

Introduction

Horror. Terror. Fear. I always marvel at the varied forms of those words that authors imagine to create works within the “Horror” genre.

It’s a truly old and venerable genre oftentimes maligned but more so embraced by entire generations of readers and writers. From the iconic and brooding Edgar Allan Poe to the everyman’s modern master, Stephen King, the horror genre has a long and rich history.

Within the hallowed halls of the genre, the short story reigned supreme in the early, glory days of Poe, Lovecraft, James, Machen, Chambers and a host of others who became purveyors of dark and morbid tales, using the art form to thrill readers. It wasn’t until much later that novels nudged the short story from its throne. But the supernatural short story never left the royal court. As a matter of fact, it’s enjoyed a renaissance among readers and collectors of horror.

Short story anthologies, traditional magazines, and online publications today continue the tradition of the horror short story. It’s alive and thriving. News of its demise was premature, one might say. Television has also played a part in bringing the supernatural short story into the spotlight with shows such as “The Twilight Zone”, Boris Karloff’s “Thriller”, and “The Outer Limits”. Many of these shows featured script adaptations from short stories of some of the masters of the genre, while giving many new authors the chance to pen original short story scripts for the various series.

Even within the short story form, there is yet another, more minute exercise in writing. Flash fiction. Traditionally acknowledged as a “short short” tale of 1,000 words or less, some are as short as 50 words or less. It’s also been referred to as “Sudden Fiction” or “Micro Fiction”. Whatever name you put to it, it’s the short story on steroids. It’s a slam-bang rush of pure storytelling. No frills, just thrills. No prisoners taken.

The genre of horror and fear make a perfect partner for flash fiction. Why not take the mix of the supernatural, fear, terror, and horror, throw in terrifying flash stories of 1,000 words or less written by the best new and favorite Gay/Lesbian authors, stir vigorously into the boiling, bubbling cauldron, and offer up the heady brew to waiting readers?

Inhale deeply of the book you hold in your hands. Can you smell the fear? Can you taste of the horror that might come lurking to your doorstep in the dead of night? Some of the authors in *Chilling Tales of Terror and the Supernatural* will chill you with gentle horror while others might come at you with a bloodied axe. There is something here for every fan of horror and the supernatural. As editor, it’s my hope that you’ll devour these short trips into the darkest and most twisted portions of our mind with delight and that you will have many memorable nightmares to sleep by.

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www.myspace.com/chilling_tales