



Dark Screams: Volume Eight

Richard T. Chizmar (Editor) , Brian James Freeman (Editor) , Kealan Patrick Burke (Contributor) , Frank Darabont (Contributor) , Bentley Little (Contributor) , Billie Sue Mosiman (Contributor) , Benjamin Percy (Contributor) , Glen Hirshberg (Contributor) , more... Elderlemon Design (Illustrator) ...less

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Frank Darabont, Bentley Little, Benjamin Percy, Billie Sue Mosiman, Kealan Patrick Burke, and Glen Hirshberg share chilling tales of ancient evils and wicked desires in this spooky collection assembled by renowned horror editors Brian James Freeman and Richard Chizmar.

WALPUSKI'S TYPEWRITER by Frank Darabont

They say that genius is ten percent inspiration and ninety percent perspiration. For Howard Walpuski, it's an IBM Selectric II typewriter, a nefarious secret, and a whole lot of blood.

THE BOY by Bentley Little

Christine has found the perfect neighborhood to raise her family: a quaint, quiet, friendly place where everyone gets along. Everyone, that is, except for *the boy*.

TUMOR by Benjamin Percy

He dodged death in the nick of time when the golf ball-sized tumor was surgically removed from his head. But the tumor isn't done with him.

TWISTED AND GNARLED by Billie Sue Mosiman

He's smart. Smarter than anyone knows. No one has linked him to the string of bodies he's left up and down the California coast. Only one woman has ever come close—and she's no match for his intellect.

THE PALAVER by Kealan Patrick Burke

It's time for Oscar Dennihy to close his failing barber shop and retire—until a mysterious customer tells him a truly hair-raising tale . . . and gives Oscar a wonderful and terrible new purpose.

INDIA BLUE by Glen Hirshberg

Like most Americans, Enrico never gave much thought to the sport of cricket. Not until America's Rockin' Professional Cricket game—a spectacle that will live forever in his most horrible nightmares.

Praise for the Dark Screams series

“A wicked treat [featuring] . . . some of the genre's best.”—**Hellnotes**, on *Volume One*

“Five fun-to-read stories by top-notch horror scribes. How can you lose? The answer: you can't.”—**Atomic Fangirl**, on *Volume Two*

“If you have not tried the series yet, do yourself a favor and grab a copy of any (or all) of the books for yourself.”—**Examiner.com**, on *Volume Three*

“Fans of horror of every variety will find something to love in these pages.”—***LitReactor***, on *Volume Four*

“[*Volume Five*] runs the gamut from throwback horror to lyrical and heartbreaking tales.”—***Publishers Weekly***

Dark Screams: Volume Eight Details

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Author : Richard T. Chizmar (Editor) , Brian James Freeman (Editor) , Kealan Patrick Burke (Contributor) , Frank Darabont (Contributor) , Bentley Little (Contributor) , Billie Sue Mosiman (Contributor) , Benjamin Percy (Contributor) , Glen Hirshberg (Contributor) , more... Elderlemon Design (Illustrator) ...less

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From Reader Review Dark Screams: Volume Eight for online ebook

Dave says

Dark Screams is a quarterly horror publication of short fiction. All the pieces here are quite readable and include barbers, serial killers, psychics, and more. But the reason to open this volume is Frank Darabont's "Walpuski's Typewriter," which is a twist on selling your soul to the devil. Forget writer's block! If your typewriter is possessed by a demon, you can crank out bestsellers in no time at all! Told with a vivid sense of humor, it is truly a fun read.

Char says

3.5/5 stars!

Another entry in the, (overall), excellent **DARK SCREAMS** series is here, this time with a few surprising authors. I've listed what I thought were the standout tales below.

My favorite story in this volume has to be **WALPUSKI'S TYPEWRITER** from Frank Darabont. Known for his work directing movies like The Green Mile and The Shawshank Redemption, I had no idea the man wrote stories. This one was dedicated to Stephen King and it even has that SK vibe to it-reminding me a lot of King's early story **THE MANGLER**. In this case, the machine gone-wild is a typewriter and Darabont doesn't hold back. I LOVED this tale!

