabies? Well, we're not entirely sure. It's not like they're fast, vicious monsters like werewolves or vampires, and they're not really zombies, either. Just don't let them touch you. In fact, they've been called different things by different people. But "tarbabies," named after Brer Fox's scheme to catch Brer Rabbit in the Uncle Remus tale, seems to be the name that "sticks."

Here's an excerpt...

"That thing on the porch won't go away. I called the police, but I don't think they're coming. They've got their hands full with the Manhattan quarantine, so they can't waste their time on a nothing little town like Otterkill. That means it's up to me and the neighbors, and there are fewer of us every day. Fewer of us, and more of them. Every person we lose is one more monster to deal with. The Spiller family, the folks from the Retirement Center, even the Mathises' Rottweiler are now stalking the streets, waiting for someone to get too close. A single touch is all it takes. I don't know which of my neighbors became the thing on the porch, and I suppose it doesn't matter. I've got to get out of here, but the Tarbabies are already showing up in Albany, and Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh. There's nowhere left to run, and there's no point in hiding. Not when the shadows themselves are after you."

The menace of the tarbabies builds throughout the book, as the creatures start appearing everywhere. There is a particularly harrowing scene on the Appalachian Trail, when the main character and his wife are pursued by a "thing that was a duck." If that sounds funny, it's because it is. But Brady still makes it frightening.

Allen Brady is a local writer here in the Hudson Valley, and I've performed in a couple of shows that he's written or co-written. *Tarbabies* is published by Spore Press. I look forward to more novels from Allen in the future.

Originally posted at Booksellers Without Borders (NY). Here's the link...

<http://www.booksellerswithoutbordersn...>

AudioBookReviewer says

My full Tarbabies audiobook review can be found at [Audiobook Reviewer](#).

The tarbabies, while it wasn't disclosed how they were created, where these shambling slow creatures that hide in the shadows during the day and come out only at night. Here's the interesting part, if you even so much as brush up against a tarbaby, suddenly all pain will leave you and a euphoric hilarity will overcome you, all while the sticky black tar consumes your body and you become one of them, living only to transform the next victim. With stories that boast themselves as a horror novel I really want or look forward to something that I can really sink my teeth into, I want edge of my seat tension, maybe some gory action scenes, a scary or evil villain or a freakishly horrifying monster. Sadly, for me, Allen R. Brady didn't deliver a horror story that I was expecting. However, he created a very interesting science fiction thriller story. I just didn't get sucked in as I have in other horror stories very minimal tense moments. There was one particularly violent action scene that made me want more and there was little else in the department. If you are looking for an easy listening, low stress and violence, sci-fi monster story you will like Tarbabies very much. I am looking forward to more from Brady as he has a great imagination and a very easy going writing style that I could see creating something really great.

Audiobook provided for review by the author.

Cormac Zoso says

Truthfully, as the book began to take shape I was a bit mystified as to how the author was going to continue in an interesting manner, where it was going to go, how the monsters were truly going to be, well, scary, and how could they ever be defeated (or not).

Mr. Brady accomplished all of these in a smooth and unpretentious and believable manner, which considering the monsters were globs of "tar" is frankly a fine achievement. His characters are well drawn and the societal reactions and over-reactions and somewhat insane reactions were very believable.

I won't go into details and not have spoilers but I recommend this book even to non-monster book fans. The writing is crisp and flows like a clean river and the story moves along at a lively pace making this book a pleasurable and pretty quick read. (My reading time on the book is of no relation to the actual pace you'll be able to get through it ... shortly after starting I had some neurological episodes that cut down my reading pace and the amount I could read -- so do not think it will take you six months to finish this fine tome.)

I'll be looking forward to Mr. Brady's next effort.

Paul says

This is excellent. To be frank, I really didn't think I would enjoy it, not my kind of book at all. However, how wrong can you be? It was brilliant, well written and I'm looking forward to book 2 in the series now.

Sarah-Jayne Briggs says

(I received this book for free as part of Goodreads First Reads giveaways).

(This review may contain spoilers).

I would probably have given this book 4 stars. Unfortunately, the constant switching between third and first person, with no warning, made this book very hard to read at times.

I thought that the new take on the zombie theme was a really unique one, especially given the link-ins to Brer Rabbit, though I could definitely agree that the name (and title) carried racist connotations, so I was very hesitant to use the actual name.

While it was good to have the opportunity to see the effects on a smaller area of something like that, I did struggle with my suspension of disbelief when it came to the police officer handling things. To be honest, the first several chapters had me assuming it was a satire. While there were more serious aspects later on, I found it very hard to take a bus driver's refusal to abandon their route, when instructed to by a police officer, seriously.

I really did like the descriptions of the tarbabies, though it was hard to picture how they could have moved around at all, given how sticky they were described as being. One thing I found quite interesting was the fact that, although the majority of them seemed to be driven to 'go forth and multiply', there were a few that seemed more harmless. I did, however, feel that a trick was missed when no one attempted to communicate with the creatures through those in the process of being infected.

I did especially like the relationship between Josh and Libby. While I did think Libby was quite physical (even if it was meant to be in a playful, non-threatening way), I enjoyed their interactions and felt they really did care about each other.

One thing I particularly liked was seeing how different people saw the tarbabies. It was good to see that, when faced with the prospect of their own mortality, some people chose to make the transformation... and I couldn't blame them.

