



# Tales Most Strange

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## **Tales Most Strange** Jeremy Hayes

Contained within these pages are 24 chilling tales most strange. Delve into the world of weird fiction, if you dare. Follow Detective Kane while he attempts to solve bizarre murders. Journey with the survivor of a plane crash as she wanders off into a vast desert. Visit a creepy mansion that a man inherits from his father. From haunted houses to the planet Mars, these short stories will have something for everyone.

## **Tales Most Strange Details**

Date : Published August 2nd 2014 by Northlord Publishing

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Author : Jeremy Hayes

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## From Reader Review Tales Most Strange for online ebook

### **Kristen says**

The title definitely does it justice but loved every story I read.

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### **John Yeoman says**

These clever, gentle stories of horror and intrigue are delightfully crafted. Not a word is wasted and each is a model of suspense for the mystery reader - or writer - who likes a twist in their tale.

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### **Cindy Smith says**

I found this to be a nice collection of short stories. I was hoping for more horror, but they do all qualify as strange. Twists at the end and unusual circumstances keep you turning the pages. My favorite was the one about the scarecrows, definitely did not see that end coming.

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### **Shashi Gandhi says**

Great for fans of the Twilight Zone!

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### **Valerie says**

I won Tales Most Strange in a GoodReads GiveAway! I received a thick paperback book with a glossy cover of modest design resembling an old, worn book of dubious origin. The two-hundred-and-seventy-six pages are thick and yellowish with light, serified font.

Tales Most Strange is 24 short stories in the familiar vein of classic Twilight Zone or Marvel's Strange Tales. From brief scenes with unexpected visitors to small stories with surprise endings, Tales Most Strange does exactly what it promises and delivers an unpretentious cadre' of quick, weird diversions from Vampires to Mars.

Tales Most Strange are written with a simple efficiency. Jeremy Hayes is a not a grandiose or loquacious wordsmith, but writes with a determined, measured pace towards his inexorable twist or shock ending. All of the tales are written in first-person narrative, and while the author handles the voicing effectively enough, it does sometimes require an effort on the part of the reader to clear the mental palate and reset the character inhabited. For this reason and others, these short stories work best in small doses, like breaks between work or while traveling.

It's not outstanding but neither is it pretentious. It's entertaining and engaging, sometimes cliché' and sometimes surprising, but easily recommendable as a good read for aficionados of old sci-fi and pulp-fiction horror.

Like a large litter of puppies, Tales Most Strange has a couple of runts and a couple of favorites, but is mostly made up of just a bunch of good tales.

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### **Angelica Dimeo says**

The author contacted me and asked if I would like a copy of the book for a honest review.

The first story was a little slow.

The rest of the stories were quick and interesting.

big white apes,vampires vampire hunters,ancient ruins

I thank anyone who loves stories and tall tales will enjoy this book.

I would not recommend for young readers probably at least 14 and above.

Thanks for the opportunity.

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### **S.T. King says**

The Crypt-keeper, you remember him? – that cackling bag of worn and dirty bones. Some good memories I've had with him as an husky young boy: taking trips across town to see my grandmother, eating fried chicken and mashed potatoes and cheese and macaroni (because there was more cheddar than pasta) – and pulling weeds from around the hedges, and chasing hens around her backyard. My grandmother was the nearest family member who knew the thrill of cable television. And it was a twenty-five minute drive to her modest country home in North Jacksonville: across an overpass that took us over a cemetery a few blocks from her front door. I didn't like sleeping at my grandmother's house, for what I think are obvious reasons; because in the dark, I always thought of the cemetery.

What made it worse was the Crypt-keeper. The first time I saw his likeness was in the T.V. guide (am I giving away my age yet?)He grinned with his rotten teeth and dared me to meet him when the night was heavy. So when the laziness of the Sunday set in, and my parents chatted with my grandmother over tea and crackers, I went off to her room, and I saw the Crypt-keeper for the first time.

Tales Most Strange, written by Jeremy Hayes, reminded me of the Crypt-keeper: of the scampering camera wandering through the creaking front doors of his house, of the descent down the murky stairs, a quickening rush to the corpse's tomb, and the ghoul himself laughing hysterically to greet me.

I didn't sleep for days because of the Crypt-keeper.

And it took me the rest of my adolescence to gain the balls to see the Crypt-keeper again, thereafter. But I did. And I ate the black comedy like candy.

Black comedy, to me, has a fairly simple formula: a straightforward progression of events, a twist ending, just desserts. What we see in Tales Most Strange, at least to me for that matter, is a walk through similar foliage. And it's refreshing to see it resurface.

One of the problems though, I think, with the animal that's black comedy, at least in anthology form – through comics, prose, or late-night cable television sitcom – is the simplistic nature of plot. It relies less on

actual story telling than it does on its headlong rush to each tales twist conclusion. Consequentially, the stories lose their novelty fairly quickly -- even with new characters, new plots, or new situations. Maybe that's part of the reason why there were so many guest actors on Tales From the Crypt – because with the same faces the show would have died within its first season.