Coming in a close second for me though, was Kealan Patrick Burke's **THE PALAVER**. Those of you who have read Kealan's work in the past may already be familiar with the town of Milestone and be as happy as I was to return. There is something about human hair that creeps me out and Kealan takes that creep factor and amps it up to eleven. Just thinking about it makes me shiver!

I enjoyed **THE TUMOR** by Benjamin Percy as well. I believe this is the first story I've read from this author and I'm going to have to track down some more.

DARK SCREAMS 8 delivers the goods once again. Not all the stories resonated with me, but that's not unusual. The ones that did resonated deeply and that's what keeps me coming back to this series again and again.

Recommended!

Available on Halloween! Pre-order yours here: <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01...>

An e-ARC was provided by the publisher in exchange for my honest review. This is it.

Jonathan Urban says

Volume Eight is an average read, a few strong stories, but not comparable to the quality of the last couple volumes. There's one story that is just long, drawn out and not all that entertaining. Another is the opposite, so short that you feel that it was more an idea that hadn't fully formed. I'd say there are three to four strong stories and the rest are average fair. At the price point, you could do a lot worse.

Jan says

3.5 stars

The latest in the Dark Screams Anthology series once again came through with some dark, creative and creepy horror stories.

My favorite has to be 'The Palaver', with 'Twisted and Gnarled' a close second.

I rarely have read a shorty in this series that I just didn't like, but I did find one here: 'India Blue'. I really struggled to get through it.

Volume nine is waiting in the wings, perfect for this time of year :)

ARC provided by NetGalley

Mommacat says

Review Copy

A less than average read for this volume of DARK SCREAMS. I love the series, but with the exception of the always exceptional Kealan Patrick Burke, volume eight is a near miss for me.

A haunted typewriter turned into a story that I nearly didn't finish. The author got into subject matter that personally offended me. The story itself was just so-so to start with; there are plenty of you out there that would like this one.

THE BOY was another disappointment - and again, I was offended. Is it the era of Trump that brings this garbage out? It's certainly not the first story to promote bigotry.

Mosiman's story about a serial killer was very good. I was enjoying it quite a bit. Then suddenly she decided to stop writing and in just a couple of paragraphs ended the story. What a let down.

KPB's entry THE PALAVER is a Milestone story and one I had previously read. Kealan is incapable of turning out a less than 5 star story.

Glen Hirshberg is normally wonderful, but this story went on and on about cricket and took me forever to finish. By the time I did, I didn't care what happened because I was so bored.

An ok read.

Jonathan Sweet says

[I was provided with a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review]

This latest iteration of Dark Screams is, like the earlier editions, a mixed bag. The best story is the first one - Walpuski's Typewriter by Frank Darabont. You might be surprised to find that the great director is also a pretty darn good writer outside the realm of screenplays.

Unfortunately, it is also a reprint, first issued in 2005 by Cemetery Dance. However, if you haven't read this, it makes the collection worth checking out.

The rest of the stories didn't really do much for me. Most of them I pushed through so I could write this review, but otherwise two of the other four I wouldn't even have bothered finishing.

Elke says

Walpuski's Typewriter (Frank Darabont)

Actually, Howard Walpuski just wanted his IBM typewriter repaired, but what he got was much more. A bargain that soon turns weird - and bloody. My favorite story in the collection, it was creepy but also funny. *****

The Boy (Bentley Little)

I think this was a very mean story. ****

Tumor (Benjamin Percy)

Weird thing with a ending that makes your imagination run wild. Perfect implementation of the short story concept. ***

Twisted and Gnarled (Billie Sue Mosiman)

Suspenseful cat-and-mouse thriller. ***

The Palaver (Kealan Patrick Burke)

This is the first story of one of my favorite authors I didn't immediately warm to. Great writing as expected, but the subject didn't really catch my interest. **

India Blue (Glen Hirshberg)

My least favorite story in the collection. I'm not familiar with that sport so didn't understand most of it. The ending was equally confusing and made me feel like I missed something vital. *

Summary: Reading the stories from top to bottom turned out to be unexpectedly anticlimactic - I so wished I would have read them in reverse order to save the best for last. However, the eighth volume in the Dark

Screams series still manages to deliver some fine horror stories, and I'm glad to see the series will still go on.

