



Tales Of The Uncanny And Supernatural

Algernon Blackwood

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This is fiction not supposed fact. Some of these stories have been long out of print. Supernatural and real plausible horror.

Tales Of The Uncanny And Supernatural Details

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Author : Algernon Blackwood

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TrumanCoyote says

Not nearly as good as I thought it was going to be. Algie tends toward prolixity, and the frequent repetitiousness definitely dilutes the effect (all of which reminds me a bit of Frasier's great line: "So you're saying that I repeat myself--that I commit tautologies--that I say the same thing over and over again!"). "The Little Beggar" is about the best thing here (and only a few pages, all quite well-controlled). On the other hand, that thing about the trees proved to be an unending droning pointless morass...

Shawn says

Algernon Blackwood is one of the best writers of weird fiction around, and if you've read "The Willows", you know that's true. This may be one of the best single collections of Blackwood's writings that I've run across, short of an actual "Complete Works", which I don't believe anyone has attempted yet (as stories keep being discovered) - and it doesn't have "The Willows" in it! Which is to say, some writers get typecast by their best stories and all it takes is digging below the surface a little to make you remember why they were a great writer, over and above the classic tales.

This collection gives a nice sampling of all of Blackwood's styles - straight out horror ("The Doll", "The Occupant Of The Room", "The Terror Of The Twins", "The Decoy" and "The Empty Sleeve"), the weird tale ("The Man Whom The Trees Loved", "The Valley Of The Beasts", "The Man Who was Milligan", "The Trod", "The Glamour Of The Snow", "Entrance And Exit", "The Pikestaffe Case") and some touching tales that seem almost like supernatural romances with weird events ("The Little Beggar", "The South Wind", "The Touch Of Pan"). He is a subtle and considerate writer, always surprising with some aspect in a story that you couldn't see coming. The recurrent themes of Blackwood are here as well: man interacts with the elemental forces of nature personified (in "The Valley of The Beasts", "The Glamour of The Snow" and "The South Wind", and is diluted into nothingness by those same forces in "The Man Whom The Trees Loved" - a story that seems to have a lot in common with Vladimir Odoyevsky's "The Sylph"), or with some paganistic symbol of the same ("The Trod" features faeries neither good or evil, just inhuman, which is as it should be; "The Touch Of Pan" features an appearance by the God of Panic himself, presiding over a - chastely described - orgy, and yet he's not presented as evil, but simply part of the natural order of things, unlike E.F. Benson's conception at the time - but then Benson was raised in religion, while Blackwood was a member of the Golden Dawn at one time, or so it's thought).

"The Doll" is probably the best story ever written about a creepy doll. "The Touch Of Pan" and "The Trod" feature men who feel they have some sensitivity to a natural world that the rest of coarse civilization cannot comprehend, then meet women who feel the same (one story turns out badly, one nicely) - these stories really convey a sense of yearning by Blackwood for a real soul-mate, one I believe he never found (I haven't read the bio I have on my shelf yet). "Entrance & Exit" and "The Pikestaffe Case" mine then current theories of higher mathematics and spacial geometry to bizarre ends, something I thought only H.P. Lovecraft and the Belgian writer Jean Ray had done much with, although it does make up a large part of Blackwood's "The Willows". "The Man Who Was Milligan" re-interprets a classic Lafcadio Hearn tale of the worlds of art and reality intersecting to an unsettling degree, while "The Decoy" is one of the best "stay overnight in a haunted house to prove nothing can happen" stories that also mixes in a doppelganger.

Really, Blackwood is just amazing. Any aspiring writer should read him thoroughly to examine how well a story can be built with attention to detail, pacing and a touch of creativity. Now, where's that "Complete Algernon Blackwood"?

Martin Shone says

So many stories here but ones which stand out for me are: "The Man Whom the Trees Loved", "The Glamour of the Snow", "The Touch of Pan", "The Lost Valley" and "The Terror of the Twins".

Kevin Lucia says

Excellent, as always. A wide, diverse collection that every fledgling speculative fiction writer should sample.

