



PETER AND THE VAMPIRES (Volume One)

Darren Pillsbury

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For fans of J.K. Rowling (the HARRY POTTER series), Orson Scott Card (ENDER'S GAME), R.L. Stine (the GOOSEBUMPS series), Darren Shan (CIRQUE DU FREAK), and Stephen King (IT) comes a new series of supernatural thrillers!

When ten-year-old Peter moves into his grandfather's creepy old mansion in a small town, bad, baaaaad things start to happen.

A family of charred boogeymen who haunt the garden decide they don't like trespassers...

A classmate with a crush comes back from the grave, and decides to make Peter her Undead Prince Charming...

A creature from Fairieland changes place with Peter's two-year-old sister, leading to a VERY strange babysitting job...

A prehistoric predator snatches children from the town lake, forcing Peter to literally dive into the belly of the beast...

With his troublemaking neighbor Dill, his grumpy grandfather, and only his courage and wit to guide him, Peter has to survive all these things, plus the Greatest Horror Of All:

Fourth grade.

PETER AND THE VAMPIRES is for teens and adults who, when they were kids, were looking for stories that kicked butt. The protagonist might be young, but the stories are dark, funny, and pulse-pounding.

VAMPIRES is the first in an ongoing series that includes PETER AND THE WEREWOLVES and PETER AND THE FRANKENSTEIN. This book is 120,000 words (370+ pages) and contains some mild language, violence, and scary situations.

PETER AND THE VAMPIRES (Volume One) Details

Date : Published (first published May 6th 2011)

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Author : Darren Pillsbury

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From Reader Review PETER AND THE VAMPIRES (Volume One) for online ebook

William Winkle says

I originally downloaded this collection of four YA novellas to review for a podcast. I made it through the first one in time to review, but then I set the book aside as other demands pressed on my time. Eventually, though, I came back to it and read through the rest of the book over the course of several weeks, reading one tiny chapter at a time on my phone's Kindle app as time permitted. I found that such choppy reading tends to diminish many books, but it proved no problem at all for "Peter and the Vampires." As a 41-year-old man, I found myself often laughing out loud at the antics of Dill, the sidekick of the series. Of course, I knew I'd signed up for fluffy semi-horror that in actuality isn't much scarier than a Scooby-Doo episode, but it's fun, and I looked forward to every chance I had to open it up.

I downloaded "Peter and the Vampires" onto my 10-year-old son's Kindle, and once he started in on it, he couldn't stop. This morning, he was entirely ready to give up his breakfast just to be able to keep reading it, and he found it so funny that he wanted to read it out loud to the rest of the room. I don't think I can pay Pillsbury a higher compliment than that. If your kids, like mine, enjoy a little sass in their story and can handle just a pinch of imaginative tension, the "Peter" series will not disappoint. I have a feeling I'll be buying all the other volumes for my son *very* soon...

SenoraG says

I was not sure what to expect by this book so I opened it with an open mind. I was hooked by page 2! Peter and the Vampires is truly a delightful book with lovable young boys as our main characters. Add to that a creepy grandfather, a huge house where strange things happen and a two year old little sister who wears a bathing suit every day OVER her clothes!

Dill and our hero Peter find adventures and in some circumstances adventures find them. I loved this book. It was creepy, mysterious and laugh out loud funny. I enjoyed Peter but his buddy Dill was hands down my favorite. When Dill gets scared he "maybe" pees his pants, "just a little" and while most of us would keep that tidbit to ourselves, Dill always tells Peter. The exchanges that follow that are hilarious!

I was very curious about the grandfather. He has his own story that unfolds slowly and made me read as fast as I could and turn the pages so I could find out. Dill is scared to death of grandfather and grandfather is none to fond of him either since there was an incident with Dill blowing up some watermelons in the grandfather's garden. The interaction between those two is a lot of fun.

My favorite part of the book besides Dill was the vampire schoolgirl with a crush on Peter. I felt sorry for her at times and wanted to kick her butt at other times. There was nothing funny about her to Peter who had to fend her off but since he's such a nice guy really didn't want to hurt her. Good thing he has back-up in Dill and grandfather!

Peter and the Vampires is a quick, easy read and truly a lot of fun. I will surely look for the other books in the series and I hope my friend Dill shows up in them too.

This is a Young Adult book but trust me, adults will enjoy it just as much, maybe even more. Normally I don't read or enjoy YA but I devoured this and want more! Highly recommended.

Kate says

I really have no idea what I was expecting when I went into this...but it's not the book I got.

And that's GOOD.

I mean, really really good. This is some of the best middle-grade fantasy fiction I've read in ages.

