



More Deadly than the Male: Masterpieces from the Queens of Horror

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Readers are well aware that Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*: few know how many other tales of terror she created. In addition to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote some surprisingly effective horror stories. The year after *Little Women* appeared, Louisa May Alcott published one of the first mummy tales. These ladies weren't alone. From the earliest days of Gothic and horror fiction, women were exploring the frontiers of fear, dreaming dark dreams that will still keep you up at night.

More Deadly than the Male includes unexpected horror tales by Louisa May Alcott and Harriet Beecher Stowe, and forgotten writers like Mary Cholmondeley and Charlotte Riddell, whose work deserves a modern audience. Readers will be drawn in by the familiar names and intrigued by their rare stories.

In *The Beckside Boggle*, Alice Rea brings a common piece of English folklore to hair-raising life, while Helene Blavatsky, best known as the founder of the spiritualist Theosophical Society, conjures up a solid and satisfying ghost story in *The Cave of the Echoes*. Edith Wharton's great novel *The Age of Innocence* won her the Pulitzer prize, yet her horror stories are known only to a comparative few.

Readers will discover lost and forgotten women who wrote horror every bit as effectively as their male contemporaries. They will learn about their lives and careers, the challenges they faced as women working in a male-dominated field, the way they overcame those challenges, and the way they approached the genre—which was often subtler, more psychological, and more disturbing.

More Deadly than the Male: Masterpieces from the Queens of Horror Details

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tightrope.to.the.sun says

"'Wal, I talked with Jed about it; and says I to Jed, says I, 'Now, ef you'll take my advice, jist you give that are old house a regular overhaulin', and paint it over with tew coats o' paint, and that are'll clear 'em out, if any thing will. Ghosts is like bedbugs,--they can't stan' fresh paint,' says I.'" -- *Tom Toothacre's Ghost Story* by Harriet Beecher Stowe

I received a review copy from the publisher in return for an honest review

Guys! This short story collection was amazing. All of the horror stories included were written by female authors between 1830 and 1908. The majority of those included are not well known or frequently anthologized. Each story was prefaced with a short blurb by the editor, Graeme Davis, to give some background on the author and some context about the style, genre, or importance of the piece. I enjoyed reading these, because I am much less familiar with what was typical of stories during this time period and it was nice to have a little stylistic background.

None of the stories included were frightening or scary, so if that is what you are looking for, you will probably be disappointed. However, being a fan of horror, it is great to see the history of specific horror sub-genres. All of the narratives were well crafted and interesting, and there was a huge variety of topics covered. Many of the pieces were hauntings/supernatural/ghost stories, but they also included vampires, mummies, sea stories, transformations, and psychological ruin.

by far, my favorite story was *The Beckside Boggle* by Alice Rea. *The Beckside Boggle* was set in England's Lake District (near the Scottish border) and Rea wrote characters who spoke in dialect that was difficult to get the hang of, but greatly enriched the authenticity of the piece. I don't want to ruin the plot for those of you who have yet to read it, but she perfectly captures the sense of unease the characters feel, throws a couple of twists in, and provides a really unique method of murder.

This is a small thing, and probably nit-picky, but I was a little disappointed that *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman was included in this collection. As much as I love that story, it felt out of place because of how well it is known. In so many of the before-story blurbs, Davis mentioned how little-known or less popular the stories he chose to include were. Finding such a popular story in this collection felt a little off-brand.

Despite that, I loved reading all of these horror stories by badass female authors of the 19th and 20th centuries. They deserve so much more credit than they have been given by society, and I am so happy that Davis put this collection together. 4 Stars

Genevieve Taylor says

An incredible collection of lesser-known ghost stories from female writers of the 18th and 19th centuries. The collection includes stories from an array of famous female writers who weren't known for horror, like Louisa May Alcott and Harriet Beecher Stowe, in addition to lesser known authors lost to history, and the

best ghost advice I've encountered all year: nothing drives off ghosts like a fresh coat of paint.

Becky Spratford says

Review coming to blog and Booklist soon
