


The Roald Dahl Omnibus: Perfect Bedtime Stories for Sleepless Nights

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Ever since his stories first appeared, people have been telling and re-telling each other Roald Dahl's sometimes shocking and always brilliant and bizarre assortment of terror-tinted gems. Bawdy, funny, touching, and downright outrageous, there's simply no one else like Roald Dahl.

This volume is a diabolical collection of 28 of Dahl's best stories. Shiver to classics like The Man From the South, Taste, Royal Jelly and The Great Switcheroo and hard-to-find gems like Poison, The Wish and Neck. It's the perfect remedy for a sleepless night.

Here's what the critics are saying about The Roald Dahl Omnibus:

"A story teller in the tradition of Poe and Hawthorne, Dahl has the master of plot and character possessed by great writers of the past, along with a wildness and wryness of his own."--Los Angeles Times

"The reader looking for sweetness, light, and subtle characterization will have to try another address. Tension is his business; give him a surprise denouement, and he'll give you a story leading up to it. His name in this instance is Roald Dahl."-- The New York Times Book Review.

The Roald Dahl Omnibus: Perfect Bedtime Stories for Sleepless Nights Details

Date : Published June 13th 1993 by Barnes & Noble (first published 1986)

ISBN : 9780880291231

Author : Roald Dahl

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From Reader Review The Roald Dahl Omnibus: Perfect Bedtime Stories for Sleepless Nights for online ebook

Justin says

Wanted to visit an old friend. These are wonderfully wicked short stories. Dahl's control of character and pacing is incredible. Must read.

Favorites in this collection:

"Lambs to the slaughter" which is a warning to spouses and police investigators that pregnant women are very dangerous.

"Pig" which is a moral tale as to why parents should never go out on a date or how vegetarians are beneficial to the meat packing industry.

"Royal Jelly" just read it and never underestimate a beekeeper. When the husband takes off his shirt to reveal....

Mark says

This is a really good collection of stories. My one criticism is that a few of the stories seemed to be less inspired than the others. This makes perfect sense seeing as the book is a collection of many stories that span the writers career.

These stories delve into the strange workings of upper crust society that are just laughable. Bets, insults, fingers, wine, lamb legs, and other trivial subjects become dreadfully serious.

What a good read. This is not life changing, but HIGHLY entertaining.

Akie says

Many people love Dahl for his absurdly comedic children's stories, but their interest unfortunately stops there. He is one of the most chilling, demented & skilled short story writers I have ever read, and this collection of adult fictions is enough to satisfy anyone's taste for macabre humor. Dahl twists the commonplace into the horrific, the sublime & the darkly hilarious in delectable tidbits that brim with the violence that seethes behind every moment of life. In retrospect, his children's books hint at his talent--- James' evil aunts are squashed by an enormous peach piloted by vindictive insects, Charlie must defeat uncommunicative aliens that seek to devour him & his family, etc. My personal favorite in this collection is 'Lamb to the Slaughter,' although 'Skin' is also quite good. Perfect for a chilly afternoon with some tea, a blanket & guests later that evening to banish any lingering chills.

Nick says

Well, the cover of the book says "perfect bedtime stories for sleepless nights," and that's pretty much how I

got through Dahl's Omnibus. Though, I was a bit confused as to why you would want to bill your book as perfect for sleepless nights-- as if just cracking this one open would get you snoring in no time. Quite the opposite was the case for me, as this book usually *induced* sleepless nights rather than remedied them. Dahl's tone in this collection is a far cry from what I've been acquainted with in the past. Forget Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, James and the Giant Peach, and everything else that made Dahl famous. The Omnibus reveals a more macabre side of his personality, as well as his more sordid imaginings (four of the stories originally appeared in Playboy--quite entertaining, but sordid is definitely the word). There is an astonishing variety of subject matter varying from the mundane to the outrageous, and it's hard for me to fathom just how one imagination could burst into creativity in so many different ways. But the common thread that runs throughout the whole collection is an uncanny ability to create tension either outright or through subtle suggestion, only to resolve it in a ridiculously simple twist or allow it to fester in delicious anguish after the story has come to an end. Take a look at the first story, "Taste": if it whets your whistle, don't look back and plow through to the end. A fine collection that has endeared Dahl's storytelling to me yet more.