PETER AND THE VAMPIRES is actually a collection of several novella-length middle-grade fantasy adventures, each featuring Peter Normal and his friend Dill (don't even think of making a pickle joke). All see the boys dealing with different supernatural threats, in engagingly realistic ways. Peter is a real kid; he's flawed, vulnerable, courageous, impulsive, and cowardly in equal measures. He adores his family, even though they have their problems, and he has a very realistic family life (a harried but concerned mom, an annoying but beloved little sister, etc.)

Basically, it's the perfect representation of a young boy, thrown into some very, very weird situations. Some of these, Peter brings on himself through selfish, irrational, impulsive, or misguided actions - things that any normal person, let alone a normal kid, might do. It's a breath of fresh air to see such a NORMAL kid handling extraordinary situations in a way that, well, you might do yourself. It's one thing to try to fight vampires if you're superpowered, like Buffy; it's another entirely to do so by trying to distract a priest and make off with a collapsible camping cup full of holy water, because you don't have any other resources.

The writing is lively and engaging, full of wit and charm. My only complaint is how much the author likes capitalization, but even that seems to fit with the characters' ten-year-old voices.

There's another collection of Peter novellas teased to at the end of this one; I'll be picking it up immediately.

Mary says

When I first picked up this book, it was just to kill some time - I didn't really expect much from it. But now that I've put it down... wow. I am absolutely amazed. No matter how hard I try, I cannot find a flaw in this book. The characters are believable and realistic, the plot is rich and fantastic, the dialogue is entertaining and (whenever Dill is involved) hilarious. Recently, it's been hard for me to find a good book. All of the stuff that're being published nowadays just end up disappointing me. But after reading Darren Pillsbury's Peter and the Monsters series, I've regained my faith in the book world.

You will not regret reading this wonderful series.

Ali says

What a cute book! Peter and the Vampires is made up of several stories that sorta tie into each other. We

start out with Peters mom loosing her job and the family has to move in with his crazy grandfather. He meets the kid next door Dill and the crazy adventures begin. From taking on crispy hobos to horrible swamp creatures, this book has something for everyone, but is not scary and ends on a positive note each time so I was able to read this to my 3yr old at bed and she couldnt wait each night to hear the next part. *altho I wouldnt lable this a childrens book*

Definatly 4 stars, I would have given it 5 stars but I like my books scary. :) definatly worth reading and we will be picking up the next installment!

C.L. Bevill says

Peter is a young boy who is forced to move from California. He moves in with his creepy grandfather and the paranormal action begins. This book is written for YA, although I would say a tween could read it, too. The author has a great sense of humor and a nice pace. First up is not the vampires, but the crispy critter guys who are like two hundred years old. Then Peter gets to face the vampires and then a changeling, which is loads of fun. The final story is about a swamp monster. Love this book. Am thinking about sharing it with my eight year old daughter.

Cheryl says

Peter Normal, his sister, Beth and their mom are moving. Peter's mom lost her job. They move in with Peter's grandfather. Peter's grandfather is crazy and there is nothing to do here. His grandfather owns no television and makes him go to bed early. Luckily for Peter, he meets Dill. Peter's grandfather warns Peter not to go into the garden. There is a reason for it. It is late at night and Dill and Peter go wandering down in to the garden. They can not help themselves. They are ten year old boys. There they meet something that scares the wits out of them. Now they know why Peter's grandfather warned Peter not to go into the garden. It is not long after that Peter and Dill start noticing strange things happening in town and to some of the people.

Peter and the Vampires by Darren Pillsbury is the first book in this series that features young, Peter. This series is geared towards younger readers but even teens and adults can get into this series. Warning as you will fall for Peter and Dill. What I liked is that some series that are written for younger readers are written at a level that is sometimes dumbed down. The part that I liked the most was that Peter and Dill acted their ages. The vampires were scary but not gory. This book is a quick read for a full length novel. This book ends on a cliff hanger moment. If you want to know what happens next, than you will have to check out Peter and the Werewolves.

Patrice says

This book isn't actually Peter and the Vampires. It's an anthology of four books about nine and a half year old Peter Normal, an unlucky and reluctant young hero transplanted from California to a rather supernatural place called Duskerville. The four stories are Peter and the Deadmen, Peter and the Vampires, Peter and the Changeling and Peter and the Swamp Monster (along with a twelve chapter preview of Peter and the

Werewolves from the next volume). All of this occurs during his first month or two in Duskerville. Peter's a very busy kid. I like Peter as the rational character who does the right thing even when it's hard. His plucky sidekick, Dill, is the comic relief, although sometimes he can be overly annoying (I empathize with Grandpa Flannagan's feelings toward Dill). My favorite character is Peter's eccentric grandfather. He's crazy in a fun, dependable way. Although it's a little below my reading level (probably late elementary or early middle school), I had a good time reading it. Since I don't have an e-reader, I was a little limited in my access to reading it, which slowed my progress. If I want to read more e-books, I'll need to invest in some technology.

