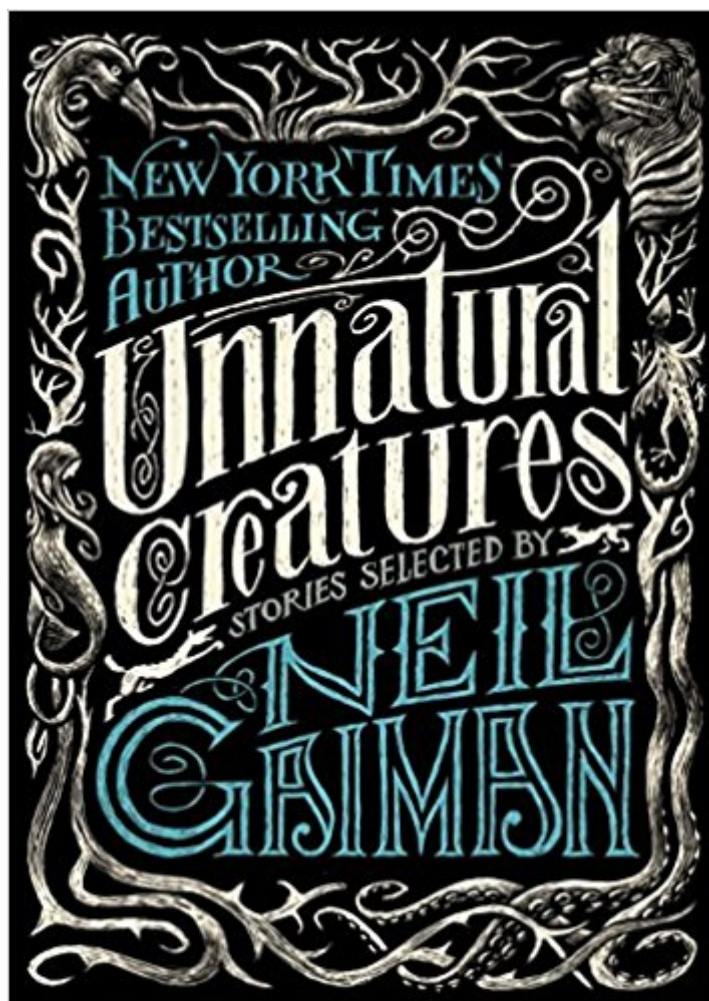


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Unnatural Creatures: Stories Selected By Neil Gaiman



Synopsis

Unnatural Creatures is a collection of short stories about the fantastical things that exist only in our minds—collected and introduced by beloved New York Times bestselling author Neil Gaiman. The sixteen stories gathered by Gaiman, winner of the Hugo and Nebula Awards, range from the whimsical to the terrifying. The magical creatures range from werewolves to sunbirds to beings never before classified. E. Nesbit, Diana Wynne Jones, Gahan Wilson, and other literary luminaries contribute to the anthology. Sales of Unnatural Creatures benefit 826DC, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting students in their creative and expository writing, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up—The 16 short stories in this anthology contain accounts of delightfully fantastical creatures, ranging from the familiar (werewolves, mermaids, griffins, and unicorns) to the chillingly mysterious (an ever-expanding, flesh-eating blob; a strange bird that spurs unpredictable changes to its surroundings; and even Death herself). Classic science fiction and fantasy authors Anthony Boucher, Frank R. Stockton, Peter S. Beagle, E. Nesbit, and Diana Wynne Jones are represented, as are contemporary authors such as Nnedi Okorafor, E. Lily Yu, and Gaiman himself. From the first page, Gaiman appeals to a sense of imagination, prefacing each story with a brief personal commentary, causing readers to stop and ponder questions they never knew they had. Who would a griffin eat? What does a phoenix taste like? What happens when you question an invisible dragon? Why are there always too many coat hangers? All of these questions, and more, are

