



Marvelry's Curiosity Shop

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Retired stage magician Dr. Marvelry prefers to stock his antique store with strange and occult items. He has always enjoyed meeting odd people and hearing their stories, the legends attached to mysterious objects. A phonograph that seemingly replays a tragedy. Fertility dolls that are more than decoration. A bedeviled mannequin. These are just some of the relics this eccentric shopkeeper has collected over the years.

No two customers will have the same experience in his curiosity shop -- some walk away satisfied, others are never heard from again. But one thing is certain – when you purchase an item at this store, you often get more than what you paid for.

Follow Marvelry and his hexed objects through twelve tales of suspense, magic, terror, and transformation. Meet his new assistant, fellow illusionists, and some irregular characters along the way. Whatever macabre artifact of the human psyche you're seeking – you'll find something special in Marvelry's Curiosity Shop.

Marvelry's Curiosity Shop Details

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Author : John Brhel , Joseph Sullivan

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From Reader Review Marvelry's Curiosity Shop for online ebook

Kally says

I really loved the premise of this book; it reminded me of a childhood series "Magic Shop Books" by Bruce Coville, but an updated adult version. I was not disappointed in that; these tales were all a bit creepy at heart and I read through them very quickly.

I did have two issues with the book. The first is in the character of Dr. Marvelry; he was not very consistent. In some stories, he was empathetic towards people, merely a stage magician, and completely naive of the power in the items in his shop. In others, he is fully aware of the dangers of "the occult" and of the items he sold. The inconsistency was distracting. Perhaps if the character of Dr. Marvelry was a stronger tie between stories, the book would have flowed without a hitch. Unfortunately, some stories seemed to allude to others and some were told in isolation, which confused my brain as to whether to think of this book as having very choppy chapters or as separate tales.

Overall, though, I would still recommend this book to friends. The tales are interesting and have the right amount of eeriness and, most importantly, I enjoyed it.

I received a copy of this book from the group For Love of a Book in exchange for an honest review.

Jeff Raymond says

Growing up, like many kids, I had an affinity for the *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark* series, complete with their creepy illustrations and stuff teachers hated. I know they rebooted them a few years back, and I don't know if they're still as crazy popular as they were in my classes, but they occupy a very firm spot in my memories.

Marvelry's Curiosity Shop bills itself as a collection of strange tales all centered around supernatural items sold from his shop. By the third story in, I couldn't help but think how much it reminded me of *Scary Stories* in that the self-contained tales had a similar, classic structure to them and they weren't *scary* as much as strangely comforting from a nostalgic standpoint to somewhat unsettling in some other places.

The pacing and length of the individual stories are a strength, and, truly, the best story is the last one in the collection, but if there's a flaw to the overall collection, it's that it doesn't feel as if the book knows what it wants to be. If it went all-in on a nod to its inspirations, that would be one thing, but some tales are kind of silly and others maybe a little too far from a tonal perspective in terms of horror/macabre tropes. This imbalance keeps the book from being everything it could be.

Overall, though, this was a fun collection on a whole. If you put on your nostalgia glasses and put yourself back in fourth grade for a bit, you'll definitely find some enjoyment in it even if you tend to like things a little darker these days.

Shari Sakurai says

*I received this book for free in exchange for an honest review *

This novel is a collection of 12 short stories which centre around Marvelry's Curiosity Shop which is a second hand store unlike no other – in that your purchase could kill you! The short stories are either unsuspecting customers dealing with the consequences of their purchases, being connected to a customer in some way or Marvelry's own experiences.

This is very well thought-out and put together collection of tales. Short story telling is an art that the two authors have clearly mastered. Each tale was wonderfully imaginative and a fun read, with an unexpected twist at each end.

Marvelry himself was...well as curious as his shop! I couldn't decide whether he knew just what the object he was selling could do or whether he really didn't know at all. Either way, I found him to be rather likeable and endearing in a quaint old-fashioned way. I also liked that some of the stories were about Marvelry himself so I gained some more insight into the character.

Overall Marvelry's Curiosity Shop is an excellent read and one that I recommend to lovers of short stories and spooky tales.