Susceptible to the weakness of Black Comedy, the Achilles heel of Tales Most Strange, is lack of diversity: both in voice and point of view. Each voice sounds the same: whether it be a troubled teenage boy without a backbone -- or a business woman, the lone survivor of a plane crash in the dessert. The ventriloquist in Throwing Voices and the middle-aged writer in Writer's Block think and amble around in the same pair of loafers, harboring the same fears. This, paired with tales that often reference each other's places and events, and originate in some way, from the same nameless "Big City", while cute, at first, gives each tale the same atmosphere and feel. You turn the page to the next story; and yet the tempo is unchanging.

Now, proportions!

I think, the only way to fairly judge an anthology, is to rate each of its stories separately, then average them together. The average you get should represents a good approximation of the reader experience moving forward through each tale in the volume.

*The true worth of a good story rested solely on its ending, of this I firmly believed. I built my career on it, in fact. A twist, an unforeseen event, anything the reader did not see coming, left them with a sense of awe and ensured they would talk of the story for years to come.*

#### **Excerpt from Writers Block (Sub-rated 3.5/5).**

Writers Block is among the stronger tales in the volume. It's, of course, about a writer, who is blocked (Or at least that's how it often feels, doesn't it?). It's paranormal in nature. And this particular tale poses the question pondered by many of us story-tellers for eons: is writers block real? And if so, where does it sleep? Is it in the authors themselves – or is it something else, entirely? Hayes tackles this question with plain, cut and dry prose; and the conclusion is black comedy at its finest. These stories are good for whetting a leisurely reading appetite. There aren't many, but there's enough to keep it interesting.

The others riding shotgun:

Throwing Voices (Sub-rated 4/5).

Before the Gates of St. Peter (Sub-rated 3.5/5).

The Panhandlers Will (Sub-rated 3.5/5)

*I should at first mention the immediate sense of horror I felt after discovering the ghastly truth of the floor that we tread upon. It felt even and I quite nearly tripped before I crouched low for a closer inspection. I gasped out loud but it did not seem to startle Sebastian, as he had already made the same discovery as I.*

#### **Excerpt from Tombs of the False (Sub-rated 3/5).**

Tombs of the False lingers with the bulk of the books contents, in the middle. These tales each have a beginning, middle and end. But there isn't much more to offer that's fresh and new; the prose is tight and plain, like before; but the storytelling lacks something. Indeed, many of these tales read like an interview with someone on the five o'clock news; perhaps the event that came before it was shocking or compelling in its own right. But the reporter, or the eye-witness, lacked the voice to make it touch the viewer, to bridge a connection with an interesting or fresh perspective.

Some of the others, sagging the middle:

The Weeping Willow (Sub-rated 3/5).  
Mars-Four, Can You Hear Me? (Sub-rated 3/5).  
Shooting by the Light of the Moon (Sub-rated 3/5)

*In each of those places, someone went missing and was never found. The monster that was named Erwin Baardwik left a trail of death everywhere that he went. Now he was here in Vandebourg and I needed to find him before he chose his next victim. I just hoped that I was not already too late.*

**Excerpt from One Less Hunter (Sub-rated 2.5/5).**

This quote, minus whatever places were mentioned before, the name, the new place, Vandebourg -- is, more or less, the theme of pages upon pages of fiction, long written and enjoyed before the day of this review. This is beyond mere horror fiction, and has bled into dark fantasy, and crime fiction, and thriller, and drama. Clichés are what I'm talking about; and are one of the unfortunate burdens that anchor these bottom dwellers on the dark and rocky sediment, pressing them into the watery abyss.

And those lowly few, whose mouths evolved to the bottom of their bodies, for they can only feed from the floor of the ocean:

Jungle Johnny (Sub-rated 2.5/5).  
My Haunted Chambers (Sub-rated 2.5/5).  
The Unremembered Solder (Sub-rated 2.5/5).

I should be clear: for those of you who've missed the guilty pleasure of black comedy, (which are probably those of you much younger than my Sega Genesis) this volume may offer you (albeit, to a lesser degree) something structurally different, even refreshing, at least for a spell. There are certainly laughs to be had, a bump in the night here or there. I'd be lying to say I didn't smile at least a few times reading this little volume. Once, however, you've made it a few tales in, you'll likely be very familiar with the formula dictating the prose. The "twists" of each ending will start to jump at you before you get there. And once you've arrived you'll have little left to look forward to.

If you liked this review, check me out on Horror Novel Reviews.

<http://horrnovelreviews.com/hnr-con...>

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**Sarah-Jayne Briggs says**

(I received this book for free as part of Goodreads First Reads giveaways).

(This review may contain spoilers).

I found this collection of short stories to be a really entertaining read. It was interesting to see that all of the short stories were written from the first person perspective, but I didn't actually get confused with the different POV characters.

There was quite a nice variety of different stories. I liked the fact that all of them were different in some way and there were a few unexpected twists.

I did notice a couple of the stories were vampire-based. Although I do think vampires are really over-used in fiction, they didn't irritate me so much in these short stories... I think because they weren't the dark, brooding figures of vampire paranormal romances.

I found the werewolf film to be quite an intriguing story and it was interesting to see that it was linked to one of the later short stories. The one about the bestselling story was quite good as well.

The stories were a bit too short to really get behind the characters, but I still found them really entertaining to read. There were a few original ideas and twists to the stories and I felt they did a good job of holding my attention and keeping me engaged. The author kindly sent me the first book in his fantasy trilogy and I do intend to read that in the next day or so.

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