



## **Broken Meats: A Harry Stubbs Adventure**

*David Hambling*

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## **Broken Meats: A Harry Stubbs Adventure** David Hambling

Weird things lurk in the dark streets of London in 1925.

After a bizarre shooting incident, Harry Stubbs, former heavyweight boxer and sometime debt collector, is coerced into helping a visitor from Shanghai. Mr Yang, an agent of the feared Si Fan Society with unusual powers, is seeking information about a dead man.

Roslyn D'Onston was a journalist and black magician -- and a leading suspect in the Jack the Ripper killings. D'Onston has been dead for thirteen years. But exactly how dead is he now?

When Yang joins a cell of renegade Theosophists for a séance, things start to go terribly wrong and Harry finds himself caught in a battle between occult powers, with strange enemies and stranger friends. It will take all his deductive skills – and talent for throwing a killer punch – to survive against the all-too-real arts of necromancy...

## **Broken Meats: A Harry Stubbs Adventure Details**

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Author : David Hambling

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## **From Reader Review Broken Meats: A Harry Stubbs Adventure for online ebook**

### **NarniaGirl says**

I love Harry Stubbs. I enjoyed The Elder Ice where we first met him, and was delighted I was sent a copy of Broken Meats by David Hambling - thank you! Neither book is long, this one is only 143 pages but it proves you don't have to have a massive tome to convey a great atmosphere and a tight story. I love the detail that Hambling uses for characterisation -the description of Mr Yang, his clothes, his manner - you could see him.

I hope there are more Harry Stubbs stories!

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### **Brad says**

Follow the link to listen to my podcast review:

The Daily PawnCast reviews: "Broken Meats: A Harry Stubbs Adventure"

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### **pookie says**

Another Harry Stubbs short story that slides in and around Lovecraft's Mythos in an early Noir style and pugnacious persistance. Stubbs definitely deserves more stories.

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### **Matthew says**

It would be very difficult for me not to enjoy this novella as it deftly works in material from both Sax Rohmer and H.P. Lovecraft. I very much like the setting Norwood setting that Hambling has established; it is a nice change from thinly populated New England towns. Harry Stubbs is a well drawn character, though he sometimes seems a bit too literate for a former boxer. (This might literacy might have been laid out in Hambling's The Elder Ice, which seems to be where Stubbs was first introduced.)

Well worth the read and this reader will be going back to The Elder Ice to catch Stubbs' first adventure and then will eagerly await the next Harry Stubbs Adventure.

Note: For those reading on the Kindle, this e-book is exceptionally well formatted; only one typo I caught and that was an "an" that was meant to be an "at. If only all e-books were this well formatted.

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## **Timy says**

Full review: <https://wordpress.com/post/starlitboo...>

First of all, thanks to Mr Hambling for providing me a copy in exchange of a honest review.

The book picks up events right after it was left off in *The Elder Ice*: Harry needs a job, and Arthur happens to have one for him. Mr Yang arrives to London from Shanghai in search of a mysterious man Roslyn D'Onston – journalist, occultist, traveller, possible suspect of Jack the Ripper murders and a person who really lived and walked on the streets of London. Harry, having no other choice, tags along as Yang's guide and finds himself neck deep in occultism and a rather strange case. Since this is a pretty short book I can't go any further into the plot without spoilers so let's just say things get interesting pretty quickly.

I had issues with *The Elder Ice*, which I wrote up to my current state at the time. This time I had no such issues and could lose myself pretty easily in 1925's London. Harry Stubbs is not your average MC with detective skills, or any special skills really, except some boxing knowledge which helps him to stay alive. Sometimes barely. But that's what makes him feel like a real person, his averageness, his natural curiosity, his sharp wit he is not entirely conscious about and his ability to make people open up to him. It's easy to identify with him and root for him.

Mr Yang and his cultural background was a nice addition which made this book more vivid. Probably your only complain will be that there weren't more introduction to Chinese customs and the superstitions Yang performed while walking around town with Harry in tow. However, the cutest scene ever belongs to a little girl, Chun Hua who tries to teach Harry how to use chopsticks. If that doesn't melt your heart, then you don't have one!