Madelon says

As I read the first several chapters of MARVELRY'S CURIOSITY SHOP, it seemed more like I was reading a collection of vignettes built around a single, singular character binding the disparate tales together. There never actually seems to be a timeline or continuity from one chapter to the next; however, subtle clues are sprinkled throughout. It is, no doubt, an interesting way of getting the story told. Dr. Marvelry, our protagonist, does finally get his story told in an appendix-like newspaper article at the end of the chapters.

My first impression, as I read the first chapters, was that the curiosity shop was much like the one in the television program "Friday the 13th - The Series" that aired between 1987 and 1990. You might recall that the 'curiosities' there all carried a curse. There is no explicit reference to curses in this book, but the antiques do seem to wreak havoc on those who purchase them.

MARVELRY'S CURIOSITY SHOP is well written and offers a somewhat unique method of storytelling. I was hooked by the variety of characters and the weaving of their individual tales with the items drawn to them by need or desire.

This eBook is well edited and well written from a grammatical point of view. John Brhel & Joseph Sullivan show a great deal of potential and a lot of creativity; however, the polish and pizzazz aren't quite there yet. I like to follow up and coming writers, so I am definitely not writing them off. If you enjoy the-demon-is-in-the-artifact stories, this one is for you!

Dez Nemec says

I bought this book because it was on sale, and because it sounded like an 80s tv show - like Friday the 13th: The Series or Tales from the Darkside. And this shop sounds just like the place I would love to go. They have skeleton keys made out of real skeleton, a toy guillotine, a Charlie McCarthy ventriloquist doll, vintage Weird Tales magazines, postcards of classic freak shows, and animal skulls. I'd totally buy any of those - and have bought some of them!

The book includes stories like: two men that by a Victrola with Sinatra record that includes random screams; a mirror that shows potential futures of the onlooker; a magic prop that makes things disappear and appear; and an easel that compels you to paint what it wants you to.

All the stories were quick and fun. I did feel that it ended a bit abruptly with no real conclusion. Otherwise, I enjoyed it so much that I am reading another book of stories by John Brhel that I have on my Kindle next.

Mandilynn says

Submitted for your approval of the now adult Midnight Society....

This book reminded me so much of a more adult version of the classic 90's kid's show *Are You Afraid of the Dark*. Marvelry is much like Sardo in that he was an antique collector with a shop full of curiosities. Each item had a back story and a little bit of weirdness that come with it. There's even a fun exchange at the beginning of the first story:

"It's Marvel-RYE, not Marvel-REE. No Doctor. Accent on the RYE."

Ahem, Sardo, anyone? No Mister. Accent on the DOE. :) At one point there is even a coffee shop called Sardo Cafe. If the authors weren't trying to channel AYAotD in some way, I would be surprised.

There are quite a few stories in here. Most of the beginning is stories of folks who come into the shop and purchase something that eventually goes bad for them. There are a few stories which deal with Marvelry himself and his colleagues. And one or two stories that focus more on the person than the object and it's just a coincidence that there's a Marvelry object in the story.

Overall, I really enjoyed this.

Pete says

Marvelry's Curiosity Shop is a collection of spooky short stories that I found very entertaining and well written. Much like "Tales From Valleyview Cemetery," the authors' first collection, each story here is thrilling enough as a stand alone tale, but the entire collection comes together when read as a whole. Many of the stories contain repeating characters, intertwined plot lines, and recurring locations or supernatural elements. Each tale is about a different item from a mysterious pawn shop that deals in objects of the occult, and the (mis)adventures of the store's customers upon trying to use the items and unleashing their horrific powers. Each story contains an underlying commentary on themes such as secret desires or abuse of power, making the book more than just a series of frightening tales. Sometimes the protagonists learn their lessons, and other times they meet a gruesome demise. In each story, the reader is often left guessing their fate until the final paragraph.

Without giving anything away, I thought it was great how the book's titular character, Dr. Marvelry, seemed to be patterned after one of my all-time favorite literary heroes - Sherlock Holmes. From one story to the next, the reader gradually learns more about the shop proprietor's background, and meets many of his colleagues, friends and foes alike. As in "Tales From Valleyview," this book is also peppered with elements of Upstate New York history, where the authors are from, and even contains a few references to the people, places, and events from "Valleyview."

