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James Howe , Deborah Howe , Alan Daniel (Illustrator)

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BEWARE THE HARE!

Is he or isn't he a vampire?

Before it's too late, Harold the dog and Chester the cat must find out the truth about the newest pet in the Monroe household -- a suspicious-looking bunny with unusual habits... and fangs!

Bunnacula Details

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From Reader Review Bunnacula for online ebook

Michelle Isenhoff says

I first met Chester and Harold as a kid and fell in love with them. If you haven't encountered these two yet, let me introduce you. Chester is a highly educated cat with a vivid imagination. One of his delights is to listen to his owner, a college English professor, practice class lectures. He's widely read, and especially favors Edgar Allen Poe. Harold isn't quite as intellectual as Chester, but he does have a good deal more common sense. He's also the one who wrote and delivered the first manuscript of this story. Mr. Howe confesses to being only the publisher.

In this first installment of Chester and Harold's adventures, a baby bunny comes to live with the Monroe family. But he's found at a Dracula movie, he has strange markings and oddly pointed teeth, and the note found in his basket is an obscure dialect of the Carpathian mountain region (fortunately, Harold is familiar with the language due to his varied ancestry), which is to say, Transylvania. When a variety of vegetables show up with tiny teeth marks and all juice and color drained from them, Chester puts two and two together and turns to his copy of *The Mark of the Vampire*. The lengths he goes to to protect his family from this imagined threat nearly get him tossed out of the house and left my boys and I howling with laughter!

Bunnacula is a short read, coming in at only 98 pages, but they're full of fun and wit. I'd estimate a third-grade independent reading level and an easy first grade listening level. The cadence, the dialogue, and the outrageous antics of our two heroes make this a superb read aloud. No matter your age, I highly encourage you to pick this one up!!

James Howe has written several related stories. They haven't received the same acclaim as Bunnacula, but I own *Howliday Inn*, and I love it almost as much. (Watch for my review soon.) I have not read the others.

Aarika says

Harold the dog and Chester the cat enjoy intelligent conversation, warm milk, and the occasional belly rub at the hands of their human family, the Monroe's.

Their quiet lives are turned inside out when the Monroe family brings home a small, white bunny with red eyes and a hand written note in an unknown language tied about his neck. The family names him Bunnacula. Suspensions rise when vegetables begin to turn up white and drained of juice.

Chester, with the help of Harold, derives a plan to uncover the truth about their new house mate.

When Chester's plans go awry and Harold befriends Bunnacula, how far will Chester go to reveal the supposed mortal danger he believes they are all in?

Howe has captured the essence of man's best friend in Harold, and the conniving, self-importance of a cat in Chester. Their voices are fun and genuine and my daughter is ready to read the entire series.

Bunnacula is a children's story that spans generation's. Howe's storytelling is the perfect addition to any emerging reader's TBR list.

J.G. Keely says

I had a bizarre obsession with this book as a diminutive child. There is a vague remembrance of myself dancing menacingly in an airport while my father's friend improvised (at my behest) a song on the topic on his guitar. It is unfortunate that the book was not written by a darker and stranger writer, for my love of the concept didn't really translate to the simple silliness of the books themselves.

Of course, I didn't want something evil and frightening, but a bit of Carroll's disturbance would not have gone amiss.

Mitticus says

Charming and Funny.

The Monroes' kids didn't know what special rabbit they brought home.

Necesitaba con urgencia algo livianito con todas las tragedias pasando en The Fifth Season y esto fue justo lo que necesitaba. A pesar del titulo, no crean un intento de horror para niños (segun dice, esta pensado para 8 años para arriba ;P), sino que es más bien jocoso y escrito con mucho ingenio.

Cualquier cosa que me haga reir, tiene mucho valor para mí.

"He's a vampire!" Chester snarled. "Today, vegetables. Tomorrow . . . the world!"

Oh, and beware of paranoid cats!

Además tiene el plus de ser recomendado por Brandon Sanderson.
Reto Posugar 2017. #41: Recomendado por un autor que te encanta.

Lisa says

I read this to my two youngest daughters and we thought it was hilarious. There were many laugh-out-loud moments for all of us. We look forward to continuing with the adventures of Harold the dog, Chester the cat, and Bunnacula the vampire rabbit.

