



## The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales (Oxford Books of Prose & Verse)

By Chris Baldick

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Brimming with tales of terror, suspense, and the uncanny, this work offers a collection devoted to the best of the Gothic genre. Each story contains the common elements of the gothic tale: a warped sense of time, a claustrophobic setting, a link to archaic modes of thought, and the impression of a descent into disintegration. Yet taken together, they reveal the progression of the genre from stories of feudal villains amid crumbling ruins to a greater level of sophistication in which writers brought the gothic tale out of its medieval setting, and placed it in the contemporary world. Bringing together the work of such writers as Eudora Welty, Thomas Hardy, Edgar Allan Poe, William Faulkner, Arthur Conan Doyle, Joyce Carol Oates, and Jorge Luis Borges, *The Oxford Book of Gothic Tales* presents a wide array of the sinister and unsettling for all lovers of ghost stories, fantasy, and horror.

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

The fog-enshrouded castle, the crumbling family manor; old secrets unveiled, curses cast, chains clanking, fear and trembling; dread, decay, disintegration, death--each of these trademarks of the well-made Gothic tale is vividly represented in this comprehensive anthology. Informatively introduced and chronologically arranged, the 37 stories showcase the Gothic tradition from its late-18th-century inception up to the present. Included are genre classics from such illustrious practitioners as Poe, Hawthorne, Lovecraft and McGrath, as well as gems from literary masters like Faulkner, Welty, Oates and Borges, all of whom dabble(d) to fine effect in the form. Among the highlights are "The Parricide Punished," an anonymous entry from 1799 set in an enormous castle and narrated by a guest whose visit becomes a waking nightmare; Eden Glasgow's "Jordan's End," in which a long history of family madness gives rise to a most untimely death; F. M. Mayor's "Miss DeMannering of Asham," the story of two women on holiday who get more local color than they bargained for when they learn the shocking truth about DeMannering's dead infant; and especially Ray Russell's bizarre "Sardonicus," whose title character gives the kind of villainous performance that evokes Vincent Price in his horror-movie heyday.

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Review

`Review from previous edition the perfect book to put beside the bed of a timorous guest you wish would go home' The Economist

`a sumptuous spread of eeriness, horror and decay, plus an astute introduction that lays bare the gothic's vitals...there will be something in this book to chill the blood of any reader.' John Carey, Sunday Times

`Armed with this anthology...the faint-hearted connoisseur can make his way down the gloomy halls and secret passageways of the genre.' Peter Ackroyd, The Times

`this is a generous selection from the eighteenth century up to the present day ... Deliciously unsettling.' The Observer

About the Author

Chris Baldick, Goldsmiths' College, University of London.

## **Users Review**

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