Overall, I thought the stories flowed well from one to the next, like a properly sequenced LP record. Upon finishing a story, I was always eager to read the next and see where it would take me. The stories are descriptive and vivid, with an occasional dose of dark humor or 90's style witty banter. I think both adult and teenage readers would enjoy Marvelry's Curiosity Shop, whether they are fans of tales of the macabre and occult or simply curious about the genre.

Frank Errington says

Review copy

I love the concept behind Brhel & Sullivan's newest book. If you're waiting for the "but," it's coming.

With nearly every story, I'm reading along, enjoying the writing and the imagination that went into the tale, and then...BANG...the reveal or twist and...that's it...over. It was almost as if the writers would get to a certain word count and then go into hurry up mode to wrap up that particular tale. I don't know, maybe it's me, but I like a little time to savor and enjoy what just happened in the individual stories. A mini epilogue of sorts for each episode would have been nice.

The curiosity shop is set in the fictional town of Binghamton, NY. Think Binghamton, NY, pretty much the same place.

Marvelry's Curiosity Shop is told in a series of anecdotal stories, each one dealing with an item purchased from or given away by Dr. Marvelry, the shop's proprietor. Marvelry himself was once a world-renowned illusionist, now retired.

The Victor Talking Machine - The story of Brent and Kevin Buckley, a young couple who purchase a Victor Victrola that came with an old Frank Sinatra record and a little something extra.

Echo's Reflection - Echo Dollinger and her fiancé, Robert Simmons were looking for the perfect bathroom mirror for their Neo-Victorian furnished home. They find the mirror they purchase at Marvelry's Curiosity Shop shows more than their reflections.

Magician's Complex - One of my favorite stories in the collection, about Peter Myers, a magician looking for a new illusion to give his act a boost. He purchases a special bureau from Dr. Marvelry and gets more than he bargained for.

The Painter's Premonition - Justin Loza is an artist who walks away from the shop with an antique easel and some squirrel hair brushes. When he uses them to paint a landscape, what he sees on the canvas is another scene entirely.

A Gift Ungiven - Tom Kopp's son, Chad, buys his father an Iroquois bone breastplate. Tom is an anthropologist, so the gift is perfect...or is it.

A Made Match - African fertility dolls. Need I say more. Nothing good ever comes of these things and this story is no exception. Meant to be sold as a set, the two are sold to two different couples. Oh, no.

The Letterbox - When Josh Hart manages to purchase his grandparent's home, he wants to restore it to the way it was during his childhood when he spent his Summers on the property. He finds the original letterbox at Marvelry's and soon starts receiving letters from his mother mailed to his grandparents more than forty

years ago.

Seams of Consequence - What a great title for a sewing machine story. When Emma Cowden's old sewing machine breaks down she can't really afford a new one. Dr. Marvelry has one that one belonged to a very successful local seamstress and sells it at a bargain price. Soon, Emma discovers if she make garments for events she or her husband would like to be a part of, they come to pass. But there's a twist.

Martinus' Mannequin - The story of a possessed mannequin, but it's not who they believe is doing the possessing.

Siren Song - An organ, sold to Dr. Marvelry, finds it's way back to the apartment complex where the seller resides.

The New Assistant - A tale about what happens when the shop's new assistant, Drew, and the trouble he gets into when left alone to watch over the emporium.

Grand Illusions - A sold story about the second greatest magician in the world.

An Article On Dr. Marvelry From the Sun Press - Much too long for a newspaper article. It is a pet peeve of mine when this trope is used and then the story fails to read like a newspaper article.

There is also a bonus story from the forthcoming Anthology *At the Cemetery Gates: Year One* called...

A Dark and Desolate Occurrence - A clever tale of a couple who's car gets stuck in a snowbank.

Overall, I did enjoy this collection of stories and can recommend readers check it out for themselves. After all, your mileage may vary.

Published by Cemetery Gates Media, *Marvelry's Curiosity Shop* is available in both paperback and e-book formats. If you subscribe to Kindle Unlimited you can read it at no additional charge and if you are an Amazon Prime member you can read it for FREE through the Kindle Owners Lending Library.

From the bios of the authors...

