



Fiber

Seanan McGuire

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One car, five cheerleaders, and a totally disregarded speed limit: these are the things that dreams are made of.

But when Heather and her friends head to a rest stop, they drive straight into the middle of a bad horror movie—well, to be fair, as a former zombie, Heather is always in the middle of a horror movie...

Fiber Details

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From Reader Review Fiber for online ebook

Cas says

THIS STORY.

What do you get when you put five cheerleaders dressed like pumpkins in a car with semi-supernatural powers and yogurt? A gas station in the middle of nowhere that proves that not all mythological creatures are, well, mythological, "like zombies, mind-control, and attractive high-waisted jeans, and yet here we are." Oh and teriyaki human jerky. The best stuff.

The idea was intriguing from the start, but the writing style and execution made it such a fun and hilarious read. It's written in Heather's, former zombie, perspective and there's so much sarcasm and sass, it's fantastic. I loved this a lot! [And it definitely made me want to read Unbound.]

Dr susan says

Fiber is an absolutely hilarious take on a not quite average cheerleading squad. I admit I loved all of them, even Laurie.

{erika} says

Really hilarious and well written! definitely enjoyed this mix of horror, supernatural, humor, ZOMBIES, cheerleaders, and fiber yogurt.

karen says

"Why are we in a horror movie? I just had my nails done!"

"Because we're always in a horror movie," said Jude.

what's my damn problem? everyone else likes this story more than me and i don't know why i'm not more wowed by it! i figured this one would be an easy story to love - i am a fan of the author, and it's a poky-funny look at horror movie clichés, but it just didn't give me anything *new*. its brand of "cheeky girls subvert horror movie conventions" is itself a cliché at this point. it's like a mash-up of *buffy* and *lumberjanes* and *cabin in the woods* with more teen snark and superpowers. which all sounds like it should work, especially in the hands of this particular author, but it read flat and forced to me, and didn't rise above much more than "humorous romp." and that makes me feel *terrible*!

but i mean, mcguire's so much better than this:

We all had our little quirks, like me having been dead for a while, or Marti being allergic to gluten.

that's the kind of winky pause-for-laughter rhythm that much lesser authors fall back on and it feels like

phoning the laffs in from someone who has proven she knows how to be genuinely funny, so what gives?

i'm not sure if this is one of those tor shorts that is attached to a particular series, and i'm supposed to already be familiar with these characters so a little authorial shortcutting is permissible, but if it is, i'm *not* familiar with them; although i'd much rather know that i'm missing the joke because i haven't encountered these characters elsewhere than to know that this is meant to be an introduction for all and i'm missing the joke because ... it's not there.

because even what *is* there is sloppy. first, there's this:

We were an odd streak of color in the blasted landscape: we had changed out of our uniforms after the game, choosing comfort over remaining encased in cotton-poly blend, so we were all in jeans.

and then, mere paragraphs later:

Only this fellow didn't seem to be batting an eye, either out of fear or because he wanted some barely legal cheerleader action (also not uncommon, unfortunately). He was looking at the four of us with an expression of vague amusement, like we were the most adorable things that had ever darkened his doorstep. That made me nervous. No, more than nervous: that made me wary. Never trust anybody who can look at a group of teenage girls in short skirts and not react at all. Those are almost always the people who are hiding something.

which costume-change-gaffe is inexcusable in a short story, considering how meticulous she's been with her world-building in other works.

but whatever - it's not *terrible*, and it definitely gets better in its home stretch. and it seems rude to be so critical of a free story. you're a douche, karen!

i'd've liked it a lot more if i'd gone into it not knowing who had written it. i'm actually more baffled than disappointed - like, i want to see if she's feeling okay and maybe bring her some chicken soup. oh well. the cheese stands alone.

One car, five cheerleaders, and a totally disregarded speed limit: these are the things that dreams are made of

read it for yourself here:

<http://www.tor.com/2015/12/01/reprint...>

Zala says

Whatever I did to stumble across this imaginative short, I'm grateful that I did it.

If you had told me that I'd like a short story, only 15 pages long, more than some of the full length novels that I've read, I'd have called you *a person that sprouts nonsense*. But what do you know, **I loved this little story in all its gory and entertaining glory.**

[A Tor.com freebie]

Faith says

I'd seen them mentioned here or there (in a tweet, in a comment) but this was my first Fighting Pumpkins story. I'M IN LOVE.

Darkly comic nearly to the point of ridiculousness - it's not my usual genre, so I haven't seen any of these movies, but I imagine something like Shaun of the Dead has a similar feel? - and lots of fun. Plus, free to read from Tor.com. So check it out.

Susana says

[we have ex zombies and girls with supernatural abilities amongst them (hide spoiler)]

Beth Roberts says

Okay, I know, it's ZOMBIES. And I HATE, LOATHE, and DETEST zombie fiction. But still, zombies are waaaaay (light years) better than space aliens. And even Stephen King gave me frickin' space aliens.

But (1) this was kinda cute, and (2) it's Seanan McGuire. So 'nuff said. Except for (3) - IT'S FREE SEANAN MCGUIRE. Frickin' go read it already.

Matthew says

Tor and Seanan McGuire present this wickedly funny short story about five cheerleaders, a pack of Wendigos and Jamie Lee Curtis-fronted fiber-embellished yoghurt. McGuire's engaging, always amusing prose elevates this unique, fun homage to horror films higher than usual short stories even get, and I will definitely check out more McGuire in the future. Hopefully, there's more Fighting Pumpkins tales to be told, and if there's a Lawrd above, someone out there'll fund a short film. **Here** , for free.

Melki says

[
AAAAAA! WENDIGO! (hide spoiler)]

Frida says

“Okay, Colleen, you’re our genius. How the fuck do we get past these things?”
“I’ve never seen a wendigo before!” protested Colleen. “They’re supposed to be mythological!”
“Like zombies, mind-control, and attractive high-waisted jeans, and yet here we are,” said Marti. “Figure something out!”

Eagerly anticipating McGuire's *Down Among the Sticks and Bones* and so I thought I'd go look for free short stories and *lo and behold* there was this little gem.

Kwoomac says

Loved protagonist Heather's snarky tone.

carol. says

story here: <http://www.tor.com/2015/12/01/reprint...>

An amusing little short from Seanan McGuire. Five cheerleaders are driving home when the lazy one who over-indulges in fiber-enriched yogurt requires a restroom break. Needless to say, the first available exit leads to a worn-down decrepit service station with a very attractive attendant.

Sadly, McGuire's strength in mythology doesn't get the chance to run as free as in longer books. While predictable, it was diverting and did an excellent job capturing the interaction of almost-adult teen girls. I'm not sure it's a premise that would hold for a longer length piece--as a short, it was just long enough.

Two and a half grams of fiber

Charli says

Funny and creepy and delicious - everything you want in a teenage zombie cheerleader horror short story. Highly entertaining with an unusual point of view and fabulous characters. Lots of depth - Makes me want to read everything this author has ever written.

Nilchance says

Charming and funny. You can really see Seanan's love of horror here.
