



The Gingerbread Collection

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When two children sneak into a candy factory to steal sweets, they risk capture by the dreaded superintendent, the Candy Man. In the title story, Gingerbread, Victor A. Davis brings all the force of the contemporary literary short story to bear on this reimagining of Peter Rabbit. In this and other stories, he lures you in to the many worlds of his darkly colorful imagination. From a touching scene at an ordinary diner to the moment man first tamed fire, he surprises. From the travelogues of Patagonian and Peruvian wanderers to the emotional forces hiding in a young boy's closet at night, he entreats.

The Gingerbread Collection Details

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From Reader Review The Gingerbread Collection for online ebook

Victor Davis says

Wow, so incredibly humbled by and proud of my first public review. Thank you Joel R. Dennstedt of Reader's Favorite! <https://readersfavorite.com/book-review/the-gingerbread-collection>

Reviewed by Joel R. Dennstedt for Readers' Favorite

The Gingerbread Collection: Short Stories by Victor A. Davis immediately reveals the efforts of a master craftsman hard at work creating what appears to be an effortlessly produced, highly polished, perfectly edited, exquisitely written, fine tuned set of finished tales. Upon opening the book to partake in these delights, the reader immediately relaxes, knowing that he or she is in the hands of a professional writer and master storyteller. The style of writing is impeccable, exhibiting a perfect balance of necessary information, descriptive detail, and allocated momentum uniquely relevant to the action immediately at hand, with finely measured doses of anxious tension to make one hesitate before recklessly plunging on ahead. All for the purpose of entertaining the avid reader with intriguing, helplessly engaging plots.

The title story, called simply Gingerbread, retells the story of Hansel and Gretel in a totally modern setting with more anticipatory involvement than the original, and with a decidedly more gripping – and perhaps more morally demanding – finale to the tale. You will be deeply touched, affected, and morally offended ... that is guaranteed. You will also have been deeply involved and entertained ... that too is guaranteed. This holds true with all of the stories in The Gingerbread Collection (especially one really horrifying tale), in which each tale – so completely unique unto itself that choosing a favorite is not only impossible but somehow inappropriate – seduces the reader into a new and different spot to be, watching with a kind of participatory gaze the events of life so particular to that specific tale. I am attempting to convey here the incredibly lucid sense of reality that permeates each story, immersing the reader quite helplessly as he becomes a participant in the telling. That is what a great storyteller does, and make no mistake, Victor A. Davis is a great storyteller.

Audrey Lewis says

Just finished "The Gingerbread Collection" Wow. So there is so much to say. Victor Davis did an incredible job. I am especially impressed at how well he was able to use a female voice, especially when there is so much emotion involved. There aren't many male authors, (at least ones I've read) that can pull it off so incredibly. Kudos. Love how he moved through the process as he told each story, and how each ended making me wonder and want more.

All of the stories offered a unique twist and tale and I loved each one of them.

Leo Robertson says

Davis writes science fiction, fantasy, re-imagined fables, local myths, and as far as I can tell, nails every style! The writing is clean, the voice is clear and reminiscent of Ray Bradbury, good Stephen King and resident indie Luke Marsden.

Beautiful turns of phrase meet refreshing earnestness, optimism, hope for change, original speculations and imaginative futures, but also tension and horror that is enhanced simply by being implied and never revealed (difficult to pull off!)

GR fans looking to support their indies should turn to Davis at their earliest convenience—he won't disappoint :D

Christina Browne says

i enjoyed these stories i believe some of these have morals in them each one a tale to remember

Jaq Hazell says

Victor A Davis has a talent for suspense. The darker stories in the Gingerbread Collection had me gripped and fearing the worst.

The title story Gingerbread begins with a dare that soon descends into full-on horror. And again the story A Night at the Lake is told in taut, suspenseful prose that puts you right there with the characters willing the protagonist to survive.

The Flying Kite, said to be based on a true story, has the feel of an urban myth. Guillermo Faulkner is a man who is constantly on the move, travelling resourcefully and alone in the South American wilderness, his wife always "a few days ahead of him". The story has a melancholic, otherworldly feel as Guillermo's love and relentless pursuit of what he has lost can only lead him in one direction.