I probably felt the most sympathy for Brandon as a character. While he and his brother seemed to be somewhat lacking in the common sense department, it did seem they really wanted to try to help; and it was pretty awful to see that Brandon was hurt so badly by trying to do the right thing.

I thought it was good to see Libby and Josh have to figure out how to get to her parents, given the roads were blocked. I thought it was good to learn a bit more about the creatures, but I found their supposed weakness to be quite confusing.

I thought it was good to see some semblance of society try to keep going, but I would have liked to see it on a bit of a wider scale. While the ending of the book was a little confusing, it was good and I did find the plot held my attention throughout. I would be interested in reading the next book/s in this series in the future.

Claire says

Zombie apocalypse mixed with the blob. Instead of undead cannibals there are shuffling tar-like creatures who engulf whatever living thing they encounter, turning them into another featureless monster.

Josh and Alice live in the suburb, and initially intend to stay since they don't see the threat of the creatures, but a few incidents later they set off to find a better place to wait out the apocalypse, dodging the "tarbabies" as they go.

The book's biggest draw is the sarcastic, dark humor which can be very entertaining. Unfortunately there were a couple instances where the humorous tone of the narrator clashed with the events of the book, making the narrator sound more like a sociopath than someone who uses humor to cope. The characters essentially fumble from situation to situation, the narrator always quick to crack a joke, which keeps the book fun, but also makes the main characters seem weirdly unaffected by what's happening around them.

If you enjoy sarcastic, dark humor you will likely enjoy this book. It is ultimately a very fun, if not very emotionally satisfying read

susan murray says

Won from goodreads

The story is around Libby and Josh and how they need to get away somewhere safe as people are turning into tar blobs and walking around slowly but if they touch you it's curtains. You can't get away as it's like a glue and you start changing no one knows how it started or what can kill them.

It takes people's ailments away and they are happy but turn into a blob with no features at all.

Not really a horror story I have to admit I smiled to myself but worth a read to see what happens on their journey a few humours along the way.

Joe says

A horror book that isn't exactly heavy on the horror, BUT.....this was one of the best written books I've ever read! I've never felt so attached to characters in a book as I was with the main character and his wife. He really knows how to paint a picture of situations. The humor was completely on point and much appreciated. Can't wait for the sequels! And I couldn't get over how much this book would lend itself to the big screen. Here's to hoping!

Michele Cacano says

I debated on giving this book four or five stars, but opted for the higher because it was so damn entertaining. Also, the ending...argh! But so good. I don't know how to not give anything away...so I will say that I related to the characters, who were well developed in such intriguing ways. The whole story is such an original take

on apocalyptic crises, I found myself eager to keep reading. A lot of it made me laugh, and the action scenes had me speed-reading along. Recommended read.

Brady manages to create high tension within an absurd series of events. His highly visual writing style should appeal to all of us movie-saturated horror buffs. All while presenting us with villains who are the least villainous of any...yet, it totally works. I loved it.

And, as a bonus, there were so few mistakes (typos / grammatical errors) that I was doubly pleased with this book!

Jennifer says

Yes I received this book from the author. Yes I gave it 5 stars. It was a perfect blend of utter creepiness and absolute comedy all rolled into one. I can't tell you how creeped out I was by The Tarbabies.....I think they are more scary than zombies....vampires,werewolves...etc. But the horror was tempered in a good way with...the utter mundane-ness (is that a word?) of Josh and Libby...their neighbors...this is how people are...how they would react to the impossible. I can't tell you how I went from moments of eebie jeebies to laughing out loud, crying moments.(the husband and teen thought I lost my mind at one point). This was a thoroughly enjoyable book. I think everyone needs an encounter with some Tarbabies. Be aware of the duck.

Emily says

Full disclosure: I received a free ebook copy of this book in a giveaway.

Some books leave me at a loss for words in a very good way, and this is one of them. The entire book left me really wowed. A strong mix of survival horror and apocalyptic fiction, with a hint of old-school dark fairy tale thrown in. The tarbabies are sticky, as you'd expect, and if you're caught by one...well, best not get caught.

The story centers around a couple trying to get back to the wife's family during this apocalypse, and the various theories they (and others) try to stop these creatures along the way. I found myself trying to brainstorm ways along with the characters. The creatures do have an interesting weakness, but I won't spoil what it is. Though they're based off an old tale, the creatures themselves are very original. I don't really want to say more than that to avoid any sort of spoilers.

I feel like there is a creeping dread here, even though I know not everyone sees it. It's like the slow, inevitability of a zombie horde but without the violence. To me that makes it worse...that once they get you, you're happy. There's just something utterly wrong about it.

The portrayals of the way various groups react to this apocalypse is really interesting, too. The author goes out of his way to illustrate various aspects of human nature, but does it in such a way that I was left feeling almost as conflicted as the characters making the choices. Sometimes there's no clear right or wrong, and I love the ambiguity of it.

Kimberly says

I'm not sure why this book is referred to as a "Horror novel" since there is nothing even remotely horrific about it. Maybe if there were a point in the book when the protagonist seemed frightened himself and not cracking jokes while being chased through the woods or wondering if his wife is carrying chapstick while being ambushed I would have given this book 2 stars.

But that was simply not the case.