John Brhel is a writer of fiction from Binghamton, NY. He is the co-author of two books, *Tales From Valleyview Cemetery* and *Marvelry's Curiosity Shop*, a vampire hunter serial titled *Rita's Midnight Rides* and numerous short stories.

Joseph Sullivan is a writer of horror, including *Tales From Valleyview Cemetery*, *Marvelry's Curiosity Shop*. and the upcoming *Route 12: The Legend Trip*. He is also a hiker, songwriter, and co-founder of Cemetery Gates Media. His long-term writing goal is to combine his love of poetry, the American novel, and Upstate New York into one cohesive work of fiction.

Rebecca McNutt says

This amazingly peculiar novel reminded me of various Nineties television programs I grew up with as a kid - *Are You Afraid of the Dark?*, *Eerie Indiana*, *Goosebumps* and the like. Full of horrific charm, quirky characters and odd happenings, it's a book that any reader should consider checking out, and it's one I'll

never forget. Like a vintage Seventies film, *Marvelry's Curiosity Shop* brings out the mystery in all things weird. I'm so grateful to have gotten the chance to read it, being a lover of this type of literature myself, and I highly recommend it to anyone looking for a phenomenal read. :)

Reading Bifrost says

“So, you must be Dr. Marvel-ree?” asked Brent.

Marvelry spen around. “Why, yes. But it’s pronounced ‘Marvel-rye,’ no need for ‘doctor,’ and the accent’s on the ‘eye.’”

Marvelry’s Curiosity Shop in an anthology of short stories focused around a small shop that belongs to a retired magician, Marvelry. As a former world traveler, and a man with many connections, Marvelry has obtained quite a few strange and mystical objects that he sells in his shop.

Each story is about a different item in the shop (with the exception of the final two stories) and how those items affect the buyers. I wouldn’t necessarily call all the stories horror, some could be rather sweet, but other buyers would have benefited from listening to Marvelry when explaining the history of the piece or giving friendly advice.

Marvelry himself is the main character of the book, so I have to take time on him. I do like his character, but he’s also hard to figure out. He seems like a nice, grandfatherly character, but he also knows that some of the items he sells are dangerous and sells them anyway. I would have to say having a more sinister shopkeeper would probably been a better way to go, or at least having a shop assistant selling items behind his back. I just can’t see the kind old man selling something he knew would probably cause harm to the buyers.

The endings to the stories vary; not all end happily but not all end in violent, gory death either. That does shake up the entirety of the book a bit, but the stories themselves are a bit predictable in their outcomes, and often the endings are harshly abrupt. It didn’t put me off from diving into the next story though.

Overall, Marvelry’s Curiosity Shop is an anthology of quick read little stories of interesting little trinkets and a charming main character. It’s good for an afternoon of reading, or just a story a day to let the mind wonder for a bit. I wouldn’t mind reading more from his little shop with a few adjustments.

Latasha says

I received this book in exchange for a honest review.

oh Dr. Marvelry! this book was lots of fun. it's a collection of short stories all tied together by Dr. Marvelry or purchases made at his shop. The stories are fun, not really scary, and interesting. I pictured Dr. Marvelry as Vincent Price and this as a tv show in the early 90's. it's definitely worth a read! :)

? Kimberly says

The Victor Talking Machine- Kevin and Brent are out purchasing unique items for their countryside home. They stumble upon Marvelry's Curiosity Shop and meet the odd curator, who shows them a Victor Victrola player. It is in good working order and even has a Frank Sinatra album. Ecstatic they take it home and place it on an antique table in their bedroom. When Kevin is home alone, he plays it and discovers there is more hears more than just Frank. This tale was creepy with a curious twist and one you'll want to share around the fire.

Echo's Reflection- In this tale we meet Echo Dollinger and her fiance Robert Simmons. The two go out searching for a mirror for their master bathroom and discover the perfect mirror in Marvelry's shop. The tale that unfolds had an Alfred Hitchcock vibe and lesson to be learned.

Magician's Complex- We learn about our curator as he helps Peter Meyers, a thirty-five-year-old magician who longs to be in the spotlight. A magician's chest of drawers made hold the key or maybe not. Another twisted tale, and I am beginning to see that some of these tales give a warning or teach lessons. This story was a tad freaky folks, leave the lights on.