Edward Lorn says

A blast from my past that is still epic to this day. One of my first horror reads, too. *Bunnacula* and *My Teacher is an Alien* are why I started writing stories when I was younger. I read those two books and thought, "Hey, I can do this!" The rest is history.

In summation: Find it. Read it. Pass it down through the generations.

Final Judgment: Highly recommended for all ages.

Kayla Edwards says

Just read this novel with my elementary book club. The kids found the idea of a vampire bunny hysterical. This book's popularity has been making a comeback lately with all of the vampire hype in recent years. And I must say, my favorite part of the entire novel may be the Editor's Note at the beginning.

Melika Lux says

This long-time favorite was exactly what I needed to get myself out of a prolonged reading slump. I must have read this book about 20 times over the years, but it still brings a smile to my face...and causes me to break into random bouts of laughter, thanks in large part to Chester, the cat. My favorite part: when Chester tries to "steak" Bunnacula. That's not a typo! ;D You don't have to be a kid to enjoy this book, either. It's a pint-sized comic masterpiece with tons of heart. Give it a shot, guys. You won't regret it!

karen says

while i read this, check out a vampire list i made over here - <http://www.rifflebooks.com/list/21865...>

OCTOBER

as part of my personal reading challenges for 2017, once a month i will be revisiting a favorite book from when i was a little bitty karen and seeing if it holds up to my fond memories and determining if i can still enjoy it as an old and crotchety karen.

fingers crossed.

Corinne Edwards says

I remember hearing about this little "vampire" bunny when I was a kid, but the story never interested me. Shame on me, because I read it outloud to my two little boys this past week and had a ball. Our narrator is the loyal, if not slightly blustering, dog Harold. When their family discovers a WHITE tomato, Harold's scheming cat-friend Chester is convinced that the family's new bunny is the culprit. A juice sucking BUNNY? That is just funny, in fact, my boys were in hysterics more than once, thanks to Chester's hair-brained plans to rescue the family from their fang-toothed pet.

I can see why this one is a classic, my boys were always begging for more. I think we'll search out more books in this charming and clever series.

Kelli says

Bunnacula, written by Harold the dog and starring Chester the cat, was well-received by my kids on a recent trip north. It was short, silly, and featured hi jinks of the best kind. Chester is one high brow cat! Extremely well-read and quite impressed with himself, he makes frequent literary references and he sees no reason to dumb down his language for Harold and as a parent, I loved that. I chuckled at his barbs and sarcastic comments, as well as his paranoid ideas about the bunny. Chester stole the show but Bunnacula is a better title. Just don't tell Chester that...I suspect he'd be highly offended.

Alex says

Hear me out: there is no Bunnacula. This is about the cat.

His name is Chester. He has schemes and a vivid imagination, as cats do. He's steeped in Gothic literature. Here's my Gothic Drinking Game if you need a refresher, and notice how Bunnacula will get you drunk:

- Nasty weather
- Fainting (in our first hint that Bunnacula may not be the villain, he is usually the fainter)
- Creepy noises
- Scary eyes
- And the most important thing: a relative turns out to be the surprise villain.

Here's what we know: the Monroes have a new bunny, and vegetables are turning white. The bunny has funny markings, which leads the family to name him Bunnacula. On this evidence Chester declares the bunny a vampire. This is basically the plot of Northanger Abbey.

This would be funny if Chester's reaction wasn't so unbelievably cruel: he immediately starts stealing all the food from the bunny's cage, to keep the bunny from murdering lettuce. Bunnacula is young. Chester is starving a baby bunny to death because he says it's a vampire.

One of the original illustrations, which are great, basically lays out the whole plot

The book is narrated by the family dog, who plays himself off as stupid but also insists he recognizes and understands Romanian, so it's safe to call him unreliable. Anyway dogs are the least reliable of narrators, have you ever tried to let one explain what they're smelling?

The poor family finally realizes Bunnacula is on the brink of death and rushes him to the vet, who prescribes carrot juice, so the poor thing is saved in the nick of time. The rabbit has still never said a word; there's been no evidence whatsoever that he's a vampire. The only thing we have is pale vegetables. Recovered but with no one in the least concerned about what happened in the first place, he's forced to continue living with the monster who tried to kill him in the most cruel way.

