



## Fear the Reaper

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Warning: This is not just a book.

This is a journey into the life of Death; a journey through this world and the next on the words of 21 of the best horror writers around.

Will you follow them to stare into the eyes of the Grim Reaper? Can you handle the true story of the birth of Death, or the minute details behind catching or escaping Death, becoming Death? Dying? These are not just stories but horrific experiences of pain and death: the deaths of lonely people, famous people, entire worlds, and the death of innocence and the pain of those left behind as they wait their turn, wondering what it will be like—no one is safe from the Reaper!

## Fear the Reaper Details

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Joe Mynhardt (Editor) , Gary McMahon (Introduction) , Rena Mason (Contributor) , Joe McKinney (Contributor) , Rick Hautala (Contributor) , Gary Fry (Contributor) , Ross Warren (Contributor) , Marty Young (Contributor) , more... Stephen Bacon (Contributor) , Dean M. Drinkel (Contributor) , Sam Stone (Contributor) , Eric S. Brown (Contributor) , Mark Sheldon (Contributor) , Steve Lockley (Contributor) , Robert S. Wilson (Contributor) , Jeremy C. Shipp (Contributor) , Jeff Strand (Contributor) , Lawrence Santoro (Contributor) , Feo Amante (Contributor) , John Kenny (Contributor) , Gary A. Braunbeck (Contributor) , Taylor Grant (Contributor) , Richard Thomas (Contributor) ...less

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## From Reader Review Fear the Reaper for online ebook

### Bandit says

There are so many things right with this anthology. Its title is a play on one of my favorite songs. It's got great cover art. It's thematic and the theme is really incredibly appropriate for the genre. And it's fun too. Great line up of well known and considerably less so authors offering their unique takes on the grim subject. Not every story is great, the middle is sort of a mixed bag, but overwhelming majority is pretty awesome, clever, interesting, original and well written. Really excellent anthology for any horror fan. Highly recommended.

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### Ashley Sigler says

The variety of short stories in this book were absolutely amazing. The authors each had their own views of death and the reaper. This is definitely a reread for me. The stories in this book are brilliant and should be read by lovers of this genre for many, many years.

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### Kenneth Cain says

Solid collection of stories. Standouts for me were Robert S. Wilson's "The Death Catcher" and Jeremy C. Shipp's "The Tubes"

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### Monique Snyman says

Do not read this book just before bedtime. If you do, you're just setting yourself up for a sleepless night, watching the shadows grow and dance and become all kinds of scary creepy monsters, ready to eat you up. In other words, Fear the Reaper, an anthology published by Crystal Lake Publishing, is going to mindfreak you like it's nobody's business. The anthology revolves around the Grim Reaper, so obviously you can expect a lot of death, but every story - unique in its own way - has a distinctive take on ol' Death.

Fear the Reaper is a very ambiguous anthology: you have your usual horror thrills and chills to look forward to, don't worry, but hidden between the lines is some surprisingly deep themes.

There's also a lot of variety to look forward to.

All in all, I liked it. I liked the cover art (don't know if you've ever noticed, but my screen-name is The\_Reaper - wink, wink, wink). I enjoyed the stories. I loved reading between the lines in search of that ambiguous meaning/theme (I do that for some weird reason). Basically, I think it's a wonderful horror anthology to chill to, and if you're in the mood to have your blood run cold, then you should definitely pick it up.

Review originally posted at:

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### **E.F. says**

Death: fascinating, terrifying, unknown. Horror fans will enjoy the editor's selections of stories that go well beyond the tropes associated with the image of the reaper. Between these pages, there is much more to fear.

Each story in this collection contributes a distinct approach to the topic. Some offer twisted spins on the topic of beating - or cheating - death, like "Stumps" by Jeff Strand and "Do No Harm" by Joe McKinney. Others, like the chilling "Death Squared" by Rena Mason, take on an afterlife filled with horrors of their own. Some stories blur the line between fantasy and horror, like the fascinating "Cedo Looked Like People" by E.C. McMullen, Jr. with an innovative, character driven and surreal glimpse into identity and loss. Another standout in the collection is the complex and hauntingly powerful "At the 'Pay Here, Please' Table" by Gary A. Braunbeck, which, considers death in both literal (murderous) and figurative (lost innocence) terms.

This fine collection delivers a good share of shock and chills, and stares into the depths of death without flinching.

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### **Carl Alves says**

Like many anthologies that I read, *Fear the Reaper*, had some strong stories that I enjoyed, and some forgettable ones that I skipped through because they couldn't hold my interest. This anthology had an interesting theme—one that focused on death. There were tales of the Grim Reaper, life after death, vampires, ghosts, spirits and a smorgasborg of ghastly delights.

It seems as if most of the better stories were in the first half of the anthology. The ones that stood out to me in particular were *The Life of Death* by Marc Sheldon, which opened the anthology. It was followed up by a darkly humorous tale by Jeff Strand—and you can never go wrong with anything by Jeff Strand. I also enjoyed Rena Mason's story. *The Death Catcher* by Robert S. Wilson stood out. *Cedo Looked Like People* was an odd but captivating tale. Then there were some that missed the mark, which I won't go over in this review, but clearly the good outweighed the bad, and overall I give this anthology a thumbs up. There's a lot to like in here if you like to dip into the macabre.

Carl Alves - author of *Battle of the Soul*

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### **Steve Isaak says**

#### **Overall review:**

Good mainstream horror anthology, worth owning.

#### **Standout stories:**

- 1.) "Stumps" - Jeff Strand: Darkly funny story about a man who seeks immortality and finds it.

2.) "Death Squared" - Rena Mason: Two boys' friendship is tested when they visit a death site and encounter something more than ghosts. The scenes will be familiar to those well-versed in ghost works, but the writing is fun and solid.

