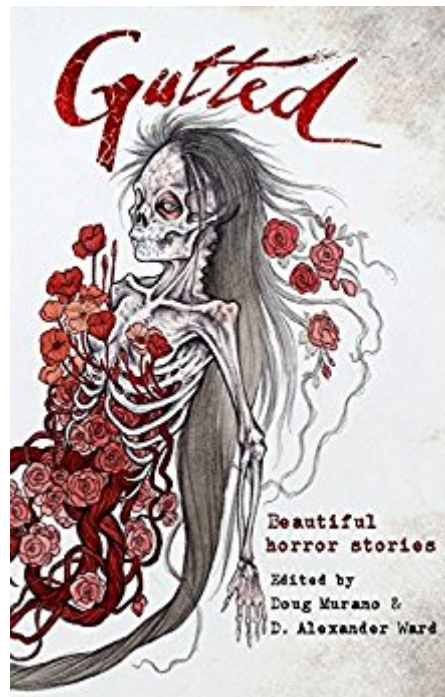


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Gutted: Beautiful Horror Stories



Synopsis

From Bram Stoker Award-nominated publisher, Crystal Lake Publishing, and the editing duo who brought you the best-selling and critically acclaimed small-town Lovecraftian horror anthology *Shadows Over Main Street*, comes *Gutted: Beautiful Horror Stories*—a disturbing journey into the beauty that rests inside the very heart of darkness. Awe meets ache. Terror becomes transcendence. Regret gives way to rebirth. Fifteen short stories and one poem span nearly every twisted corner of the horror and dark fiction genres: A woman experiences an emotional reckoning inside a haunted house. A father sees his daughter rescued after a cold case is solved, only to learn the tragic limits of his love. A man awakens a vengeful spirit and learns the terrible price of settling scores. A boy comes of age into awareness of a secret universe of Lovecraftian scale. A young woman confronts the deathly price of existence inside a German concentration camp during the Holocaust. And much, much more—*Gutted: Beautiful Horror Stories* features the most celebrated voices in dark fiction, as well as a number of exciting new talents: Clive Barker, Neil Gaiman, Ramsey Campbell, Paul Tremblay, John F.D. Taff, Lisa Mannetti, Damien Angelica Walters, Josh Malerman, Christopher Coake, Mercedes M. Yardley, Brian Kirk, Stephanie M. Wytovich, Amanda Gowin, Richard Thomas, Maria Alexander and Kevin Lucia. Edited by Doug Murano and D. Alexander Ward. With a foreword from Cemetery Dance magazine founder Richard Chizmar. Proudly brought to you by Crystal Lake Publishing.

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Customer Reviews

Have you ever been punched in the stomach? You know, just hit so hard that it knocks the wind out of you and all you can do is sit there and try to catch a breath. That's how I felt after reading this book. Each and every story packs such a powerful punch it's hard to say which is the better one! Kudos to Doug Murano and D. Alexander Ward for gathering together such a stellar collection of stories that so aptly go with both the darkly beautiful cover by Caitlin Hackett and of course the title | Gutted: Beautiful Horror Stories. Stephanie M. Wytovich "The Morning After Was Filled with Bone" Read this poem and then look at the cover again, this is a poem of empowerment. It encompasses the body of the book and is a great introduction to the stories within. Brian Kirk "Picking Splinters from a Sex Slave" A child abducted, and as hope begins to wane of ever seeing her again the unimaginable happens | she is found. But, can things ever go back to what they were? A father's love is pushed to the limits. Lisa Mannetti "Arbeit Macht Frei" It is said, "All's fair in love or war". But, what does that really mean, and how far should one go? Neil Gaiman "The Problem of Susan" Survivor's guilt, what a cross to bear. Or is it remorse? "Why not me?" one may ask. Christopher Coake "Dominion" I've heard it said that the soul will linger at the site of death until it can find a resolution. A group of kids ready to party are soon to find out whether this is true. Mercedes M. Yardley "Water Thy Bones" Love comes in many strange forms, it's just a matter of finding someone who is willing to accept what one willingly has to offer.

Short stories aren't usually my thing, simply because I like to get lost in a story and typically about the time I get to that place, a short story is over. But this collection had a lot of gems in it. Before I get in to that, I have to say that so many of these stories yet again explore the horror that is humanity, more often than the horror of monsters or make-believe. Humans are monsters, or at least we can be, and this book is a reminder of both the beauty and horror we possess. It begins with an achingly beautiful poem and takes you on a ride from there. "Picking Splinters From a Sex Slave" by Brian Kirk is heartbreaking. In this day and age where everyone (even those who don't have children) are armchair generals in regards to parenting, this story is a super painful reminder

that love and parenting is never easy and that you can never judge what someone chooses to do until you have placed yourself in their shoes."Water Thy Bones" by Mercedes M. Yardley explored a different kind of love, a dark love, an infatuation with what a person is within; a love for their bones. Beautifully written and fascinating, if not just a bit taboo."Cards for His Spokes, Coins for His Fare" by John F.D. Taff quite literally broke my heart. The love and devotion good parents have for their children, and the desire of a child to branch out and explore the world he lives in could not have a more painful ending than this. My childhood came screaming back at me with all those small pleasures that meant so much as a child and it made me thankful that none of my adventures took me away from my parents.

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