Bunnacula subverts our expectations: we expect to discover that he is indeed a vampire, but in the end that's not the story at all. As in great Gothic novels like Uncle Silas and Lady Audley's Secret, the real villain was inside the house: it's Chester, the psychopathic cat. Jealous of the attention paid to a new pet, he frames him

as a monster and is barely stopped from murdering him. He's abetted by the dog, who hides a slavish complicity under his goofy doggishness. Horrifyingly, there are sequels to Bunnacula. Who knows what tortures they'll bring to this poor, defenseless bunny?

Drebbles says

Howard the Dog and Chester the Cat enjoy living with their humans - Harold especially likes Toby who enjoys feasts that he shares with Harold. So when the family brings home a bunny they name Bunnacula, it isn't surprising that Harold and Chester are a bit jealous of the attention the family focuses on Bunnacula. But Chester's jealousy soon turns into the suspicion that Bunnacula is a vampire. He sets out to prove it - no matter what the cost.

Although "Bunnacula" is aimed at readers ages 8 - 12, it is a delightful book for readers of all ages. It is written in the first person from Harold's point of view and it is a lot of fun reading what Harold thinks about the goings on as well as his constant focus on food. Also fun to read is Chester's ongoing battle to prove Bunnacula is a vampire and how his efforts baffle the family who think Chester is just being a cat. Harold and Chester remind me a lot of the Satchel and Bucky characters in the Get Fuzzy comic strip although Chester is not nearly as mean as Bucky. There is a wonderful sense of humor throughout the book and the vampire elements are never scary and played for fun. In fact, I laughed out loud at times especially when Chester tries to steak..er stake Bunnacula.

"Bunnacula" (the first of many books in the Bunnacula series) is a delightfully funny book for readers young and old.

Karlyflower *The Vampire Ninja, Luminescent Monster & Wendigo Nerd Goddess of Canada (according to The Hulk)* says

I had completely forgotten about reading this book as a child until a conversation with my best friend likening someone to a bunny with red eyes and fangs. Whereupon she said, wait, I'm pretty sure that's actually a book isn't it? She looked it up and yes, yes it was.

BUNNICULA is one of those children's books that I love! Literary references and large vocabulary words interwoven into an adorable little story. Although I had forgotten about this book, not hard to do when you book carnivore like I do, I now remember really enjoying it as a child.

It's written from Howard the dog's point of view which I always think is just so much fun. Full of lovely little references to Edgar Allan Poe and Robert Louis Stevenson, amongst others. Bunnacula is a bunny vampire who drains vegetables of their juices, could there be a better kids will be kids novel. Imagination is so important with children and this book just embodies that to me. It's not a life lessons book by any means, it's just for fun which I think is really great.

Gail says

Introduced this book to my 4th grade class. Started out with overhead transparencies of Bela Lugosi as Dracula, and discussed common - held beliefs about vampires. After having the students complete a Vampire Worksheet, we dove into chapter 1, pausing for exciting vocabulary words.

A fun, fun read. Great for those kids who have a dry sense of humor. They'll appreciate the jokes. The rest enjoy reading about pets that are smarter than (or, at least as smart as) their humans.

Melissa Storm says

It's only month #2 of the "books that made me love reading" challenge, and already, I'm noticing a pattern. Last month, I re-reviewed Harold and the Purple Crayon, a book that has had a profound influence on my life. I freely attribute my creativity to the inspiration I received from this happy little picture book, and now I realize that this month's book, Bunnacula, has had an equally large impact on my life and personality.

Bunnacula made me smart. Seriously, it did.

Yes, I'm raising serious nature vs. nurture questions here, but the authors Howe & Howe really deserve some credit. They didn't dumb down their vocabulary to appeal to children, no. They let the big words and the references to classic literary works fly. The authors didn't say, "Hey, wait a sec here. How are kids supposed to know about Dracula, or Treasure Island, or A Tale of Two Cities?" They said, "Hey, kids probably won't know about these great books, but maybe after reading Bunnacula, they'll search them out."

I really respect that about Bunnacula, and frankly, I don't even remember the huge words being a problem when I was reading it as a kid. Maybe these things are less of an issue than adults think they are, just saying.

Okay, so the title of the book clearly refers to our friend, Bunnacula, the vampire bunny wabbit. And the narrator is Harold, a mutt who loves to feast on chocolate cupcakes but never succumbs to their poison. Interesting...

Now, *who*, you ask, *who is the star of this tome?* Why, Chester, the hair-brained, intellectual pussy cat, of course!