*Broken Meats* is a short, tightly written book. David Hambling really has the talent for bringing to life a vivid, action packed story with the right amount of descriptions for you to understand what's going on and don't feel like anything's missing. And all this under 200 pages! He explains Theosophy and Palingenesis in a way that even those who never heard about these things – like yours truly – can easily understand. And believe me, if I understood, you will too. I always had a difficulty to understand philosophical stuff. Just look at my grades regarding those topics in my university years.

Anyway, *Broken Meats* combines fiction and history in a way that they complement each other and makes it seem like the most natural thing in the world. But then, Mr Yang already told us: "What you call fact and fiction are intertwined and cannot be separated. They support each other. They are 'two sides of the same coin', as you say in English". You'd think occultism, Chinese culture and their 'secret' societies and Jack the Ripper makes a unusual mix. They do. And still, it works and that's what makes *Broken Meats* such an enjoyable read. Mr Hambling is not afraid to pull all these elements together and create something strange and unexpected. By the end you'll wish it was longer and that you could read a stand alone novel based on Roslyn D'Onston with Hamblings' unusual twist on his story. If you happen to have a few hours to kill, I would strongly recommend to check out the Harry Stubbs adventures!

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## **Filip says**

I returned to the Harry Stubbs adventures with his second outing, *Broken Meats*, and here is what I have to

say.

David Hambling's attempts to bring the world of Lovecraft to a turn-of-the-20th-century London have ensnared my imagination. I enjoyed *Elder Ice* well enough, though I felt its elements of Lovecraftian horror and suspense were slightly understated. In stark contrast, *Broken Meats* did quite a bit better with these elements, relying less on references and reinforcing the strange and aberrant elements by introducing a secret society or two, an insane and charismatic dead sorcerer, and an absolutely fascinating support character in the face of Yang, a member of the Chinese underworld, come to London for a reason no one can figure out.

Yang needs a guide, and that's where our very own Harry Stubbs comes in. Since the events of the *Elder Ice*, Harry has been unlucky in finding the respectable work he wishes for himself – a man with a boxer's physique like his has a certain set of preconceptions working against him. But Stubbs is an example as to how appearance-based preconceptions really don't work; as we share his headspace, Harry's intellect shines through, and his voice is both clever and jocular depending on the situation. His loyalty is also inspiring, and the rapport built between him and Yang makes for a very satisfying friendship I didn't expect.

Speaking of defying expectations, *Broken Meats* has a lot of plot twists! The story thrilled and surprised me especially towards its end; I give myself points for suspecting a character's motivations for giving Harry some curious information that didn't entirely click with me early on during a scene in a pub...but I didn't quite see all of it and when Hambling revealed it to me, I was impressed.

The pacing is excellent, exactly as it needs to be to keep a perfect balance between light-hearted scenes and the darker, more sinister events eating away at Harry's well-constructed and rational world. An edge of chaos is felt and carefully kept at bay for most of the book until Stubbs is placed in situations that directly wrestle control away from him, and that's when the heartbeat of the Lovecraftian essence of these stories can be felt the strongest.

When reviewing the *Elder Ice*, I mentioned that a few lines of the dialogue pulled me out of the world; happy to say, that's no longer the case. Either Hambling has improved, or I've become less of a nit-picker! Though seeing as how very invested I was in *Broken Meats*, I do believe the prose, the plot, the pacing, and the character dynamics are much improved! This being said, I am a firm believer in continual improvement, and I'm looking forward to reading the remaining two Harry Stubbs Adventures to see if that is indeed the case here. Hambling's next title, *Alien Stars* is quite a bit larger than these past two novellas, standing at 231 pages; as reference, *Broken Meats* was 144, and *The Elder Ice* was a bare 88. I do believe *Alien Stars* is easily a novel at this length!

At any rate, *Broken Meats* gets a 4.5/5 from me, with a bump to Five Stars on Goodreads.

You'll enjoy this if:

- You're interested in turn-of-the-century London;
  - You like boxing, as Harry thinks in boxing terms often enough, you'll find plenty to bite into, here;
  - You like characters who're not caricatures over the way they look;
  - You like the Cthulhu mythos, but better;
  - Secret, esoteric societies do anything for you;
  - And More, Prob'ly!
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### **Kris Lugosi says**

When the shooting of a man who has already been proven deceased is circulated outside the tavern where it happens, a chain of events is set into play for our favorite heavyweight boxer turned debt collector, Harry Stubbs, to use his skills to make sense of the phenomenons that suddenly surround him. Between the mysterious Mr. Yang whom Harry takes on the job of playing hostess/chauffeur and the sorcery involving Roslyn D'Onston there is not a dull moment for Harry.

