



The Séance: A Gothic Tale of Horror and Misfortune

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A gothic Victorian chiller from the author of the Dr Blessing Series Albert Kench is summoned back to London from his travels in Australia, and is shocked to find that his sister has suffered horrific mental and physical damage. A man of science and progress, when Albert is told that Sally attended a seance prior to her collapse and has been touched by otherworldly forces, he believes there must be another, more rational explanation. Albert learns of a man who claims mastery of the dark arts, who may hold the key to Sally's salvation. Albert sets off in search of answers, but can he emerge victorious without faith, or will he be forced to accept the existence of a realm beyond the world around him?

The Seance: A Gothic Tale of Horror and Misfortune Details

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From Reader Review The Seance: A Gothic Tale of Horror and Misfortune for online ebook

Melissa Bryan says

The Seance: A Gothic Tale of Horror and Misfortune
By Jack Rollins

This chap book was a fun and scary journey into the evil depth of Hell and I loved it.

This is a gothic tale of horror and misfortune per the cover...I would call it a gothic tale of insanity and dark sinister manipulation. I enjoyed this story and I had to look around a few times to ensure I was the only one in the house, maybe I should read with more or brighter lights. It is well written and I love the Old English Sherlock Holmes' feel it has. When I am reading this type of story I think that the Old English time frame will either be a victorian romantic type story or a Jack The Ripper type...cut you open and see your insides slide out type story. This is the latter.

I like the way Mr Rollins starts the story and builds on it so the charters back ground is given and moves forward at a good pace. He doesn't impede their story with unnecessary information that can make a story move slow and the reader gets unintested. There is plenty of action and globs of blood and terror.

The only thing I disliked about the story is that I want more, hopefully he will write a sequel to this book.

I recommend this book to anyone who wants a fresh story line and likes to be freaked out. It is a short read that gives you a big novel story. I mean what can you lose, a little time and perhaps your mind!!!

This is the first book I have read of Mr. Rollins' and it was so stupendous I am going to start on his "The Cabinet of Dr Blessing", I think the title alone is intriguing. I'll let you know how I like it. His books are on ebooks and in print.

Valerie says

Fabulous little tale won as a Goodreads giveaway. Thoroughly chilling tale not to be read late at night. Albert Kench believes that his sister's misfortunes must have a logical explanation and he becomes embroiled in the world of seances which go against everything he believes in as a man of truth, reality and progress. I look forward to reading more in the Dr. Blessing series.

Angel Gelique says

Albert visits his sister, Sally, in an asylum and finds her in a terrible state--completely uncommunicative and missing a limb. He meets with a childhood acquaintance, Rachel Darby, who recounts the bizarre details of the night Sally became incapacitated.

Though Albert finds the story quite unbelievable, he sets off to find the man responsible for Sally's condition--the man with the mysterious mirror who attracts people to bear witness to the dark arts. Armed and ready for vengeance, Albert finds his way to this man, determined to make him pay dearly for his sister's misfortune.

Within the pages of this immersing short story, Rollins weaves an eerie tale of supernatural suspense. With superb writing and a most clever ending, you won't be sorry giving this incredible book a try!

Valentina Blood says

A quick but very fun read! You meet a man named Albert who decides to visit his poor sister in an asylum. It pretty much goes downhill from there. The novella is well written and very vivid. If you need more convincing, I did a video book review that you could check out and get an idea on this cool novella!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2a5S...>

Bookdragon Sean says

The Séance is a perfect read for Halloween and is an ideal one stop read for lovers of the gothic genre. It is **wonderfully atmospheric**, with spooky imagery and a coiling plot: I enjoyed it very much.

This may be a short read but is nonetheless a worthy one. In just a few pages the author has managed to create an immersive plot, one I wanted to reach the end of; thus I read it in one sitting. When I was reading it I regretted not doing so at night, by candlelight, as I do with other horror books I like but alas the author made me want to finish it there and then: not really a bad thing. This short story would slip perfectly in to an anthology of gothic short stories as it is very representative of the genre.

I won this, here, on good reads as a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

Michael Brookes says

I should say in advance that I had the pleasure of being a test reader for this story before it's release last year. I left it a few months to read the final version to see if I enjoyed it as much as I did the first time and I'm pleased to say that I did. I'd previously read the author's Dr Blessing stories and he invokes the Victorian era feeling well. This is repeated in The Seance providing a classic horror story feel.