3.) "The Death Catcher" - Robert S. Wilson: Especially well-written and real-world plausible (within the context of this work) tale about a man whose ability to resurrect the dying brings heartache as well as relief.

4.) "Cedo Looked Like People" - E.C. McMullen Jr.: A boy's strange next door night- and day-divided neighbors make for equally strange - and later disturbing - friendships. This Ray Bradbury-esque is one of the most memorable and one of the more original stories I've read in a long time.

5.) "The Tubes" - Jeremy C. Shipp: This is one of my favorite works in this anthology. In a not-quite-bizarro science fictional world, death's dominion is political. Like the preceding story, this one is memorable.

6.) "A Life in Five Objects" - Ross Warren: An interview involving the titular five objects takes a surprising turn. Good read, entertaining.

7.) "The Last Resort" - Sam Stone: Solid, plot-twisty piece about a man (Charlie), dying of cancer, whose eyes are opened to certain untimely revelations.

8.) "Der Engel der Liebe" - Dean M Drinkel: This story reads like a mid-Sixties to early Seventies Hammer film, with its ritualistic murder, sadism and blasphemous-religious elements. It's predictable, aside from a Hammer-esque tale-expansive twist at the end, but this well-written work is all about enjoying the ride not the destination.

9.) "The Final Peace" - Gary Fry: A man, mourning his recently deceased wife and fearful for their offspring, goes to the fair with his too-curious-for-his-comfort children. Well-written tale, with an effective, grief-realistic tone and a finish that made me smile.

10.) "Do No Harm" - Joe C. McKinney: Provocative, memorable work about a doctor (Turner) who's forced to help a group of creatures - who prey on mankind - conquer a disease that's held them in check. One of my favorite stories in this collection.

(This review originally appeared on the Reading & Writing By Pub Light site.)

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**Sgt Roman Hunter says**

5 STARS GIVEN TO JOE MYNHARDT, NOT EVERYONE HAS THE B@LLS TO ADMIT

'THIS IS NOT JUST A BOOK' I'VE EXPERIENCE {WEIRD} STUFF MYSELF, AND I'M NOT AFRAID TO ADMIT, I FACED DEATH MANY TIMES, I'VE LOOKED DEATH IN THE EYE AND LIVED, I'VE BEEN AT THE BRINK OF INSANITY AND SURVIVED, I'VE FELT HELL KNOCKING AT MY DOOR AND SURVIVED THAT TOO. I'M CURIOUS TO SEE HOW THIS BOOK COMPARES TO THE HORRORS I'VE SEEN.

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### **Books says**

The Collection of short stories in Fear the Reaper takes a look at death, and presents the grim reaper in its numerous guises. We get the tale of how death or the reaper came into being, what it looks like when a vengeful serial killer strikes and the brutal, dirty death in the armed forces.

In a tale about the end of the world and the ultimate death of all mankind, the author creates a wonderful sense of menace. Self-sacrifice and over protectiveness play a big role in other stories. Unfortunately the reaper comes for all in the end, thus creating poignant scenes throughout the book.

Most of the stories in this collection are pure horror and blood chillingly scary. Yet, each story provides comment on human nature and the human race in general. The reaper appears as a boy, a beast, a thing of shadow and the original black cloaked man with his sithe. A crow shows itself as a portent of death, and sometimes death is just there, without form or shape, to claim its victims.

Two boys, unnaturally preoccupied with death and suicide, meet the reaper.

"He landed flat on his back, opened his eyes, and saw that Death was no longer a boy. In all his Grim Reaper glory, he stood over Trent and looked down with those red crackled eyes. Death wore black tattered robes now that swayed above Trent with shadow images of people trapped inside trying to get out."

The question about whether we should try and bring people back from death is also addressed. A medical doctor is abducted by vampires and the man with nine lives finds out that:

"He wasn't comfortable in his current unprotected state; for the first time in centuries, death would be permanent."

From the last moments of a selfish man and the macabre reward of someone who is obsessed with his own health, to drug experiments and a cure that can destroy the human race, this anthology of tales about death has everything that the horror addict can dream of. I must warn however, that some of these stories contain extreme violence, crude language and descriptive sex and may not be suitable for younger or sensitive readers.

Most of the tales told in Fear the Reaper have a wonderful twist at the end that will leave you shocked, horrified and, now and then, delighted. A book that will chill you to the bone and have you switching on all the lights at night, Fear the Reaper should appeal to all readers of the horror and dark fantasy genre. (Ellen Fritz)

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### **A.R. says**

This collection had a few really good stories, but most of the tales I didn't care for. It was a good idea for an anthology, though, and had a killer introduction.

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### **A.E. says**

*Fear the Reaper* is another good quality anthology from Crystal Lake Publishing that features great horror stories centering around the theme of Death and they're all very diverse so there is something for every horror reader to enjoy.

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### **Lisa says**

All in all, this was a pretty great collection of stories. There were a few stinkers, but that's only to be expected. I'm glad I got this book and there are two new and upcoming new authors I found and will be following to see what else they come up with. Yep, I'd recommend this book.

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### **Richard Barber says**

this anthology is a mixed bag of horror tales. There are a couple of very weak stories, a selection of good stories, and a couple of stand out, head and shoulders above the rest, tales that justify the price of the book on their own. for me, the two outstanding stories in this collection are Stephen Bacon's "Rapid Eye Movement" and Richard Thomas's "The Culling"

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### **Tamara says**

#### **Death ... Death ... Death ...**

This death collection comes to you from an all-star lineup of writers, so there's no way a reader can be let down! From the alluring cover to each deathly crafted story within, you'll be transported into "the life of death." Keep a tight grip on reality ... and be sure to find your way back from the pages ... if you can.

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