



Windeye

Brian Evenson

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A woman falling out of sync with the world; a king's servant hypnotized by his murderous horse; a transplanted ear with a mind of its own. The characters in these stories live as interlopers in a world shaped by mysterious disappearances and unfathomable discrepancies between the real and imagined. Brian Evenson, master of literary horror, presents his most far-ranging collection to date, exploring how humans can persist in an increasingly unreal world. Haunting, gripping, and psychologically fierce, these tales illuminate a dark and unsettling side of humanity.

Praised by Peter Straub for going "furthest out on the sheerest, least sheltered narrative precipice," **Brian Evenson** is the author of ten books of fiction. He has been a finalist for the Edgar Award, the Shirley Jackson Award, and the World Fantasy Award, and the winner of the International Horror Guild Award, and the American Library Association's award for Best Horror Novel. *Fugue State* was named one of *Time Out New York's* Best Books of 2009. The recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and three O. Henry Prizes, including one for the title story in "Windeye," Evenson lives in Providence, Rhode Island, where he directs Brown University's Literary Arts Department.

Windeye Details

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Author : Brian Evenson

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Genre : Short Stories, Horror, Fiction, Fantasy, Weird Fiction

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From Reader Review Windeye for online ebook

Gregor Xane says

One of the best collections I've read in quite some time.

All stories are good to great.

Highly recommended!

Paul says

Evenson is the master of what I'm now calling the paranoid/weird tale. As in, *did that really happen? man, that's messed up..* In lesser hands the playing with reality and perception can get tiresome, but Evenson always manages to be thematically spot on and genuinely creepy or uncanny. Besides, do you really need an excuse to read a short story collection with a story about Bon Scott being recruited and then possibly murdered by Mormons? No, you don't.

Forrest Taylor says

I picked up this book because the back listed it as a series of sometimes-funny horror stories that Peter Straub was a fan of. Spoiler alert: it isn't. Funny, that is, unless you mean "funny in a strange way." Every single one of Windeye's stories begins in a somewhat-unnatural place and get stranger from there. Eventually, you'll wind up in a place where nothing really makes sense anymore, but you still believe it. You believe that it did happen- at least in some way.

Windeye's characters are set apart from the beginning. Whether it's a dark tunnel that keeps them away from humanity, or a ship cast off in a storm, or a machine built to clean and repair trains that learned something new, or even just an unhappy woman who starts to feel somewhat out of sync, these people (animals? robots? ghosts?) find something that most of us cannot, tightly packed with humans all around us. The question is whether that something is worth finding. Each character is alone in their own skin, and in some ways, that's the worst horror of all- this whole book taps into our (or, at least, my) primal fear that we will never really be understood. You are born alone, Windeye seems to whisper, and you'll sure as hell die alone, and the rest is a farce, at best.

The only problem I had with this book was that this sense of never knowing what's real or not combined with a series of short stories is *robustly problematic* for me when I really want to know more about what's going on. Multiple stories could easily be expanded into a full book or even a series, and I'd eat them all up. Hear that, Evenson? I WANT TO THROW MONEY AT YOU.

Richard Thomas says

Always challenging, always amazing. Such a unique voice.

Klava says

This book is a collection of stories by a writer whose work I've never read before and I am very happy to have found this book because the stories, although short (one story only takes up one side of the page!), seem to transport you to very different places filled with intrigue and mystery. As every writer knows, it's very hard to write effective short stories and work out whole personality in a few hundred words, but Brian Evenson seems to have a good grasp of that.

The title story, *Windeye*, is a haunting story about a boy who remembers his little sister despite some very unusual circumstances, and sets the tone for the whole book.

If you like mystery and word play, you'll definitely enjoy this little gem of a book!

Karen says

How to tell if you are reading a Brian Evenson story:

1. Are the characters often nameless?
2. If the characters have names, are they often Scandinavian or Eastern European or otherwise non-American-seeming?
3. Is the story quite short?
4. Does the story involve a horrifying conceit, cf. bees inserted into throats, people without faces, cave Chthulhus?
5. Is it extremely difficult to summarize the content, nature, and impact of the story?
6. But do you nevertheless feel satisfied, cf. Yes, that was a story?
7. And do you also feel unnerved?
8. After reading the story, do you feel less comfortable in your own body?
9. Do you find yourself imagining the possibility of, if your ear were surgically reattached to your head, simply pulling it off like a pop top?
10. What if it's not your ear?
11. But it is your head?
12. Do you find yourself thinking of H.P. Lovecraft or Terrence Holt (the writer, not the football player) while you read?
13. Do you find yourself thinking, "This can't end well."?

If you answered yes to all of the above, congratulations. You are reading a Brian Evenson story! Enjoy not sleeping tonight.