I'm a big fan of the time period for horror stories and the blend of the rational and supernatural works for me. The author nails it in this story with some good references to bed the story into the era. This is a relatively short story with a quick pace but with some twists and turns along the way to keep things interesting.

The basic plot is a familiar one with a cursed item at the heart of it and the central character is a man of his age and provides some similarity to heroes of stories from that era. I enjoy a story that doesn't shy away from the concept of supernatural evil and this does that while also layering on the evil that men do to themselves.

If you're a fan of classic horror then you should give this a try and check out the author's other work while you're at it.

The Grim Reader says

Really good short story from Jack Rollins. I wasn't too sure at first if the author was going to be able to suck me into this gothic tale with it being so short. As it happens, he did. Albert Kench returns from Australia to find his sister has lost an arm and now resides in a mental asylum. Albert seeks to uncover the truth and literally goes to Hell to find out how this happened. It's atmospheric and creepy. I loved the mirror to Hell and the demon lurking behind it. A fast read-which was a little bit of a shame because I became so engrossed with the story. Rollins captures the time period very well and I will be seeking out more of his work. Excellent. 4.5 stars.

Caroline Gebbie says

Gothic Creepiness and Plenty of Terror

I have never been a lover of historical books however in *The Séance* Jack Rollins gives such effortless atmosphere that I found myself drawn in from page one. At 56 pages this is not a long read but it is full of Gothic creepiness and plenty of terror, with twists and turns that will keep you looking over your shoulder and a surprise ending that does not disappoint.

Albert Kench arrives back from Australia to find his sister in the rather strange and creepy Oakbridge Asylum. The staff are all smiles and everything seems too perfect so Albert sets out to discover why his sister is catatonic. He visits an old flame who tells him that she attended a séance and there begins his desire to investigate the supernatural.

This book is beautifully written and the author is able to immerse you in both the period and the characters. You are there with them all the way and it makes the twists and turns of this story all the more terrifying. 5 Creepy Stars for *The Séance*.

Lisa Sandberg says

What a great, little short story. I am fast becoming a great fan of Jack Rollins. :-)

This about a man, Albert, who goes to visit his sister, Sally, in an insane asylum. He has many questions as to what happened to her, so he goes in search of answers, starting with Rachel. Rachel has been to visit Sally many times. Rachel tells the story of what happened. This makes Albert search out the man who did this. He does find him and what happens next is classic horror. Great ending! Great story.

I won a signed copy of this book in a promotion on Facebook. Many thanks again to Jack for the win.

4 out of 5 stars!

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Nono says

I won this Book as a First Read in a Giveaway, which won't influence my reading experience or Review of it.

Attention - Might contain Minor Spoilers

Written in First-person narrative.

We have a Main Cast of 6 Characters.

The main protagonist Albert Kench, his sister Sally Kench. Miss Rachel Darby, a childhood friend of the siblings. A so called Viscount Alexander De Kroll. And last but not least Lord Aubrey Levi-Black & the one I shall not name.

At the beginning we find ourselves at Oakbridge Asylum. Albert Kench after having spend time overseas, Australia, finds himself in the Asylum to visit his unfortunate sister.

After this visit he meets with a childhood friend, Rachel, who tells Albert what had happened to Sally & how she came to her current state.

Unbelieving about Rachel's story yet mad with fury Albert wants to 'meet' with the mysterious Lord Levi-Black by sneaking into one of his shows which, according to Rachel, are hosted at the Priam Theatre at West End.

There Albert is met with his ultimate fate. Betrayal & the supernatural are just few of the things he will have to live through in this gothic Novelette.

The story is fittingly written in style and language of that Era.

And although Albert Kench seems to be a bit of a naïve young man, he is a honest one at that, keen on helping his sister even if it means revenge.

He relies on his sister's friend Rachel to achieve this, by asking her out on every detail about how Sally came to need the special help of an Asylum. And through Rachel he comes to know about the mysterious Lord Aubrey Levi-Black and his special Mirror.

