



Tales of Ancient Rome (Vol #1)

S.J.A. Turney

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A collection of bite-size stories of varying styles all based in the world of ancient Rome. 12 tales of the ancient world, plus a bonus tale to finish.

The second edition contains two new tales not told in the 1st. Laugh, cry and shudder at:

Hold The Wall - Hadrian's wall in the last days of the western empire

Vigil - A comedic tale of firefighting in Rome

NEW Rudis - A champion gladiator fights his last fight

NEW The Discovery - A Roman trader makes a surprising find in distant China

The man who bought an Empire - The lowest point of Imperial succession

Trackside seats - A slave helps his blind master at the circus

How to run a latifundium - A cautionary tale of estate management

A Reading - What does the future hold in Judea?

Exploratores - Trajan's scouts on the trail of Dacian warriors

With a pinch of salt - A comedic tale of food in Claudius' Rome

The Palmyrene Prince - Rome's eastern border tells grim tales

Temple Trouble - A tale of the early days of Fronto (of the Marius' Mules series)

Bonus tale: Aftermath in the Ludus - A fun finish.

Tales of Ancient Rome (Vol #1) Details

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Author : S.J.A. Turney

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From Reader Review Tales of Ancient Rome (Vol #1) for online ebook

Mark Stone says

It's been a long time since I've been this impressed with a collection of short stories, since - let's see - ever. Wonderfully written, exciting, and often humorous. S.J.A. Turney has a new loyal reader.

A.J. Armitt says

I met Simon Turney on a writing site a number of years ago, and have since been impressed not only with his writing style, but his knowledge of everything Roman. As a fan of historical fiction, I have since read and enjoyed a number of his books. When I discovered he'd released a book of short stories, I knew I had to buy it.

Short stories have been a favourite read of mine for a number of years now, you only have to check out my other reviews to know that this is true. Most of Simon's novels are quite lengthy, so I was unsure as to whether or not he could transfer his story telling skill to writing shorts. I'm pleased to acknowledge that his latest offering is equally as good as anything he has previously written.

Simon's book contains twelve very different stories, some humorous, some tragic, some with a twist, others with a moral. In some tales he has interspersed real historical characters and events with fictional ones, in others he has used his knowledge to create pure fiction, all to great effect.

All the stories are good, some are great. I especially liked the story about the chariot race, and the one about the greedy landowner... hell who am I kidding? I loved them all.

If you are a fan of historical fiction, or short stories in general, then I would recommend this as must read. It is certainly a book that I know I will read and enjoy again.

Tony

Belinda S Fielden says

Quick read

This is all short, some very short, stories that have unexpected endings. Very entertaining read. Perfect for when you don't have much time.

Joyce says

This collection of 12 short stories is a quick and entertaining read. The main characters are all very different

and their situations run the gamut of the uniquely Roman human experience. The tales range in time frame from the early Principate to the last days of the Roman presence in Britain. Some are laugh-out-loud hilarious, while others are hauntingly tragic. All of them take unexpected turns and none ends up quite where one thinks they are headed. I would love for a few of these to be expanded into novels.

If you are looking for a cohesive narrative with one main character to tie all the stories together, keep looking. If, however you are interested in fun stories that often take unexpected twists, you will enjoy this little gem!

Margaret says

DNF. I think I'll give this book a second chance by putting it on my phone where my reading style might better match the short "twisty" tales. Not what I was looking for when I DNF so no rating until then.

Eileen Iciek says

A nice collection of short stories, mostly about small aspects of famous people in Roman history. It helps if you are more than a little familiar with Roman history. A glossary at the end would have helped with some of the more obscure terms used, but it wasn't too much of an impediment.

Ruth says

A quick read but with no particular wow factor. The author is obviously au fait with the Roman era but perhaps too eager to show it in the tales. Unfortunately, unable to recommend to the normal crew.

Rae Sontheyon says

Unconnected Short Stories Set In Ancient Rome . . .

This a compilations of various short stories from individuals in different countries, cities, and diverse social standings. Beginning from the far reaches of wars and forts in Britannia to the Persian empire and deserts where politics involve the Palmyrene Empire from ancient Syria. Each story reveals pieces of ancient life during the Roman Empire.

