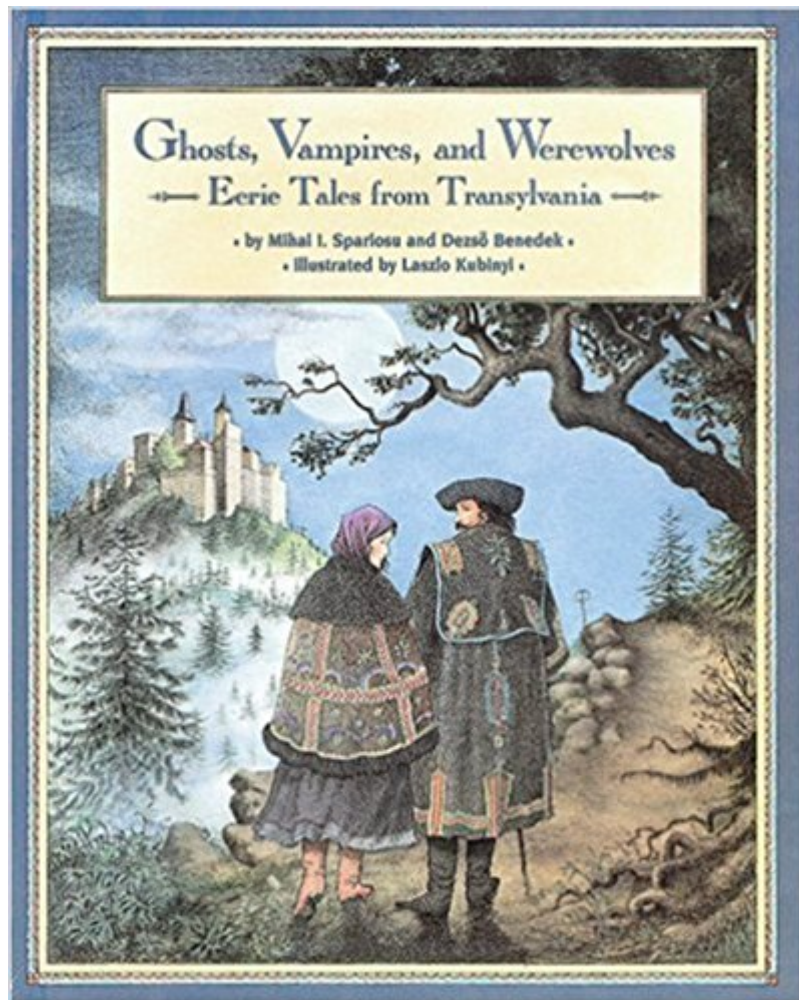


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Ghosts Vampires And Werewolves : Eerie Tales From Transylvania



Synopsis

Includes sixteen tales from Transylvanian folklore, arranged in three sections: Ghosts, Vampires, and Werewolves; Haunted Treasures; and Eerie Fairy Tales.

Book Information

Age Range: 9 and up

Hardcover: 104 pages

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Customer Reviews

Grade 4 Up-This gruesomely satisfying anthology confirms Transylvania's reputation as a breeding ground for ghastly goings-on. In the introduction, the authors, native Transylvanians, provide a background sketch of the area and insight into the psyche of its people, but the book's intent is clearly to entertain. The 16 stories, each of which is illustrated with a full-or half-page pen-and-ink drawing, are divided into 3 sections. Part one covers the more common types of ghouls-ghosts, vampires, and werewolves. "Haunted Treasures" highlights a popular theme and provides a historical foundation. For centuries, gold mines dotted the Transylvanian mountains, so naturally a number of legends sprang up concerning lost fortunes-many with ghostly guardians. "Eerie Fairy Tales" are traditional, European-style tales with a few macabre twists. Despite the grisly action, most of the selections have positive endings. Justice is served, evildoers are punished, and only rarely do the innocent suffer permanent damage. An appendix explains each story's origin and defines unfamiliar terminology. Fright fans, along with storytellers and folktale devotees, will delight in this collection. Mary Jo Drungil, Niles Public Library District, IL Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 6-10. A handsome stranger courts a beautiful maiden by day and turns into a rotten corpse at night. A severed hand is sent special delivery to an abandoned castle. A young man watches in horror as his arms become covered in dark gray fur, and, with a long howl, he joins a pack of werewolves in the wilderness. Scary, sometimes gruesome, with dark humor and dramatic immediacy, these stories are great for storytelling and reading aloud. The authors are immigrants to the U.S., now teaching comparative literature at the University of Georgia. They heard versions of these stories while growing up in the Transylvanian Alps and retell them here in the simple, direct style of the oral tradition. There's a fascinating general introduction, and brief notes at the back discuss each story, including where the authors heard it, who told it to them, and how it fits with general folklore motifs and with the religious and political history of the region. Laszlo Kubinyi's shadowy pen-and-ink drawings with close cross-hatching capture the mystery of demons and transformation in the moonlight. Hazel Rochman