TC says

This book is the first in the Peter and the Monsters series, and comprises four short stories or novellas: Peter and the Dead Men, Peter and the Vampires, Peter and the Changeling and Peter and the Swamp Monster.

Peter is ten and has just moved from California with his mum and 2 year old sister. He has been uprooted, torn away from his friends and made to move in with the grandfather he has never met. The house is huge and spooky sounding, with plenty of places off limits to Peter, including the basement which is not to be entered on pain of death! He quickly meets his new neighbour Dill, who thinks he's streetwise and savvy, and considered a bad influence by Peter's grandfather who doesn't want around him. The town they move to has some seriously weird things going on, as you can tell from the titles of each story within the book, and Peter's grandfather knows far more about what is going on than he lets on. As well as dealing with starting a new school and making new friends Peter ends up with plenty of other things on his mind, and dealing with all these incidents soon cements his friendship with Dill.

As well as the monster stories there are undercurrents based around the boys' family lives. From the start this is some mystery about what has happened between Peter's parents, and Dill's dysfunctional clan made me sympathise and feel more understanding towards him. There is also clearly more going on with Grandfather than is revealed in this book, and the hint of a curse is also present. There are two more books in the series, again divided into shorter stories, and I'll be interested to see where those threads go. What I really want to know is what is going on in the basement!

With the two main protagonists being just ten, and with the tone being scary and a bit disgusting without being too graphic I can see tweens enjoying these stories, but at 30 odd I found myself laughing in places, and picking up my reading pace as the stories reached a climax. The way the kids spoke, the things they worried about and the terms they used reminded me of being a kid again, and it was great!

This was a really fun read, and although it took me a minute to wrap my head around how the books within the book worked once I got it I thought it worked nicely. I also thought it was well formatted and proofed so was a well-presented end product. No doubt I'll be reviewing Peter and the Werewolves and Peter and the Frankenstein in the future.

Alysa H. says

This collects the first four installments of the "Peter and the Monsters" series. Although I liked some more than others, I found them collectively to be a quite good set of stories for kids who like a little funny with

their scary -- or, a little scary with their funny! -- and pretty well-written.

Pillsbury is good at building up information about these characters and their world from book to book, so that while each story is self-contained, each story builds on the last and reveals little pieces of a larger arc that is sure to come to fruition later.

My only real complaints are A) the pacing can be a little slow at times, B) Dill's slapstick humor occasionally goes overboard into tediousness, and C) the relative lack of female characters throughout. When there are females (Mercy Chalmers; Peter's mother and sister), they're not portrayed particularly positively. The intended audience for these stories is, say, 10 year old boys, but that's just an excuse, and not necessarily a good one.

My individual Goodreads ratings for these stories are 4-star, 4-star, 3-star, and 4-star, respectively, but I'm rating the collected edition 3-stars due to the meta-issues listed above. This collected edition is available free on Smashwords, Amazon, etc. I will purchase the next collection someday, when my daughter has graduated from picture-books to short novels -- assuming the next collection fixes some of the gender problems, as I'm not sure I want her to get too invested, otherwise -- but I'm not sure whether I'll be reading more of the series just for myself.

Mike Kalmbach says

Bottom line:

Wonderful collection of four middle-grade horror novels. Recommended for fans of Goosebumps. Very enjoyable!

Full review:

Peter and the Vampires is a collection of four stories:

- *Peter and the Dead Men*
- *Peter and the Vampires*
- *Peter and the Changling*
- *Peter and the Swamp Monster*

Each story stands alone, but the later stories do make a couple of references where it makes sense to read the books in order.

Initially I was confused because no vampires appear in the entire first story. That was when I realized this was actually a collection, not a single book. It might have been more aptly named "Peter and the Monsters". It looks like the author did decide to make that change, perhaps at a later date. In any case, regardless of a little naming confusion, this is a wonderful collection to own.

Peter and his family move away from his home in California to live with his grandfather while his mom looks for a job. Along the way, creatures from dead men to swamp monsters are drawn to Peter, perhaps the result of a centuries-old curse.

Each action-packed chapter takes only a few minutes to read, but the collection took me about a month to finish. There's just that much good material there. I'd recommend this to lovers of *Goosebumps* or other middle-grade horror.

* Note: I received an evaluation copy of this book in exchange for a fair review. This did not affect my rating.

BookLoversLife says

I didnt know what to expect when I started this but Im so glad I did. Its a laugh out loud funny, cringe worthy, dark and dangerous story. Dill is such a lovable funny boy. I cant wait to get to the next volumes.