Stories I found lacking were "Lucilla" and "Aftermath in the Ludus" both ended on strange notes that left me wanting further explanation. Especially Lucilla, that story was leading somewhere but then I missed where. And the Ludas one ended funny but perhaps that was the point. While stories such as "Trackside Seats" and "Exploratores" were my favorites. They were more detailed and could have been written further into a novel. Trackside is about a chariot race and I've always loved that kind of a scene since I watched the movie Ben Hur as kid. Exploratores is adrenaline and fighting, basically just a taste of what a soldier in the legions would do in a scouting party.

Overall, I really enjoyed each of the fictional stories. The author wrote some stories shorter than others and for some stories it was fine for a taste but some left me wanting. Historical fiction such as this is a good example of this genre. The stories weren't overly fictitious but highlights of historical moments, building the fictional story from there. Example is the tale from the "Reading", which entailed a character crossing paths with the Pontius Pilatus, the Roman ruler who would put Jesus Christ to death. Though the author didn't keep to any time line or purposely placed all his stories in connection to any main historic event, a reader can get a good sense of life in the Roman world from these short tales. So if you are into Rome and love to learn or read about the people from that time period, these short tales are a good way to pass the time and perhaps spur you to learn more about Rome.

-----Read more of my reviews at: <http://heyitwasfree.blogspot.com/>-----

Denise says

Roman short stories with quirky endings. Not something that readers see a lot of in today's book market. But an ideal format for those odd moments when you want something to read and love ancient Rome but can't commit to a 600 page novel!

David Baird says

Yes I'm late to the party on this one I know...

As a reader I promise myself to go back and read all the books an author has wrote if I enjoy their work. It's not always easy to fit all these wonderful tales in though..This however was perfect. I've been meaning to read more of Simon's work and this was a easy read to stick in between other reads

It's a collect of short stories which show off the author's skills. It's perfect if like me you want a quick read or this would also suit anyone as a great introduction to the author if you've not read his work previously

Some short stories leave me deflated, not bored but sort of wondering what I got out of reading them.. not this one. On numerous occasions I found myself grinning, especially when I read the sentence "oh dear, I think I shat myself" . This really was a selection of well written shorts which at times were very humorous which I think is a hard thing to do in such short tales.

My favourites were Temple Trouble & The Discovery

The book is currently free so why not grab a copy like I did.. you've got nothing to lose but lots to gain :)

Carrie Slager says

As you guys probably know from my reviews I don't actually read all that many anthologies. They're just usually not my thing unless they're from a writer I really love. Still, I decided to download Tales of Ancient Rome for free on Amazon one day because I figured I had nothing to lose and at least something to gain. I mean, I love ancient Rome.

So overall, how was the anthology? Pretty good, actually. Turney managed to span quite a few different periods of time in the Roman Empire, from the reign of Claudius to the last days of the empire as it was being torn apart by invaders and civil wars. I always like a little variety in an anthology and this one certainly delivered in that respect.

Most of the stories were pretty solid. They're quite short but they're nice little slices of Roman life. We have everything from the viewpoints of foreign princes to slaves and each character has a distinct outlook on life. Some stories are more humorous than others but pretty much all of them are interesting. One of my favourites was Rudis, the tale of the gladiator in his very last fight before his freedom because the ending was so unexpected. He was a fascinating character, even though he didn't get much page time. Temple Trouble was laugh out loud hilarious and it actually makes me want to read the full length series in which that character features. He would certainly get into some interesting situations! There were some weak stories like Ludus but most stories were pretty good.

As for historical accuracy, I was quite impressed. Turney knows his stuff and all of the little details he puts into his writing makes it better. He has a good grasp of the wide span of Roman history and although it would be a little hard to orient yourself if you're not familiar with Roman history, I quite enjoyed the stories because I picked out little clues as to the time period. If you know sort of a general outline of Roman history you should be fine with Tales of Ancient Rome but if you're a newcomer I wouldn't recommend the anthology.