answered here. Some of the stories are silly, some heartbreaking, and some profound, but all are guaranteed to make readers' hair stand on end.-Liz Overberg, Darlington Middle School, Rome, GA (c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From darkly menacing to bizarrely surreal, these 16 fantasy stories featuring mythical and imaginary creatures combine work from such luminaries as Saki, E. Nesbit, and Anthony Boucher, as well as more contemporary writers. Larry Niven's *The Flight of the Horse* is on the sillier side of the spectrum: a time traveler is sent to the past to retrieve a horse, which he has never seen except in picture books, and he mistakenly returns with a unicorn instead. In Nalo Hopkinson's *A Smile on the Face*, a self-conscious girl is bullied for her size and pressured into an unwanted sexual encounter, but she finds inner strength and an inner fire-breathing monster thanks to an accidentally swallowed cherry pit from the hamadryad in her front yard. Gaiman's contribution, *Sunbird*, recounts the adventures of the Epicurean Club members, who, grown bored after tasting every available thing on the planet, enjoy the best (and last) meal of their lives. In true Gaiman fashion, these stories are macabre, subversive, and just a little bit sinister. His fans will eat this up ravenously. The book will benefit nonprofit 826DC, which fosters student writing skills. **HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY:** Gaiman's name should draw a wide readership. Grades 8-12. --Sarah Hunter --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Harper and editor Neil Gaiman have a novel strategy for marketing an anthology: omitting the authors' names from the table of contents. For those who don't find listing the titles AND authors in the table of contents to be too louche, here's the information the editor and publisher have declined to include. (The original publication dates are a bonus I decided to throw in.) "Inkspot" by Gahan Wilson (1972) "The Cartographer Wasps and the Anarchist Bees" by E. Lily Yu (2011) "The Griffin and the Minor Canon" by Frank R. Stockton (1885) "Ozioma the Wicked" by Nnedi Okorafor (original to this anthology, 2013) "Sunbird" by Neil Gaiman (2006) "The Sage of Theare" by Diana Wynne Jones (1982) "Gabriel-Ernest" by Saki (1909) "The Cockatoucan; or, Great-Aunt Willoughby" by E. Nesbit (1900) "Moveable Beast" by Maria Dhavana Headley (original to this anthology) "The Flight of the Horse" by Larry Niven (1969) "Prismatica" by Samuel R. Delany (1977) "The Manticore, the Mermaid, and Me" by Megan Kurashige (original to this anthology) "The Compleat Werewolf" by Anthony Boucher (1942) "The Smile on the Face" by Nalo Hopkinson (2004) "Or All the Seas with Oysters" by Avram Davidson (1958) "Come Lady Death" by Peter S. Beagle (1963)

I bought this for my grandson, reading it myself. Lots of great stories. Good for a kid 10 and up

This is an entertaining collection of short and not so short stories. I'll admit that a few were a bit silly or too long but some are so outrageously original and fun to read that they make up for the others.

Good collections of stories in Gaiman's unique writing style. An enjoyable read.

What a fun compendium of fantasy short stories, selected by one of the masters of the genre, Neil Gaiman himself (who also submits a great little tale). What sets this selection apart from so many others is what it's not: It's NOT dark, gritty, "urban" nor a "paranormal romance". Not that there's anything wrong with those, but it's refreshing to read something not aimed at kids which gets outside those current "hot trends". Now, I said "not aimed at kids" but certainly Middle-schoolers and even advanced grade school readers will enjoy this collection, and a parent could supply this without a qualm to such. You have undoubtedly read a couple before, and that's fine as there are many other gems here which have not seen the light of day since first published (I love the Edith Nesbit selection!), others which are recent, and two that are new here. Now, I did say the tales weren't dark & gritty. But come-on, Neil selected them, so yes, they are sometimes more than a little macabre & weird. And what's cool is that your purchase will help nonprofit 826DC, which fosters student writing skills. Fell good by buying, feel better while reading!

I loved this book. I have been on a short story anthologies kick lately and Mr Gaiman did a great job with this one!

I bought the paperback version of this book a few months back and debated back and forth on whether I should break my "no physical books in college rule" (which has the obvious exception of textbooks). Luckily, I found the kindle version. This book is wonderful. Thanks to it being a collection of short stories it make a great bedtime read (for most ages if you are not easily freaked out) because it's easier to stop at the end of a story than at the end of a chapter in a novel. I would recommend this book to everyone who is not put off by the title.

Some of the stories go nowhere but some are pretty good. It's better than the usual short-story compendium, because (frankly) the selected authors are better. The book is definitely worth the

money if this sort of short story is your thing (it's mine).

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