Jillian says

Roald Dahl is a brilliant storyteller. Omnibus is a great collection that showcases his ability to amuse, frighten & entertain beyond compare. Not the kiddie stories that we remember him so fondly for, but these might make you take another look at those childhood favorites to see what dark nuance you may have missed. It's not just the inventiveness of the scenarios themselves, but the way he presents them: the unique perspectives of narrators, sadistic twists & clever dialogue draw you into the tiny worlds he fabricates, and just when you realize where he's taking you, bam! He ends the story how it began, smack when the burst of interesting is over. He gives his audience credit for critical reading skills.

El says

The first time I realized that Roald Dahl wrote anything other than children's stories was somewhere around 7th or 8th grade when our English class was assigned to read a short story by Dahl called *Lamb to the Slaughter*. I fell in love with it at that time, I've referenced it numerous times over the years, I've re-read it a few times, and each time it never fails to completely amuse me. It never gets old. After reading his books for a younger audience as a child, the idea that there was this whole new world of Dahl stories out there just waiting for me absolutely blew me away. This never stopped me from re-reading many of his children's stories over the years as well, but in the back of my mind I always kept this little arsenal of a thought: *There's even more Dahl out there I haven't read yet.*

I was thrilled to come across this book in a used bookstore sometime last year, but I've waited until now to read it. The beauty of these short stories are they are just short enough to read one or two before bed, just as the subtitle ("Perfect Bedtime Stories for Sleepless Nights") suggests. However, Dahl's stories are on par with my other beloved short story writer, O. Henry, in that the stories tend to end with a twist, an unsettling thought, or just plain (purposefully) abruptly which in itself can be unsettling. Some might find it difficult to sleep after reading them, but for some reason his stories are like Ambien for me - except without all the crazy side effects that comes with Ambien...

Besides *Lamb to the Slaughter* I found some stories familiar, which isn't surprising since several have been used in episodes of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *Tales of the Unexpected*. I realized one (*Man From the*

South) was familiar because I had seen Quentin Tarantino's film, *Four Rooms*. Like Ray Bradbury, Dahl's stories have lasting power that transcend literature - they almost become a part of our cultural history because of their simplicity, despite their darkness and - often - their bleakness.

Let's not fool ourselves - Dahl's children's stories aren't all that happy. There's a lot of shit going on in those stories too - but in this collection we can see just how dark Dahl could get if he just let loose; he could go dark without alienating his readers, and for that I think he was amazing.

Kacee says

Many of these short stories were adapted into Alfred Hitchcock Presents teleplays. They are delightfully dark and compelling with the whimsy and wryness one expects from Dahl presented in an entirely different, but still purely Dahl-ian way. These stories are indeed perfect for sleepless nights (I read them in between frequent nighttime feedings when my son was an infant) but I wouldn't recommend them for bedtime reading for the kids. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* they are not.

Mike says

This is a collection of short stories by a man many consider to be the greatest children's writer ever. This book should end that discussion. First, these stories show clearly that he really never wrote for children. He was a children's subversive, in that his stories are really nursery tales meant for adults. Second, anyone who has read his novels gets the vague sense there is a darker story being told than the mere details suggest. These short stories reveal that dark side: violent, biting and cruel. That is not to say that you will be revulsed by these accounts. In some ways, this shows the versatility of Dahl, a writer more like Flannery O'Connor than I ever knew. Since I love O'Connor, it was a natural that I would like this. Dahl has an ear for strange dialogue that still sounds believable even if it sounds at the same time unreal.