The Painter's Premonition- A set of paint brushes and an easel bring back memories for an alcoholic painter. Eerie and twisted Mr. Marverley and his knack for pairing items with people gave me chills.

A Gift Ungiven- This chilling tale shares events that happen when an anthropologist is gifted an Indian artifact. The twist at the end was freaky.

A Made Match- What happens when African fertility dolls get separated. In A Made Match, two couples find out when they each by one of the set. An interesting tale and the twist at the end was amusing. Oh, my!

The Letterbox- Josh loved spending time at his grandparent's Victorian home and at forty he is finally able to buy the home and goes about restoring it. When he discovers their original letterbox at the curiosity shop he is beyond pleased...that is until the letters start arriving. A creepy tale that will have you turning on the lights.

Seams of Consequence- A young woman disgruntled by hardship things she finds the answers in an old Singer. Beware of the things you wish. Seriously..be very careful.

Martinus' Mannequin- Necromancy anyone? A friend of Dr. Marvelry shows up with a strange mannequin. I liked how a previous object made an appearance here.

Siren Song- A pretty tenant has moved into the apartment building who plays her organ day and night. A twisted tale that reminds us to trust our instinct.

The New Assistant- When Dr. Marvelry goes on a day trip to retrieve an item, he places his new assistant Drew in charge reminding him that some objects in the store are best left untouched. Does Dave listen? Find out what happens as learn some of Drew's extracurricular activities may complicate things. The build up was fantastic, and the tale gave me chills.

Grand Illusions-A weekend house party to celebrate a retirement has deadly consequences. I liked the clever twist at the end.

Marvelry's Curiosity Shop reminded me of childhood shows that gave me the shivers such as The Twilight Zone and Alfred Hitchcock. For younger readers, these stories will remind you of Are You Afraid of the Dark and Goosebump episodes that aired on Saturday mornings. My favorite stories from the collection were

Seams of Consequence, Siren Song, and The Victor Talking Machine. I liked The New Assistant but wanted to know more.

Copy provided by the author. This review was originally posted on Caffeinated Book Reviewer

Sammi says

This book contains 12 short-stories; each story is based around Marvelry's Curiosity Shop and the odd and sometimes cursed artefacts that are sold in the shop. Whilst the stories are intriguing and somewhat spooky, I didn't find them to be scary at all.

Dr. Marvelry is an odd character, through the parts of the book he comes across as not knowing that he selling cursed or haunted objects, however there are other stories where he knows what some of the objects in his shop are capable of. Despite him knowing what some objects were capable of, he never issued a warning to the customers, and yet he was portrayed as a decent, caring gentleman.

Overall this book was a well written, fun and easy read. The characters were likable enough and it was great to see how some of the short stories in the book overlapped into other stories.

Cats of Ulthar February Weird Fiction says

Review: MARVELRY'S CURIOSITY SHOP by John Brhel and Joseph Sullivan

A delightfully entertaining paranormal, supernatural, magical set of vignettes, tied inextricably to the illustrious Dr. Marvelry, and his gently eccentric boutique, Marvelry's Curiosity Shop, a bastion of antiques and occult marvels in New York State, owned by an acclaimed former magician.

The vignettes are delightful, suspenseful, occasionally scary. There's a firm moral caution contained here as well: "Don't mess with something if you don't know the provenance--and if you do know the provenance, still don't mess with it." Or: "Be careful what you wish for."

Stephanie says

The book contains by 12 horror stories that related to the things bought or get by the Marverly's Curiosity Shop. Marverly is a magician that now retired and open the shop. Marverly's curiosity shop full of weird and bizarre things that he collected from all around the world. Marverly is a good person and nice character that somehow all weird and scary things happened without his knowledge. He is not purposely sell things that harm people. But the spirit do different things.

Long time I don't read the kind of story like this. I like the concept of things that have supernatural power cause its been cursed or possessed by the previous owner. Sometimes things that we use connect to us until we die. Overall I enjoyed this book, all stories was great. I recommend this book to all horror fiction lover.

I got a chance to read the book for free in exchange for the honest review, thanks to group For Love of a Book.