Janet Robel says

Now this is what I call a creepfest. These were all superb stories. Lots of creative talent that the pages flew by. The first tale hooked me in and sorta stuck with me. I thought it was clever and creepy, and it may never get out of my head. These stories take on a life of their own. Horror fans will enjoy these. In writing short horror stories, it's not easy to create a lasting impression, but these authors manage to do it.

Lars (theatretenor) Skaar says

I have to admit I was let down by this book. The short stories contained within were just not that interesting. They were not fleshed out. Some ended abruptly. The last story in particular, India Blue, was really not an interesting or well put together short, I'm sorry to say. I feel like 3 stars is generous. Also disappointing because Bentley Little has a short in here and I love him.

Walpuski's Typewriter - Frank Darabont - ??????

The Boy - Bentley Little - ??????

Tumor - Benjamin Percy - ????

Twisted and Gnarled - Billie Sue Mosiman - ????????

The Palaver - Kealan Patrick Burke - ??????1/2

India Blue - Glen Hirshberg ??

Bandit says

Well, here it is, the latest in the series and I'm the first person to review it, so yey. A mixed bag again, though no new authors to discover this time. A disappointing tale from usually entertaining Mosiman, seems like something of an anti intellectual diatribe and frankly there's enough of that around and society is paying the high cost of stupid. Also, subjectively, it just isn't that interesting or compelling to read about sports. And then there's a seriously hairy nightmare. The most pleasant surprise came from Frank Darabont, the man traditionally associated with genre movies and screen adaptations, providing the first and best and most fun story of this collection about a hungry demon in a typewriter. That alone makes this volume worth checking out. Entertaining quick read, genre fans should enjoy this one. Thanks Netgalley.

mamalovestoread says

Fabulously unsettling!

An anthology of 8 stories, Dark Screams Volume 8 was one of my favourite in the series. Wapulski's Typewriter simply blew my mind, what a way to kick things off. It had all the characteristics of a damn good horror story; gore, character empathy, holy cow moments, this has now become one of my favourite short stories in the horror genre.

Unfortunately, as with most anthologies, not all stories resonated equally with me, but The Boy by Bentley Little and The Palaver by Kealan Patrick Burke came close seconds to Wapulski's Typewriter in terms of sheer weirdness and the creep factor. Burke's tale, in particular, had a hint of The Ring about it in terms of the hair scene. Yuck!

Overall this is a great anthology, expertly curated by the guys at Cemetery Dance who yet again live up to their amazing reputation for selection great horror.

Juli says

Dark Screams Volume 8 is an anthology of six literary horror stories from Hydra - Random House. The volumes come out every quarter. I very much enjoyed Volume 7 that released in July 2017....so I happily curled up on the couch with a fresh cup of coffee and a blanket to enjoy this newest edition.

Stories in Volume 8 are:

Walpuski's Typewriter - Frank Darabont. Howard Walpuski takes his IBM typewriter to the repair shop of the damned, discovering too late it's never wise to hire a demon as a ghost writer. Great story! Nice opener for this anthology.

The Boy - Bentley Little. Christine and her husband just bought the perfect house in the suburbs. Their neighbors are all perfect, too....well except for that one boy. Holy crap....this story....oh my. It isn't really scary....just incredi-disturbing. Nicely done!

Tumor - Benjamin Percy. He might have survived brain cancer, but his tumor is still hanging around. Um....this story has an ewwww factor of like 9000. Not scary....just gross. lol. Definitely had a creepy effect on me....or was that nausea?