This collection moves between every day struggles in stories such as Change, to never ending love and tales of how peculiar people can be (Poinsettias) and the darker threat that lurks nearby in stories such as Shiva, Gingerbread and A Night at the Lake. A compelling, thought-provoking collection with heart and soul.

Greg Seeley says

Victor Davis, author of "Grains of Sand" delivers again with "The Gingerbread Collection". The book is a treat to be savored. Having read his first book, I took my time reading this superb collection of short stories, not because I wasn't tempted to just gobble it up, but because I wasn't anxious for it to end. I knew that, when I finished it, I would be hungry for more. That was indeed the case.

Davis shows, in this work, an amazing versatility in setting both tone and imagery. "Change" is a touching story based on a simple event that would occur right in front of most people, disappear, and be entirely forgotten by the next day. This author takes the same seemingly non-occurrence and turns it into something truly special that lingers in the reader's memory long after the moment has passed.

The title story, Gingerbread, on the other hand, is a dark fantasy based on a children's fairy tale but with a new, unexpected (and, yes, bizarre) twist at every change of scene. It reads like a combination of Stephen

King and Alfred Hitchcock. The reader knows it's a fantasy but, at the same time, it feels amazingly real. As the "hero" runs from place to place, the reader feels the sensation of tired and heavy legs, nearly paralyzed with both fatigue and fear.

"A Night at the Lake" feels more like pure Hitchcock. Since there is no "fantasy" one senses that the events depicted could happen to normal people on a normal outing. The "fear quotient" rises accordingly. As one who has spent many evenings at the lake, the story made me feel indeed fortunate to spend my nights in a house rather than camping out.

Well done, Victor Davis. This is another must read that will indeed leave readers wanting another taste.

Reviewed by Greg Seeley, author of "The Horse Lawyer and Other Poems"

Jessyca Garcia says

I was asked to review "The Gingerbread Collection" as a special request by the author, Victor A. Davis. Having read his work before, I was excited to do so. Davis has a gift of taking innocent fairy tales and turning them into your worst nightmares. This book is a collection of twelve of his short stories. Not all of the stories in this book are scary but they will all leave you with an impression.

The first story in "The Gingerbread Collection" happens to be my favorite. The story "Monster and Me" is a tale everyone can connect to because everyone has something they fear. This story actually made me want to take more chances in my life. I have never thought of fear as a monster but now it is stuck in my head that way. The other story that I really liked was "Alexander's Wall". This story is about a photographer who wants to take the ultimate picture. He learns that not all pictures are meant to be captured by technology. The story "A Night at the Lake" I can see being made into a scary movie. The story reminded me of a "Jason" movie but with a better ending. This book contains two stories I have read before, "Shiva" and "Gingerbread". Both are good, scary stories but "Shiva" is the story that has never left my mind. I blame Davis a little for making me hesitant around loose dogs now.

If you like to read short stories or stories that give you goosebumps, then you should read this book! Davis does not disappoint with his stories. I cannot wait to see his take on more fairy tales.

Dan Buri says

An excellent collection of stories that reinvents the fairy tale. Author Davis is impressive with his descriptive story telling and imaginative settings. He brings the reader into each diverse story with ease. I felt like I was thrust amongst the characters and apart of the book.

The title story, Gingerbread, is a dark, inventive recreation of a children's fairy tale. The story is reminiscent of many classic German fairy tales passed down over the years. Davis colors his dark canvas with fear and suspense; worthy to be included in ranks of German tales.

Rebecca Gransden says

Lost is lost, but there is nothing quite like being lost in the woods. This strong collection of short stories takes the bones of the fairytale and inverts the predominant effect. If bedtime stories and ageless myth persist in one sense to attempt to frame the fearful chaos of natural existence, these stories reclaim the unforgiving silence that comes back at us by bringing us full circle. If man be the modern monster then he steps forth here, out from the shadow, out from the trees. The rebranding of the classic is executed in a deft way, and this collection has craft written all over it. The standout stories read like a turn of the century slasher, the grounding of the writing style letting the tales unfold and breathe with urgent suspense.