Jonathan Stroud says

Blackwood had a particular genius for summoning up the psychic atmosphere of eerie places. JS

Kirk Smith says

A nice collection of creepy short stories. A British author, I place the feel of the book somewhere between Poe and The Twilight Zone. Good fun. I think his stories were in some of the "pulp".

Kara says

A wonderful collection of stories by an author who deserves more recognition than he is given. Spooky, eerie, and thought provoking, this is a book for anyone looking for something more substantial than 'ghost stories.'

Tori says

My favorite story is definately The Valley of the Beasts.

Arisawe Hampton says

Sensitive readers be warned—Blackwood does use prevalent language considered racist in our modern era. If one can overlook or suspend judgement about it he is an otherwise fine writer in the weird fiction genre.

Algernon Blackwood was a master of the subtle "ghost" story. Unlike so many of the horror authors today, he knew that the key to true terror was a slow build-up and a subdued menace. These are some of the finest examples of his craft.

Tales include: The Doll, Running Wolf, The Little Beggar, The Occupant of the Room, The Man Whom the Trees Loved, The Valley of the Beasts, The South Wind, The Man Who Was Milligan, The Trod, The Terror of the Twins, The Deferred Appointment, Accessory Before the Fact, The Glamour of the Snow, The House of the Past, The Decoy, The Tradition, The Touch of Pan, Entrance and Exit, The Pikestaffe Case, The Empty Sleeve, Violence, and The Lost Valley.

M says

Read two pages. Racist af.

Frankie Stein says

I loved this book, by one of the best authors of supernatural, imitated by many others.

I wanted to read this collection for sometime and have had it in my bookcase for years, you know one of those I got to sit down and read that. So glad that I did. One of the stories "The doll" is a wonderful read and one of my favorites in the collection. Delightfully strange and compelling. The stories are longer than short stories more like novellas.

Blackwood's style is genuinely disturbing and needs no introduction to connoisseurs of the mysterious, macabre and the terrible. If you are familiar, this is a wonderful collection if you do not know his work start here with this amazing compilation of his best.

Jason says

A collection of tales by Algernon Blackwood, an early fantasy/weird fiction author I cannot believe isn't better known after reading this book. Several of the tales in this book are excellent, not just because they have fantastical, sometimes scary twists and turns, but his reflections on the human condition are thoughtful and relevant to modern life, which is interesting considering this book was first published in 1950. "The Man the Trees Loved" is the crown jewel of the book, a beautifully written story exploring the concept of a man's connection to the natural world around him and how that connection is reciprocated by nature itself, sometimes at the loss of connection to humanity. "Valley of the Beasts" is similar, but with an animal focus instead of plants. "Running Wolf" and "The Lost Valley" are also good stories about closure and the sacrificial aspects of love.

The only reason this book didn't get 5 stars is that the first story, "The Doll", was a pretty standard horror story that I didn't care much for. It is also worth noting that since this book was first published in 1950, there are sometimes terms and concepts used that, while normal for that time period, that would be unacceptable today. They are not commonly used in the stories, and I argue that like many other literary classics, one should realize that 1950 is very different from 2014, and that the ideas and beauty of the stories far outshine

any cultural negativity portrayed.

Russ says

"The Doll" is one of the most genuinely creepy stories I've ever read...

Murray Ewing says

Some of the stories were excellent ("The Glamour of the Snow", "The Touch of Pan", "The Pikestaffe Case", to name a few), some just pretty good supernatural stories, a few were awful (unfortunately, the long opener, "The Doll" was really bad). But well worth a read. The only trouble was that this edition (from The House of Stratus) was rife with typos (or whatever the word for scanning-and-spellcheck errors is): hyphens instead of long dashes, "Her" instead of "for", "ox" instead of "or", and many others. Made reading it a trial, sometimes, though the best stories still shone through.

Bibliophile says

An uneven collection of ghost stories. Some are bland or dated, others original and evocative. Works well in small doses on gloomy autumn nights.