Michael Adams says

Brilliant collection of some of the strangest stories I've ever read. Each is a unique and singular experience,

fairy-tale horror-stories of the most twisted, yet perfectly self-contained logic imaginable. Yet never does one of the stories take the easy-out 'rug-pull' of introducing an unreliable narrator element in the final pages of the story, the cop-out of 'oh by-the-way, they were crazy the whole time and imagined the whole thing!' Indeed, if Evenson is going to have an unreliable narrator, you know about it from the first paragraphs, and their mental confusion or altered state drives the story from that point forward. I definitely would recommend this collection to lovers of the dark, the strange, the weird, or even the bizarre, and of stories of the highest caliber.

Joe says

Unsettling. Stories that will get under your skin. Brian Evenson is a master at creating tales that transport to a world where life is not quite right, and characters struggle to live in a world defined by bizzare and haunting events. It is not usually a different world, but our own, slowly tearing apart.

Evenson's short stories make up an impressive collection more than worth the read. The book starts out strong, lagging near the middle with a few somewhat confusing and odd stories, but finishes just as strong as it started. His writing, appropriately for the content, is not bogged down by poetics, but deals with his characters' direct perceptions and reactions to the world around them. Not having read much within the 'horror' genre I can't really relate him to any other current authors, but his writing clearly reminded me of the few Edgar Allen Poe stories I have read.

Found this book due to a recommendation by Laura van den Berg (who's short story collection is one of the best I've ever read), who referred to it as one of the best short story collections read in ages, and was not let down in the least.

Kelly Knapp says

This collection of short stories was a challenge. They have a paucity of wording that borders on poetry and were equally as imbiguous in many cases. While words were few, they were powerful. Rarely have I come upon imbroglio in my readings, yet it was used perfectly in "The Moldau Case." They need to be taken in small chunks. having read the stories through once, I am on my way back through more slowly to better allow the meanings and symbolisms to gel.

My favorite story was "The Moldau Case," with "The Process" coming in a close second. At opposite ends of the spectrum, each is about how its society works. In the first story, there is an organization which is behind everything, making the decisions about how certain events will be perceived. In the second, a post apocalypes story, we watch as the community attempts to return to a more civilized way of life. However, when the two sides are each given advice about how to accomplish this transformation, one side ignores the advice, while the other side embraces it...even expounds upon it.

I suspect that these stories will be something I will reread periodically, perhaps, like poetry, finding new or additional meanings within.

Donald Armfield says

Windeye a collection of short stories by Bram Stoker finalist for an Edgar award and many other awards Mr. Brian Evenson. In my opinion in the top five for horror and dark fiction. I read quite a few of his previous works and haven't been let down. Below are my favorites, but every page will have you wanting more.

Windeye: A game played with her, his sister. Who is she, she disappeared into the "windeye" 5★

Dapplegrim: An inheritance becomes ones master. A steed of death. 4★

The Dismal Mirror: Haunting, sometimes what's missing should stay that way 5★

The Moldau Case: A letter to us readers. On the verge of death of a missing person. 5★

The Tunnel: Evenson makes you feel like you are in "the tunnel" with the three characters. Gripping 5★

The Grottor: A monster that drags it's skin through the caves. A little boy becomes his follower but not by choice. 4★

Tad says

Windeye is a collection of short horror stories by Brian Evenson. Most of the stories are quite short, 10 pages or less, but no less powerful for their brevity. In many ways, I think it takes more skill to write a complete, self-contained and satisfying story in so few words. Brian Evenson has this skill in abundance.

These are not ghost or vampire or zombie stories. Nor are they even bump-in-the night stories. These are stories that worm their way into your subconscious and fill you with a sense of dread and disquiet. They contain ideas that take root and become more horrifying the longer you contemplate them. Evenson skillfully makes use of the natural fear that exists in the unknown, both external and internal. What you can't see or understand is much more frightening than what you can.

I enjoyed some of the stories more than others, as might be expected in any short story collection. All were very well written and often produced strong reactions. Think a blend of Edgar Allen Poe and The Twilight Zone. I didn't consume the stories all in one sitting. Each story almost demanded a pause for reflection upon completion. The titular Windeye, as well as the story of a woman falling out of time were among my favorites. People trapped in unfamiliar places or situations, identity confusion, loss of control, and loss of a sense of self are all themes that occur in these stories. They are frightening as well as thought-provoking.

Windeye is a collection for anyone who enjoys horror stories, as well as anyone who appreciates a well-written short story of any genre. I was fortunate to receive an advance copy of this book.