This collection of Eastern folklore is presented in a format that will appeal to children and adults alike. The illustrations are striking black and white pen and ink work and the overall package of this work is very pleasing... definitely worth a look.

Everything met my expectations!

Thank you for everything. It changed my life. Sincerely, Ghraff
Seeker of Transformation and Enlightenment
Seeker of Power and Enjoyment in Tempered Life
Seeker of Knowledge in unbridled passion

I came across this title at the children's section of my local library, and though it is a bit advanced (and perhaps too scary) for my 5-year-old daughter, I found myself fascinated by the subject matter (always having been interested in stories of the supernatural) and found this a highly engaging read. The authors who hail from Romania and Hungary (Transylvania is part of modern-day Romania) have put in a lot of effort into retelling these Transylvanian folktales. There are sixteen tales in all which have been divided into three parts: Part One: Ghosts, Vampires, and Werewolves- here, readers get introduced to the ghosts and spirits that are found in Transylvanian folktales such as the zmeu (an evil spirit), the bitang (a child born out of wedlock or as the result of incest which can in turn become a werewolf), etc. One story which I liked and found rather unique was "The Jealous Vampire" which was very different from any other vampire tale that I've read before (the

vampire could not be rid of via the traditional methods, but with the use of cunning instead).Part Two: Haunted Treasures - this section focuses on Transylvanian spirits which are believed to protect treasures buried under ancient land all across Transylvania such as the gold mines. These spirits of the mine are not usually cruel or malevolent unless deliberately provoked.Part Three: Eerie Fairy Tales - these fairy tales are not necessarily a live-happily-ever-after stories. A blend of fairy tale features such as princesses, castles, magical beings and also macabre endings with a touch of dark humor.I found the last section at the back of the book to be informative. "About the Stories" provides the reader with additional background knowledge about each of the stories, such as the source, general background, and also explains the meaning of certain words and phrases. These stories are truly engaging and interesting, as well as creepy and will appeal to children ages 10 and up (as well as adults interested in folktales and the supernatural).

I actually happened upon this book by accident one day in the children's section of a library. But in my opinion adults will probably enjoy this book more than children.The authors have collected and compiled many strange local tales from the mysterious environs which inspired Bram Stoker to create the most famous vampire figure of all.But in reading these tales, one comes to realize just how much our present-day concept of the vampire has been influenced and shaped by Stoker and Hollywood.These stories seem both intriguingly strange and disorienting (eg. --what? Vampires walking around in daylight?) and at the same time unsettlingly unsatisfying to those of us raised on action-packed plots and clearly delineated good guys and bad guys.If you are a fan of the angst-ridden vampires of Anne Rice or the rock'n'roll vampires of Poppy Z. Brite, you won't like this book. But if you are curious about getting a first-hand view of some of the traditional beliefs behind our modern-day vampire and werewolf figures, this work makes a great primary source.The compilers/translators have also included a valuable explanatory section which helps us to understand and come to grips with the great gap between the supernatural beliefs common in the West today and those presented here.

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