Qt says

I really enjoyed this one! I loved the mixture of humor and scariness. This contained "Peter and the Dead Men," "Peter and the Vampires," "Peter and the Changeling," and "Peter and the Swamp Monster." All of them were great, and I got involved in the characters and setting early on. I love how, even though the stories are scary, they aren't excessively gruesome or dark/bleak the way many horror stories are. This is just the sort of funny-exciting-scary stuff that I love!

Peter is a resourceful kid, and a good person, which I think is great--and his grandfather is a pretty interesting character. I really like how the author mixes action, excitement, humor, and scary stuff all at once. Duskerville is a most interesting setting; there are also lots of everyday details that make it feel realistic. I kept wanting to read more of this one. I will definitely be getting the next book in the series!

Tobyann Aparisi says

I loved this book and cannot wait to read the next one. I know they were probably geared towards a bit of a younger crowd but just like Harry Potter. These are VERY well written! The charachters are easily believable and lovable. You laugh and cringe a long with them. This was so fun to read I could not put it down. I would recommend this book to yound and older a like and just have fun with it. They are a blast. Darren did a great job with these two boys and this family really. Peter seems to become more and more level headed as things progress. Makes me wonder if there isn't something special in store for him (sorta). It is just hard for me to tell how to get these volumes. Do I get them as they listed here under your name on this site? Or as Amazon has them with some combos that seem to kind of combine some books and allow you to get a few extra stories in? Either way I cannot wait until I get the next book. And really this is probably a book collection I would actually want to own in actual Hardback if I can find them (I am reading them Kindle version right now). I think these would be fun to pass along some day, and I do love the art of a really good well put together book.

Darren, thank you for such an entertaining read. I loved this... I hope the others are just as wonderful.

Madison Keller says

This is actually not a book but a collection of the first four "Peter and the Monsters" serial. This contains four stories, Peter and the Dead Men, Peter and the Vampires, Peter and the Changling, Peter and the Swamp Monster. As with normal serials, each piece is a story into and of itself, but there is a larger overarching story that slowly reveals itself during the course of the serial.

Like 'Serpent in the Glass', Peter and the Vampires is young adult fare - but don't let that deter you. This is my first review of a serial, so bear with me. To make this easier I'm going to write a little mini-review for each story:

Peter and the Dead Men - This story introduces the main characters - Peter - who has just been moved by his mother from CA to the small town of Duskerville. They are moving in with Peter's grandfather, who Peter has never met. Things are not as peaceful as they seem, as Peter finds out when he and the neighbor boy, Dill, find charred dead men wandering Peter's backyard.

While I didn't exactly dislike this story, it didn't really hook me in or make me want to keep reading. In fact, I struggled to finish it. The story does have a good mystery, but at the end left too many things unexplained.

Peter and the Vampires - This story starts with Peter falling ill and missing a week of school. The night before he returns, he sees a girl who he knows from the bus, standing in the yard in the middle of the night. The next day he finds out that girl died the week before, the day after Peter fell ill. Other children disappear, and Peter takes it upon himself to stop the vampire menace before it's too late.

This is the story that really hooked me. Several parts are laugh out loud funny - like when Dill and Peter go to the church to steal vampire hunting supplies. Their interactions with the priests are perfect. The ending is a bit mushy/happy for a vampire story, but it works with the young adult themes and setting.

Peter and the Changling - While hanging out at home, Peter's mom ropes him and Dill into babysitting Peter's little sister Beth. Things quickly go wrong when Beth grows fangs and starts munching on the furniture. Peter and Dill must fight off the changling while searching for the truth about what happened to the real Beth.

Anyone who has ever babysat a little terror can relate to this story. The antics of the Changling Beth as she terrorizes Dill and Peter are perfectly over-the-top funny. And you'll be dying at the end, when Changling Beth meets her nemesis - real Beth!

Peter and the Swamp Monster - Peter and Dill decide to enjoy one of the last nice days of summer by inter-tubing down the river to the lake. Unfortunately, their peaceful day is interrupted by a monster attack. Two kids are taken, with Peter and Dill as the only witnesses. But when the adults don't believe them, it's up to Peter and Dill to save their classmates.

This story was my favorite of the collection. Peter and Dill are outside their element in the forest, and I loved it. I also really liked how Peter and Dill's interactions have evolved over the course of the stories. This story also sets off how the two characters have grown. Although the overall arc of this story reminds of the Korean monster movie 'The Host,' the authors unique take still make this an original and engaging tale. I won't spoil the ending, but it's absolutely hilarious how the boys end up defeating the monster.

Overall Serial Arc - I'm trying to avoid spoilers, but Peter's Grandfather has some dark secrets - some of

which tie into their family. It's hinted that even perhaps Peter is fated to draw dark forces to him, which is why he runs into so many monsters. I'm intrigued to say the least.

Overall, I give this whole collection 4 stars, or 5 if the reader is between the ages of 3 and 14.