This novelette was refreshing. It had no need of gore & a lot of blood to be a good horror story. I enjoyed reading it & despite of its end I was really satisfied with this one!

christina cooper says

Excellent Read!

Albert comes back to his home town to visit his sister Sally. But he's in for more than one surprise! Sally is in an asylum, Albert thinks he can cure Sally with the help of their friend Rachel, who just may be the only one who knows and can speak the truth, even though the truth is beyond hard to believe! Albert's journey to save his sister is hardcore, action packed and full of shocks and crazy twists. Look out for Myrezyn and Levi-Black! Highly recommend this to any fan of modern horror!

Nev Murray says

Albert Kench has just returned to Victorian London from Australia. He has been summonsed home after his sister Sally has been admitted to Oakbridge Asylum. When he visits her, he discovers she has become unrecognisable. She is near skeletal. She hasn't spoken in over a year and she is missing an arm. He finds out she has been visited daily by an old childhood friend Rachel Darby.

Albert seeks out Rachel to try and find out what happened to his beloved sister. The story Rachel tells him is an unbelievable tale of a fraudulent spiritualist they went to visit at an exhibition and the evil Lord Aubrey Levi-Black who is an apparent master of the dark arts and seems to be in possession of a mirror that may be holding Sally's very soul. Albert embarks on a crusade to free Sally from her glass prison but not everything he believes is true and not everyone he trusts is true either.

Jack Rollins. I have heard the name but never read anything by him. This came up to review for Ginger Nuts of Horror so I grabbed it due to my recently discovered love of gothic tales and all things Victorian, in terms of horror. This developed after discovering William Hope Hodgson's Carnacki tales. I have read a few gothic and Victorian tales since and there are some shockers out there with authors not being able to "get" the atmosphere of the Victorian times.

Finally, in Jack Rollins, I seem to have found someone who writes about this era just like Hodgson. The Séance is a fantastic tale. It totally grasps the way the higher born people of the time were sucked into the world of spirits and psychics. The problem was that most of these spiritualists were nothing more than fraudulent entertainers. Money was no object for the high born and these people knew that. Enter Lord Aubrey Levi-Black. This man was evil to his very core. He was no entertainer. He specialised in pure death.

The characters in this book are great. They are so perfectly made up for the times. Albert is a normal man of the times. Dashing and realistic about both the present and the future. Rachel appears to be a stunning woman intent on winning the charms of Albert. Lord Levi-Black is a rotter. A scoundrel, but a very dangerous scoundrel at that.

The descriptive writing makes it very easy to slip into the times. The clothes the people wear, the language they use and the settings and surroundings totally take you back in time, really making you believe you are living in the past. This makes the horror aspect of this book ten times more powerful. Albert doesn't have the knowledge we have today about such things. He doesn't have the backing of numerous people willing to

help him in his quest. He doesn't have the weapons or the know how to deal with what he is facing. Rather than making this unbelievable, it fills you with dread for him. This will creep you out big style. I use this analogy a lot with really good stories set in this time but this would have made a perfect script for a Hammer Horror film. Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee and Vincent Price would have had an absolute ball with this story.

This short story has again highlighted to me the British talent we have for writing wonderful books in the horror genre.

On Jack Rollins Twitter page he states this "I can give you nightmares simply by telling you stories!" I for one can vouch for that and I cannot wait to read more from this man.

A superb 5 stars for this short.

Kyle Scott says

Disclaimer - Since first reading Jack's early works, we have become friends, and are currently working on a project together. That aside, this review represents my true opinion on the work, (there's a reason why I wanted to work with the guy).

The Seance is a spiritual cousin to Jack's previous works, the highly acclaimed yet criminally underexposed Dr Blessing series, continuing the wonderfully original and beautifully written merging between modern and classic horror. Jack writes with a fluid poetic grace that few can match, and has, over the course of four books, including this one, carved a niche in the genre that is all his own. Blending the stylistic flourishes of the classic horror writers with the graphic viscera of more contemporary fare, he's slowly building a vibrant and authentic Victorian nightmare world in which the reader can revel in the blood, sweat and dirt.