Once again Mr. Hambling has delivered quite the adventure involving aspects of the occult, and the same period vibe that sets the atmosphere tone to perfection. Hambling's character development with Mr. Yang and other new players was spectacular and engaging. I loved every character right off the bat from the moment of their first dialogue. There is A LOT going on in this particular Harry Stubbs adventure, so much so that I will admit having to read it twice in order to grasp the situations and events at hand. This is not a bad thing, the book is a quick read with a fast pace that keeps the reader on their toes.

This is a great pocket book to carry around and read over and over....at least until the next Harry Stubbs adventure!

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### **Percy says**

This book was a thrill. Better, perhaps, than *The Elder Ice*, which preceded it. I really hope that there are more Harry Stubbs books on the horizon. A lot of them. The ending of this book seems to hint that it will be so. I burned through this tale quickly and am hungry for more!

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### **Ken says**

David Hambling brings back former boxer Harry Stubbs in a follow-up to his Lovecraftian *The Elder Ice*.

Harry is unemployed and willing to take on just about anything to make the ends meet. When asked to show around a mysterious visitor from China, Harry tackles the task and finds himself in the middle of a centuries old quarrel between rival Chinese clans....and possibly something millennia older.

In "Broken Meats", Hambling calls upon spiritualism and the occult elite of the late 19th and early 20th century to deliver a quickly-read and engaging tale.

4 STARS

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### **Philip Hemplow says**

I was looking forward to reacquainting myself with Harry Stubbs, and had high hopes for this, his second outing. I'm very pleased to be able to say that *Broken Meats* has exceeded my expectations, and that fans of *The Elder Ice* are going to be very, very happy with its sequel.

This time out, the encroaching menace does not originate in the South Polar seas, but in China. Fans of Sax Rohmer will find plenty to enjoy here, but David Hambling deserves a lot of credit for the way he exploits the wonderfully-evocative popular mythology and received wisdom of the time, while also quietly subverting stereotypes of the 'Yellow Peril' / 'bony-fingered menace from the East'-type. The book manages this without being 'preachy' -- just equitable and fair-minded -- in large part due to the character of the narrator, Harry Stubbs.

Stubbsy is developing into a real treasure: an enormously likeable narrator, with just the right amounts of insight, fallibility, and self-deprecation. In a subgenre that is sometimes rather overstocked with protagonists who are either dusty academics or relentless nihilists, he is a breath of fresh air. Some of the supporting cast are familiar characters from the first book, and some are brand new. All are skilfully and believably written, but the Chinese visitor, Yang, (the name is no coincidence) is particularly vividly drawn, and it is clear that an awful lot of effort has gone into his portrayal.

The writing flows very well, and maintains an enjoyable pace and sense of purpose, with a constant drip-feed of plot disclosure and pleasing incidental detail. Stylistically, this is the kind of thing I like to read: expressive without being self-indulgent, creative, and with words chosen for their rhythm as well as their meaning. The story has depths that you can swim down to if you so choose, but the writer never forces your head under the water. In terms of plot, too, there is a willingness to trust the reader, and DH does not succumb to the temptation to explain every last detail, leaving a satisfying amount of mystery here and there.

The plot twists and turns throughout, leavened by numerous action scenes. However, in the hands of Stubbs I didn't feel the need to try to second-guess the author or predict what was coming next. Like 'The Elder Ice', this is a story that simply draws you along like a first-class passenger. In fact, I think it would work sensationaly well as an audiobook -- it has that fireside quality to it.

As you can probably tell, I liked this a great deal. I read the Kindle version, but I believe a paperback may be in the offing at some point, and I will be picking that up too when the time comes. (Incidentally, the page count that Amazon is showing is way, way off - it actually clocks in at around 224 pages, according to Calibre.) If you are in the mood for a savoury slice of period Mythos fiction, you owe it to yourself to pick this one up. In fact, a background in the Mythos is really not necessary to enjoy this story -- it just adds the occasional little frisson of recognition to the experience. I recommend it, without hesitation.