Melissa says

The tagline for this title is "Perfect Bedtime Stories for Sleepless Nights" but what that should actually indicate to you is that if you read these before going to bed, you will not be sleeping. Definitely intended for adults, this collection of short stories all seem to be suspenseful and most of the characters come to horrible, sometimes extra creepy, ends. I like that a lot of the time the stories kind of drift off at the end - he never comes out and says how the person ends up but just hits at it. It makes your imagination run wild, and oftentimes I was trying to find escapes or loopholes to save the character (though that's unlikely). Hence the sleepless nights. All in all it is a fantastic collection, though I would recommend reading them in broad daylight. It is very true to Roald Dahl's style and I could see the similarities to his children's books (which I devoured as a child!) so if you liked his kid's books, you'll like this collection. Also if you like Hitchcock movies, you'll most likely like this collection as well. They did make me question Dahl's sanity though...

Mark says

So, having been on a short story kick for about a year, I was excited when a colleague of mine said he was reading this. I saw the recent movie version of "Fantastic Mr. Fox" and remembered how much I loved the caricatures of British life that Dahl seems to use so well, and that made me go to the library to pick this up. I've read about a third of the stories, and although I do enjoy the little plot twists at the end of most stories, sometimes they're a little underwhelming. Perhaps I'm desensitized to events that would have had a big shock value back in the 40s...

Either way, it's fun to delve into the lives of such interesting characters who live in a very different place from where I do.

Anina says

stories differ from this collection.

I think with both you have every Dahl story.

This is more of a note to self than a review, sorry!

But I can tell you that if you read this book you will feel really accomplished because it has like 500 pages.

Lani says

I've had this book on my shelf for years, but couldn't bring myself to sit down and read it. Short stories aren't really my thing, and the book is a huge and heavy hardback.

I finally made it my 'bedtime book' and kept it by my bed. Since I got the kittens, I had plenty of excuses to lounge around in my room and power through these stories.

I was surprised how quickly I ripped through the book once I started in earnest. Several of the stories were hilarious, and one in particular is very familiar - if you've ever read Danny the Champion of the World...

These stories were as twisted as one would expect from Dahl, and only a handful dragged a little long. He really has a talent for the short story with a characteristic wry and dark twist at the end.

I'm probably still more partial to his more fantastical childrens literature, but I'm glad I branched out to his short stories after all.

Some of the stories are fairly sexual, so I wouldn't recommend this collection for kids or YA readers. But there are other stories that would be entirely appropriate - and hilarious.

Laura Leilani says

Best collection of short stories I've read. All are interesting in their own way, and all have a twist at the end. Most short story collections have a few duds mixed in, but this book is an exception. I recognized a few stories that ended up being produced in Alfred Hitchcock Presents. This book is highly entertaining!

orelia says

This is the best collection of short story's Dahl has ever written. I was a fan of his children's books growing up, but his short story fiction is like a pure pre-Hollywood Alfred Hitchcock movie: eerie and wonderfully grotesque. I just can't of the stories about old hags, proprietors of boarding houses who entise young men and taxidermy them. And what about the one where the mysterious cigar smoking poolside sitting conman trades his Cadillac to chop off a man's finger? These are beautiful pieces of modern short fiction. I just can't get enough.

Kirstie says

Just finished this today and I would say 4 is an overall score..there are some stories in this that knock you right off your feet with a 5 star quality and others that are more ho hum with a 3 star fare. Overall, a very enjoyable read from an author I hadn't realized even wrote for adults until recently. Like countless other girls, I imagined myself having the power of Matilda when I was younger but for many years I have strayed from Dahl as a writer.

Many of these stories are gruesome without being bloody...they are just enough to get under your skin and many have sudden twists at the end. Dahl interjects his own humor in some but it's of an unsettling variety. Often, themes tend to revolve around women...women murderesses (both intentionally and unintentionally) and women with their giant lips ready to swallow men whole...ha! I find this sort of amusing. But there are many others that don't revolve around this idea that are very original creations, especially for their time. (Originally published in 1949.) In any case, I would say it's an overall strong collection and even though it appears to not be completely comprehensive, at nearly 700 pages it covers quite a bit of territory (and also makes me want to read the rest!)