Twisted and Gnarled - Billie Sue Mosiman. He's a killer, and a genius (or at least he believes he is). Nobody suspects he is the killer leaving dead bodies, bloody and posed, all up and down the coast. Except one woman....the mother of one of his victims. But he knows he is smarter than she is. Hmmm...this one was suspenseful and very darkly demented. When I finished, I had to sit for a moment and collect my thoughts to decide how I felt about this story. Disturbing. Definitely disturbing.

The Palaver - Kealan Patrick Burke. A barber is ready to retire. But then a stranger walks into his shop one night and tells him a tale that gives him a new, and dark, reason to continue. Very creepy story! I loved the stranger's story.....yikes! It doesn't pay to dis the new barber in town. Not at all.

India Blue - Glen Hirschberg. Cricket isn't a sport that most Americans follow, but America's Rockin' Cricket game will never be forgotten. To be honest, I didn't finish this story...it just wasn't enjoyable for me. I guess I'm one of those Americans that doesn't understand, or want to read about, Cricket.....even a match with supernatural ramifications. But...just because I didn't like it doesn't mean other readers won't love it. To each their own.

All in all, a nice mix of stories -- quite creepy, disturbing and dark. Only one I didn't care for out of the bunch...I call that a success. I enjoy these strange and disturbing story anthologies. The stories vary in style and theme. Most are weird and different....not just resurrected horror tropes.

****I voluntarily read an advanced readers copy of this book from Hydra (Random House). Opinions expressed are entirely my own.****

Julia says

This is a great collection of horror stories. Of the six stories here, I loved five. The final story, India Blue, was my least favorite. That story went on too long, tried to make cricket sound exciting to Americans, and had very little horror in it. This volume would have been perfect if that story was omitted.

WALPUSKI'S TYPEWRITER by Frank Darabont

This got a little predictable towards the end, but still a gripping story.

THE BOY by Bentley Little

I was actually shocked by the ending. A story of suburban horror.

TUMOR by Benjamin Percy

Very interesting story that had some dark humor.

TWISTED AND GNARLED by Billie Sue Mosiman

Great serial killer story with a look into the mind of a killer.

THE PALAVER by Kealan Patrick Burke

I loved the story within a story. When the old man finished telling his tale, I was genuinely shocked to find I was back to the original story. It was that compelling.

INDIA BLUE by Glen Hirshberg

Ugh. So boring and did not feel like it belonged in this collection.

This is my favorite of the Dark Screams series so far. I highly recommend it.

I received an ARC from NetGalley in exchange for my honest review.

Irene says

I have said it before but I'll say it again. Dark Screams has quickly become one of my favorite Horror Anthology series of all time. I was thrilled to be able to grab an advance copy of this most recent installment, and excited to see new stories by 2 of my favorite authors Bentley Little and Kealan Patrick Burke.

"The Boy" by Bentley Little was brilliant. Once again Bentley Little is able to take an ordinary every day experience such as settling in to a new neighborhood, and turn it into something horrifying. Christine the happy house wife is pleased to meet her new neighbors and discover that they are also home during the day. They have lots in common and will be the best of friends. I wish I could say more without giving away too much. Suffice it to say this story was shocking and quite relevant to current attitudes and events.

"The Palaver" by Kealan Patrick Burke also hit a high note for me. Poor Oscar has virtually no customers left in his failing barber shop. He spends more time sweeping up hair that isn't there than he does plying his trade. He doesn't want to retire. "It was his father's business and his grandfather's before him." As he is readying to close one day a stranger walks in, and tells him a story that will change everything.

"Walpuski's Typewriter" by Frank Darabont was both humorous and gruesome. A struggling writer with unpaid bills and a broken typewriter makes the deal of a lifetime to get it repaired.

These were my 3 favorites in the collection and I will leave at that so as not to avoid any spoilers.

I would highly recommend this volume (along with all previous volumes) to any horror fan.

I received an advance copy for review.