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### **Thomas says**

Book 2 finds Harry trying to make ends meet, London is having an employment problem. Harry thinks about debasing himself by boxing for money, and then a special job pops up. Escort a Chinese gentlemen around town, what could go wrong? A whole lot. Harry gets dragged down the supernatural rabbit hole, again. Good thing his fists are tough and his spirit grounded. Good series, I look forward to book 3. Check it out.

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### **C.T. Phipps says**

The HARRY STUBBS series is probably the best H.P. Lovecraft fiction which is currently on the market

today with the possible exception of Andrew Doran by Matthew Davenport or my own Cthulhu Armageddon (I tell it like it is). This is because it dials down the squid and the splatterpunk horror elements so many authors dial up to return to the occult mystery element that Lovecraft's best works were famous for.

Basically, the appeal of Harry Stubbs is he's actually fairly outside of the occult weirdness of your typical Lovecraft protagonist. He often encounters cultists, the weird, and the supernatural but rarely gets face-first with the horrors of Yog-Sothoth or the Elder Things. The first book, Elder Ice, had him mostly deal with the attempt to get a Antarctic expedition going versus actually reaching the Mountains of Madness. Yet, this actually makes it more interesting because you never know when the other shoe will drop.

In this book, it's vaguely related to THE STRANGE CASE OF CHARLES DEXTER WARD, the Theosophy movement, seances, and Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu (except not really on that last part). Harry Stubbs is hard up for cash and ends up hiring himself out as a tour guide to a mysterious Chinese visitor who gets him involved with a man who claims to be able to raise the dead. This is after, conveniently, a local pimp claims to have murdered an already dead man in Harry Stubbs's presence.

The story is good from start to finish and feels like an exceptionally well-researched Chaosium module for the old Call of Cthulhu gameline from the eighties. I prefer the audiobook version of this story to the text version but both are exceptional.

9/10

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### **Andy Gillaspy says**

After the excellent Harry Stubbs Novella 'The Elder Ice' I was chomping at the bit to get at the sequel Broken Meats. It was with a little bit of trepidation that I started reading the sequel worried that it wouldn't be as good and I'd built it into some impossible to achieve steam-punk giant. Thankfully the same sense of adventure and mystery courses through the story. The flavour of 1920's Cthulhu-esque London abounds and the story draws you on page by page through well written characterization of not Just Harry Stubbs but a new protagonist Mr Yang. The play of personalities allows for a rounded three dimensional personality to the players in the story which has you routing for them against the dark evil pacing across South East London's Streets. This reminds me a great deal of Steven Kings style were he builds up on one hand a normalcy and human interactions and then throws jarring sanity twisting diabolism to great effect.

For anyone who likes Cthulhu or indeed just a well written ripping yarn this is a joy to read; in fact the only bit I didn't like about this was reaching the final page and finding I had no more to read.

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### **Mercedes Rochelle says**

In Broken Meats we follow Harry Stubbs into an exotic world of séances, Asian syndicates, and strange eastern ideologies about life after death. Essentially unemployed after the last adventure, Harry takes on an assignment to act as a guide to (or rather, spy on) a wealthy Chinese visitor who is undoubtedly up to no good. Mr. Yang takes him on a merry chase through London, sometimes bringing Harry with him into the house and sometimes leaving him in the car. Although they are total opposites in character, Harry and Yang develop a grudging admiration for each other that helps them through some tight—and potentially

lethal—circumstances. Once again reminiscent of H.P. Lovecraft (in this case Charles Dexter Ward), Harry encounters implausible and inexplicable creatures that walk the earth, reminding us that there are many things known and unknown in the universe. Because Harry is big, strong, and unafraid, he is willing to take on challenges that we, as readers, wouldn't touch with a proverbial ten foot pole. The action is non-stop and Harry Stubbs is addictive. I really enjoyed the book. The author has kindly given me a free copy for my unbiased review.

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### **Rob Cooke says**

"A fantastic listen all the way through."

This book was given to me free at my request and I provided this voluntary review.

Another fantastic Harry Stubbs adventure.

The story is a follow on from the first book but could just as easily be read/listen as a standalone story.

It grips you from the start and continues throughout with turns and intrigue aplenty.

Once again it is well researched and in keeping with the time period and customs.

Narrator has changed from the first book, a smoother voice this time with less of a cockney accent and voiced a little raspier.

Character voices are well done and distinct throughout the book.

I am looking forward to the next instalment of Harry Stubbs (this is a guilty pleasure now).

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