Throughout there is a keen and engaging depth of character. As children face up to the excitements of pushing their limits, the limits push back hard. A couple trust themselves to the wild and it comes back to bite them in an unrelentingly terrifying way. The blood of the untamed is unleashed in the form of a haunting canine. The power (some may say primitive but the natural world is out there and as vital and contemporary as anything else whether we engage with it or not) that underlies these stories rests in a deep understanding of nature, of the boundless tension that our interaction with it creates, about how easily pathways can fork in radically anarchic ways.

Inevitably there are stories that impress more than others. The best here are very good indeed, and every story included had enjoyable elements. The collection left me with the feeling that the author had taken considerable care to ensure that each story had been worked on until all that could be made of it had been. That's a great way to leave any reading experience and one of the reasons why I look forward to sampling more from Victor A. Davis.

Whispering Stories says

This is a compilation of 12 short stories. The title conjures up sweetness. The reality is far from that with some of these tales. Each one is quite different to the next, and the majority were thought provoking with how they delved into the human psyche. Some I liked, some I didn't.

Monster and Me

This was the first of the short stories and one that I really enjoyed reading. It was about self-doubt and fear. It was about finding inner strength, listening to the voice in your head, facing your fears and that there's nothing to fear but fear itself. I think everyone will be able to connect with this story because everyone has a fear of some kind.

Courthouse Wedding?

This was a beautiful story that drills home the message that marriage doesn't have to be about the big white wedding with tens of thousands of pounds spent on it. It's about love. About the future. About happiness. I'd always been dismissive of those weddings where multiple couples get married in the one place at the same time, but this opened my eyes and changed my opinion.

The Bargain?

An interesting piece set one hundred thousand years ago. Two creatures/men given the power of fire. They have two choices. One, to use it for good – to keep warm, to cook food, provide energy. Two, to use it for evil – to create war, to instil fear and power, to destroy. Both are powerful choices but living in the present you can see both have existed side by side. It's a story of opportunities, of choices, of consequence. It's a clever and thought provoking piece.

Gingerbread

I wasn't so keen on this story. It was gripping yet a little too disturbing for my liking. I felt that the character of The Candy Man was far too bullish and evil and in today's society. You just don't do what he did to the children. It was so harrowing that I thought he was going to take the brutality to another level. It was an interesting modern twist on Peter Rabbit.

A Night at the Lake?

Another shocking piece. It was fast paced and well written, but I didn't like it as it was quite dark and violent. The two main characters, Natalie and Brenan, are spotted making love on a beach by a group of young men and a woman. As soon as this happened there was a threatening air that something sinister lurked. You get a real sense of doom, and the men turn out to be complete animals. I thought the story would end differently to how it did. It was a good piece of writing and the story gets into your head to the point that you can't put it down until you reach the end.

Shiva?

The story is one that keeps you reading but the end was a bit open. I felt there was no real plot. It just seemed to be about a wild dog, a family who had adopted that dog, and a strange lady who had magical powers linked to the dog. The dog kept running off, and then returning. The lady had some kind of power over it. Perhaps I missed the whole point of it and there is something in this story. It just wasn't for me.

I haven't commented on all the stories in this collection as a few of them just washed over me. Some of the stories are dark and disturbing, and some are positive. A few of them don't even seem to have a conclusion to them. The book on a whole isn't one for me but that's not to say someone else won't enjoy reading it.

I can't give the book four or five stars because I didn't enjoy all the stories equally.

Reviewed by Jodie at www.whisperingstories.com

Leonie Byrne says

I was contacted a little while ago by the author of this short story collection: The Gingerbread Collection' through my website asking if I'd mind doing a review piece on it. Of course I was absolutely delighted and agreed immediately. So first of all I'd like to say thank you to Victor A Davies for giving me the opportunity to read his stories in exchange for an honest review.

Now, I haven't read many short story collections. I was introduced to them initially when I started reading Dubliners as part of my Literature module at university. I then tacked George RR Martin (editor)'s collection Rogues and went on to read a few more collections including a lot of short stories by Karin Slaughter and

some by Cecelia Ahern and Milly Johnson. It's definitely broadened my horizons in terms of what is expected of a short story which has helped me immensely with my creative writing modules of my degree.