Basically, Tales of Ancient Rome (Volume 1) was a solid anthology. It wasn't the best I've ever read and there were some weaker aspects to it but overall I was quite impressed. I certainly got more than my money's worth out of it and I'd recommend it to my fellow Roman history enthusiasts. Best of all, it's free as a Kindle or Nook ebook.

I give this anthology 4.5/5 stars, rounded up to 5 stars for Goodreads rating purposes.

Lewis McIntyre says

This is a collection of short stories set in Ancient Rome, well-written, stories that put you in a time machine back 2000 years ago. As my recently published book, "The Eagle and the Dragon" a Novel of Rome and China" dealt in part with travel along the Silk Road between Rome and China, I was particularly taken with "The Discovery," an hilariously funny story about a trip that could have changed the world... but didn't. No spoilers here.

You don't need to know history here, just people.

Tessa says

I started out liking this book. Great writing and great stories by an author who knows that stories about ancient Rome don't necessarily have to take place in the city of Rome during the reign of Nero. Then I noticed that every story ended with a twist. Each twist lost most of its effect because I knew something was coming.

Also, I don't know if the author is a bad ghost story writer, I'm I bad ghost story reader, or both, but for both of his ghost stories I found myself going "huh?". That might just be me. I usually need to have ghost stories explained to me. Still, (view spoiler)

Leonard Tillerman says

Are you a lover of historical fiction? Do you enjoy being transported back in time? Travelling all the way into an entirely different era with all of its unique customs, lifestyle and norms. Being able to steal a glance at what it must have been like to actually live at such a time. Undoubtedly, one of the more popular eras to explore is that of the Ancient Roman Empire. Images of gladiators and the Roman war machine may instantly come to mind. If this sounds like your "niche", then Tales of Ancient Rome by author S.J.A. Turney may be the great reading selection you have been looking for!

The book is actually a collection of 12 short stories with one bonus selection included. The various stories occur at different times throughout the ancient Roman Empire. They also provide a fairly diverse perspective of life during this era which is recorded in an entertaining and fictional account. From a group of besieged Legionnaires fending off invading barbarians, to a humorous account of firefighting in the Roman age. The tales are interesting and based upon actual historic events (with a creative licence of course). My personal favorites were "Trackside Seats" and "Hold the Wall." Both did a very good job at showing the societal class system and overt disregard for human life which was prevalent in the upper echelons.

In regards to the plot development in the various tales, they each are unique and provide a good cross section of life in Ancient Rome. The stories were entertaining, but some were clearly better than others. The author knows his subject matter quite well as the fictional writing is backed up with actual facts from the era. Many of the points are spot on correct, but a few do go off course. Also, while the individual tales were certainly amusing, I personally found them far too short to really get engrossed in the events. That being said, the actual writing was very smooth flowing, easy to follow and quite diverse.

There are also a variety of interesting characters throughout the anthology. As readers, we are introduced to them and start to get familiar with them through the actual story events. However, the "snippet" nature of the tales makes it quite difficult to really see much in-depth development. I would have enjoyed more background about certain players, and seeing the series of events which led them to be at their particular point in time. Unfortunately, the relationship which develops between the reader and the wide host of characters is superficial at best.

As mentioned, the author does a good job at presenting the actual time and place in his stories. The setting is authentic and believable. I do think that some prior knowledge about Ancient Rome is probably necessary to get a full appreciation for this point and for the stories in general. Such comprehension will certainly increase the understanding and enjoyment of the anthology.

Overall, I enjoyed this collection of short stories. They were well written and able to hold my interest quite well. Nevertheless, they left me wanting a little something more.

3 out of 5 Roman Stars for this one! ***

Aditya Bondyopadhyay says

This is an excellent book of short stories based on ancient rome, and is a must read to enjoy a glimpse into the daily life of the romans, both the elite and the commoners.

Best thing, it is available for free download as an e-book both on Amazon and also on Flipkart.

SUGGESTION: If you are planning to download this book to read, I'd suggest doing it from Flipkart rather than from Amazon, as the FlipKart Version has two extra stories, namely "Ridus" and "Discovery"....