There's a sense of magic that runs through all his work, and The Seance is his most accomplished vision so far. It reads like a hammer horror movie in motion, one of the early technicolor marvels that the house was so good at. This is a tale that is both inviting and jarring, a disturbing, constantly enthralling and surprisingly intelligent glimpse into the darkness.

Jack understands horror, he understands the importance of atmosphere, tension, and imagery, and in this short, perfectly paced dip into one man's search for answers, he pulls the reader down into the shadows with him.

It's great stuff. Jack Rollins deserves to be widely read. Horror fans are missing a treat if they pass this one by.

Stuart Keane says

Dark Chapter Press, the publisher behind this novella, run a Flash Fiction competition on their website. I was the lucky, and honoured, winner of their inaugural competition in August. The Seance was my prize for winning said competition. You can enter every month here <http://www.darkchapterpress.com/octob...>

I discovered Jack Rollins, quite by accident, several months ago. After I read his debut effort, Dr. Blessing's Rapture, or, The Beast in the Bell Jar, I became an instant fan. His knack for twisting the tongue of old England and blending it with a more modern, yet timeless, style of horror was second to none. It was a unique take on the genre, one that reminds me of my youth; when Hammer Horror was thriving. This style of horror is ageless...and it seems Rollins' writing is too.

Albert Kench, having resided abroad for some time, returns to London to visit his sister. She's holed up in Oakbridge, an unorthodox mental institution that practices in the unique. His sister, Sally, is mute and unresponsive. Driven by loyalty and guilt, he seeks to discover the real reason behind her mental illness, one that takes him on a dark journey into his past, not to mention the Magic Arts and illusions.

From sentence one, I was immersed in this story. The author's writing style is so comfortable, it really proves hard to pull away. His description is so vivid, you can hear the cart pulling along the street, the wheels clacking on stone, the smell of the old style perfumes and clothing. You can almost imagine being there. When I walked up to the asylum of Oakbridge, I shivered. Writing like this can change a novella from a reading experience to a reading joy...and it did just that.

The story is simplistic in its pacing - he gets it just right. The characters are phenomenal, multi-layered, diverse and realistic - not an easy feat for a 56 page novella. The dialogue, where old fashioned, is a sight to behold. Rollins has a knack of nailing the dialogue and The Seance is no different, sweeping you along on the tongue of yesteryear with a flourish. What really sets this novella apart from the crowd, though, is the plot. Part The Illusionist, part any exorcism and Ouija Board film you've seen in recent years, the story uses suspense and thrills above blood and gore. It plays the dark chills to perfection and proves that, if you leave the blood and guts at the door, you can still craft an intelligent, creepy and thoroughly disturbing story without them.

The horror is sublime. One particularly creepy scene involves the seance of the title, one that brings our characters together and casts some light on Sally's mental state. As Kench reminisces about his past, it becomes clear that everything is...well, not all that clear. He has a dark past and his involvement with fraudsters, old flames and family members may hold the vital key to Sally's condition. The menace is underlying throughout and can never be underestimated. It elevates the novella a touch or two, making you grow fond of the characters and start to care how it ends when the darkness rises and the smoke clears. Overall, it's a short but sweet novella that packs a punch.

5*? Totally. Rollins has come into his own as an author and has started to mark his niche in Victorian Horror. True, Hammer did it with panache and flair, years and years ago. If anything, they proved that an audience exists for this sort of horror and Rollins is definitely taking the sub-genre by storm. Dark, disturbing and very original, The Seance will give you nightmares. Just don't look in the mirror...

Michael says

The Seance is the kind of old school horror story that we don't see much of anymore. Think Poe, or Lovecraft and you have a pretty good idea of what to expect when checking out this novella. This is classic horror, and as I read it I was reminded that that sometimes a great horror story uses your own curiosity against you. We want to peer into the darkness even though we know what lurks there. It's all about atmosphere and Rollins is a talented writer that relies on the classic traditional horror that doesn't need

buckets of gore to help move his story along.

It's the kind of story that would fit right into an issue of *Weird Tales*, and despite its short length you never feel that the story should be longer or that it's missing something. Writers like Rollins are rare because they have the ability to hold a reader's attention without going for cheap gore or violence. Fact of the matter is that while Rollins may not be well known now, I have a feeling that we'll be hearing a lot more from him, and I can't wait to see what he has in store for us next.