Chris says

Frank Darabont starts the collection off with "Walpuski's Typewriter," one of the two longer stories in the collection. When failing writer Howard Walpuski's IBM Selectric II typewriter breaks down, he heads to a little repair shop, hoping for a cheap repair job so he can bang out another fast buck. What he ends up with is more than he bargained for, when the repairman summons up a demonic helper to "improve" Walpuski's writing. A humorous horror story, its twists are bloody but not unexpected. It's an enjoyable start to the collection, one I thought was good but not ground-shaking. It's a reprint from a 2005 Cemetery Dance publication.

Bentley Little has earned a reputation as the master of suburban horror, and "The Boy" is a great example of how well-earned that reputation is. Christine has just moved to the perfect neighborhood to raise her growing family, a charming place full of friendly neighbors. Except for the boy. The middle-eastern tween, surrounded by a peculiar stench that disgusts the other mothers. How can someone that smells so vile not be a health hazard to their children? As usual in a Little story, things take a horrific and violent turn. A sharp little story that I found quite effective as a metaphor for "the other," where those that deviate from the norm in cookie-cutter suburbia become both villain and victim... and made more relevant with the rise of hate crimes in the last few years. One of my favorites in this collection.

"Tumor" by Benjamin Percy features a strange character describing, in loving detail, a golf-ball-sized tumor surgically removed from his head, now kept for memory's sake. But while he's survived it once already, the tumor isn't finished with him yet. It's a dark, disturbing, and bloody tale, but it is either a bit too short or a bit too rushed—or both. There's a rather abrupt shift in tone about halfway through the tale, then the story speeds along to a not-quite-satisfying conclusion. I'm intrigued enough to read more by Percy, but this was one of the weaker stories in the collection. It is also less scary and far more gross, so readers who get nauseous easily be warned.

Billie Sue Mosiman's "Twisted and Gnarled" is another dark and disturbing tale. The protagonist is a "genius" serial killer, a Stanford psych professor who preys on "nondescript" women as a kind of vengeful Oedipus complex. After getting away with several murders, he slips up and one of the victims' mothers realizes his identity—through the help of some psychic powers—and the hunter becomes the hunted. Another

well-written story, though the open-ended conclusion took some of the wind out of the sails as it were. This is one story that you need to stop and ponder, after reading it; it grew on me to the point where I'd rank it as one of my faves in the collection, but I can't say that will be true for everyone.

Kealan Patrick Burke's "The Palavar" is about barber Oscar Dennihy and his failing shop; as he sweeps an already clean floor and contemplates retirement, a mysterious customer arrives. And that customer's hair-raising tale—of a long-forgotten barber riding into town in the 1800s—explains the secret history and purpose of barbers, giving Oscar a terrible new purpose in life. Now that I look back at it, "barbers hiding a terrible secret" sounds kinda dumb, but don't let my inability to summarize it put you off. It's a solid story from a capable writer, and it's both dead serious and effective.

Glen Hirshberg finishes off the collection with "India Blue," the other longer story in the collection. Cricket isn't a sport that most Americans know anything about, but an Indian developer wearing a bright blue shirt hopes to bring America's Rockin' Professional Cricket league to a minor-league baseball stadium in San Bernadino. The protagonist is the announcer at the stadium, retelling this glorious game of cricket and its unfortunate end, as the stuff of nightmares descends on the stadium. "India Blue" is yet another case of "I enjoyed the story, but..." The story is focused far too much on the sports over the horror; the horror elements don't appear until the conclusion, and their origin and cause was so intentionally vague as to frustrate me. I'm not asking for answers here, I just want the horror to not originate from a barely-mentioned character I forgot even existed. Well written and spooky, but somewhat flawed

Dark Screams Volume 8 is another solid entry in the series; it's not bad by any means, though it's a little below average compared to how strong some of the other volumes have been. I most enjoyed the Mosiman, Little, and Burke stories, though Darabont's was a close fourth; the other two were worth reading, but were less than perfect. Considering the one of the series' main selling point is its impulse-buy bargain pricing (\$2.99), it's hard to go wrong. I'm glad that the series is continuing past its original 5-volume run, because bite-sized collections of (mostly original) horror stories are apparently one of my weaknesses. I'll keep snagging these as long as they keep making them.