Anyway back to The Gingerbread Collection. What is most evident in this collection is the authors ability to take any idea or genre and turn it into a story. From simple exchanges in everyday life which expose emotions and thoughts beyond the nature of the story and give you food for thought yourself to horror, suspense and science fiction he's nailed it. There was not one story I didn't enjoy. My particular favourites however were The Night at the Lake, Shiva and Gingerbread. There are many references to mythology as well as literature particularly HG Wells in the science fiction story which I thought were great touches and showed some of the authors influences.

Not only did the stories engage the readers interest but they also explored places and old stories which one may not have thought about before. Each story left you with a thought about what might happen next allowing you to draw your own conclusions but also leaving you with a sense of loss at the end with no satisfaction gained on what might have happened. This is a talent shared with writers like James Joyce and really, for me, shows that this author has nailed the short story process completely.

I really look forward to hearing more from this author in the future. One to watch!!

Saradia Chatterjee says

"The Flying Kite" was the first story I read by Victor Davis. It impressed me enormously. Being aware of this author's brilliance in the short story genre, I was very enthusiastic about this anthology. It didn't disappoint me. "The Gingerbread Collection" is among the finest short story collections I have come across in recent times.

Each story in this anthology is very different from the other but they converge at some point to explore the depths of human emotions and look at life from a philosophical perspective. I was moved by most of the stories but I'll have to say, "The Flying Kite" still remains my favorite one. "Gingerbread" and "Change" are my next favorites from this collection. The author has played with the title of the story "Change" and when I finished reading it, I realized how appropriately the pun addresses the central theme. "The Flying Kite" strikes a perfect balance between heartbreak and motivation--a fictionalized account of a real life incident that is hard to forget.

The only reason I'm not giving this collection five stars is I couldn't appreciate every story equally. Some of them deserve more than those five stars but I felt the others couldn't match up to that level of excellence. Irrespective of that, it is a must read for people who like good literature.

Alexandra Engellmann says

Victor A. Davis has a vision. He can take any idea and turn it into a story full of meaning and depth, a story that can inspire you, shake you to the core, or both. From simple life situations to horror stories, he has mastered the genre, and whichever of his short stories you pick up, you won't be disappointed. My favorite was The Flying Kite, although The Night At The Lake has also left a strong impression, especially, with its surprising ending. I recommend this book to the fans of the short story genre, but also, to those who are

looking for something great to read on the road, over the weekend, or before sleep. Sometimes there's no time for a big book, but you still want to "feel" the story and every emotion in it. For those times, The Gingerbread Collection is a perfect choice.

Rebecca Morales says

I received a free ebook in exchange for an honest review by the author.

I am not the biggest fan of short stories. It is very hard to find the balance between characters, dialogue, and world building in such a short amount of time. The author presented us with twelve short stories, but only a few of those stories felt complete.

The majority of these stories were moments and these stories tended to be more tell than show. There were a number of times I wish the author used a bit more dialogue or character interaction.

The love for the horror genre is there. This was a good sampler of the eerie and things that go bump in the night. While I found some stories like Gingerbread to be more successful than others, I found this collection to be ok.

I was neither blown away nor disappointed.

I give this collection a C.

Sandra Lopez says

"My medium of choice is the short story. I don't know why they appeal to me so, but I suspect part of the reason is their bare-boned simplicity, much like a fairy tale. I consider it my job, as a writer, to lure you into my gingerbread house, my false paradise. I invite you to pick up these little breadcrumbs I've dropped, to follow my paths and tumble into my worlds. But make no mistake, I am the witch." (Davis – Intro)

Judging by the title and the compelling introduction by Mr. Davis, one would expect to see a parallel to Hansel and Gretel or Little Red Riding Hood. Of course, I wasn't expecting an exact recap, but surely there would have to have been lost children, a wicked woman, or a big, bad wolf. Like the fairy tales, I anticipated something sinister and playful. But these stories weren't like that. They were quite common, full of banality and predictability. Plus, there didn't seem to be a unified theme.

Writing was okay, but the stories were unimpressive. I actually enjoyed the introduction more than the whole collection.