Kyle Muntz says

Maybe the best thing I've read from Evenson, or pretty close. This is an incredibly broad ranging collection, though held together by an emphasis on endless journeys, unhealing ruptures in the body, unsolvable mystery, and a sense that (whether they're fantastical, contemporary, or somewhere inbetween) the stories take place in a kind of impassable void. There's less excruciating violence here than Evenson is known for, but always in a way that lets the broadness of the subject matter shine through; and, in particular, "Windeye," "The Second Boy," and the "Dismal Mirror" are three of the best short stories I've read. I'm going to be reading *Dark Property* soon, and pumped to see a longer project after this fantastic collection.

Brian says

This is it, the one with which to begin, the entry point for Evenson initiates unwilling to commit a novel-sized space in their reading world but willing to invest in a small dip. Evenson might be the literary lovechild of Lovecraft and Poe and yet I believe at times his works outshine even those masters. He writes with such an unfortunate intimacy to pain and loss the reader can feel the push of those specters on the author's wrist as he scratches away the words that become these haunting stories.

If you won't read more than a couple of stories, start with the title story, the first in the bunch, and then flip to the end to read "Grottor" and "Anskan House". If you find that you've enjoyed those, re-read "Windeye" and then shuffle the pages back a few to read Evenson's book dedication and get the sweet heebie jeebies as I did.

Michele says

Immediately upon finishing this, I added three or four more of this author's books to my to-read list. That should tell you something.

A collection of did-that-happen-or-didn't-it? and what-just-happened? stories, the tales in this book range from the odd and eerie to the downright horrifying. The author's command of language and range of styles are remarkable, from fairy tale to classic monster/demon to magical realism to the completely surreal, and there's a nice sprinkling of unreliable narrators which are always fun.

In the title story we're not sure whether or not the narrator had a sister, and in a later one a man may or may not have a brother; there's a classically sinister monster tale and a very peculiar piece about what I thought was a spacesuit, but on googling it found out it's actually an old diving suit ("The Sladen Suit", whose nickname apparently was "Clammy Death"!!). There's a fairy tale about a young man whose inheritance of a fabulous horse turns out to be not quite what he expects, and a short-short about bees. All are very different in tone, style, setting, and narrative voice, but all are equally high quality. I highly recommend it.

Richard Derus says

UPDATE: this title was a finalist for a 2012 Shirley Jackson Award for Best Single Author Collection

Rating: 4.25* of five

The Publisher Says: A woman falling out of sync with the world; a king's servant hypnotized by his murderous horse; a transplanted ear with a mind of its own--the characters in these stories live as interlopers in a world shaped by mysterious disappearances and unfathomable discrepancies between the real and imagined.

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Fugue State was named one of Time Out New York's Best Books of 2009. The recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship and three O. Henry Prizes, including one for the title story in "Windeye," Evenson lives in Providence, Rhode Island, where he directs Brown University's Literary Arts Department.

My Review: Since there are 25 stories in this book's 188pp, I will not be utilizing the Bryce Method (named for the illustrious blogger/reviewer/Goodreader Bryce, of revered memory for his excellent and frequent reviews before the twins were born) as the reviews of each story would be as long as the stories themselves are. For such is the nature of Evenson's writing. It's a challenge to make his storytelling anything other than real-time without spoiling or simply regurgitating his words.

It's not that his writing is Lovecraftian in its ornament, or Kingly in its wallop. His eerie and atmospheric stories are concise, and have their own unadorned grandeur. If his prose was architecture, I'd call it Art Deco with Fascist Monumental leanings.

So here's a species of compromise on Bryce Method reviewing...stories grouped by stars!

5 of 5

"Windeye"

"Discrepancy"

"The Process"

4 of 5

"The Second Boy"

"Angel of Death"

"The Dismal Mirror"

"Legion"

"Hurlock's Law"

“The Tunnel”
“South of the Beast” (maybe this gets 4.5....)
“The Absent Eye”
“Tapadera”
“They”
“The Oxygen Protocol”
“The Drownable Species”

All of the others are three stars...good, solid stories, but not for whatever reason outstanding compared to their peers in this collection.

I'm not sure I'd call any of them “horror” stories. I'd call them all, one and all, atmospheric evocations of unsettling and unsettled mood, of disturbed and disturbing malfunctions of perception. I'd call them all quietly unnervingly accurate night-scopes on the rifles your inner demons bring to bear at the back of your neck on windy, rainy nights when the power goes out and the flashlight batteries are dead.

If that kind of reading has no appeal, horseman, pass on.

One bleat of dissatisfaction: This book has the UGLIEST cover...a dark, blood-mixed-with-poo colored block set off by a ragged edge of trailing bloody red on a white background. Y.U.C.K. Drop-out type for the advert on the back reinforces the low-budget look, as does the Preparation-H-hued type they set the title in. In a store, I'd pass it up with a wrinkled nose and a scoff. This reaction is not to put y'all off! The stories make up for the dismal disappointment of the cover. Really, honestly, they do.