I think I probably wanted to marry Chester when I was a little girl. That's okay to admit, because children often want to marry parents or cartoon characters. Chester is a perfectly acceptable crush, thank you. (I also crushed major on Disney's Aladdin, but that's a story for another day.)

The reasons why Chester is super dreamy abound. He's intelligent, well-read, persistent, intuitive, funny, and cuddly. If you didn't know I was talking about a fictional cat just now, you would probably be like, "Oh, sign me up for some of that!" Don't lie to yourself, admit it!

Sure, Chester isn't always right about everything. Who is? But it's fun to watch his misadventures unfold. Flights of fancy are fun, especially when you're tucked comfortably into your Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles sleeping bag with a flash light. Are you understanding who I was as a child now?

Bunnacula was a great read for boys and girls alike. I should know, because I detested girly gook. I collected

bugs and refused to play with dolls. Bunnacula wasn't a story about a pampered princess; it was a nitty gritty tale of vegetables in peril. I liked that.

Bunnacula was cute while still being terrifyingly ferocious. I'm sorry, Edward Cullen, but I'd take Bunnacula over you ANY DAY!

Rebecca McNutt says

Bunnacula is hilarious! I loved it during the 5th grade when I read it over the summer, and nearly everyone I know enjoys it for its witty humor and quirky characters.

Amy says

Hilarious and delightful read! I'm a sucker for books narrated by animals. With a Dracula theme and a snarky cat, how can you lose?!

Brandon Sanderson says

(This review is from 2004.)

Since it's Halloween, I thought I'd talk about something frightening: Bunnies. Vampire bunnies. Ninja vampire bunnies. Okay, so, maybe not that ninja part. But definitely vampire bunnies—one in particular.

So, my roommate (Mr. "I'm not in there!" from the other week) was recently given a collection of young adult books as a birthday present. Most of the stack didn't interest me, but I did notice one specific volume in the pile. I remember reading *Bunnacula* as a child, and it very well could have been my first genre fiction book ever. So, intrigued about how I would regard the experience as an adult, I sat down one evening to give the novel another read.

I came out of it with two impressions. First, that is one amazingly fun book. Second, that is one amazingly short book.

On the second point, it turns out that I'm older now—and I'm used to stories that take a little bit longer to tell. It's pretty amazing how few words they managed to pack into so many pages. (It's around a hundred, give or take, depending on your edition.) It's short. It has chapters, true, but they're. . .well, more like extended paragraphs. I was through the book before I knew what had happened.

Part of that, however, was due to sheer enjoyment. Often times, when I look back at things I enjoyed as a child, I find that I displayed an embarrassing lack of discerning taste. (*G.I. Joe*—or pretty much any cartoon I watched—makes a fine example.) *Bunnacula*, however, was a delightful read—both because of how fun it was, and because it proves that I at least had good taste in books when I was young. (Even if my TV habits were deplorable.)

Anyway, about the book itself. Aspiring writers, take note—there are a wealth of lessons to be learned from

this humble story. First off, it has an interesting premise. A normal family discovers a mysterious pet bunny abandoned in a movie theater—a bunny that turns out to have belonged to Dracula, and how goes out during the night to hunt vegetables and drain their ‘blood.’ Amusing, perhaps a bit farcical—however, the authors manage to mix this potentially-ridiculous idea with some solid storytelling. The book is told from the viewpoint of the family’s pet dog, a creature with a healthy dose of personality and an interesting narrative style.

That means we have both a clever premise, a strong character, and a unique viewpoint. Mix with that a solid mystery plot—why are these white vegetables appearing around the house, and why does that bunny look so downright evil?—and you have a book that will hold its own against pretty much anything you throw at it. I know a lot of modern fantasy novels that could learn a few things from *Bunnacula*.

So, I recommend that you give the book a read, if you haven’t already. It’s fun, quick, and could probably teach you a few things. And, if you did read the book as a child, it might be an interesting experience to pick it up—like I did—and see how your childhood memories compare to your adult observations.

Devann says

You know those books that you remember very fondly from childhood and then you go back and read them as an adult and you're like 'oh no, it's awful and boring now'? WELL THIS ISN'T ONE OF THOSE BOOKS! This was every bit as hilarious and entertaining as it was when I read it 18+ years ago and I'm so happy I decided to revisit it. Definitely a classic.
