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The Bloody Chamber: And Other Stories: 75th-Anniversary Edition (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition)



Synopsis

For the 75th anniversary of her birth, a Deluxe Edition of the master of the literary supernatural's most celebrated book featuring a new introduction by Kelly Link. Angela Carter was a storytelling sorceress, the literary godmother of Neil Gaiman, David Mitchell, Audrey Niffenegger, J. K. Rowling, Kelly Link, and other contemporary masters of supernatural fiction. In her masterpiece, *The Bloody Chamber*—which includes the story that is the basis of Neil Jordan's 1984 movie *The Company of Wolves*—she spins subversively dark and sensual versions of familiar fairy tales and legends like "Little Red Riding Hood," "Bluebeard," "Puss in Boots," and "Beauty and the Beast," giving them exhilarating new life in a style steeped in the romantic trappings of the gothic tradition. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

"Since I first came across *The Bloody Chamber*, I have kept a copy with me wherever I have been living. . . . The things that I needed, when I was beginning to think about writing short stories,

were the things that I found in *The Bloody Chamber*. . . . Reading Carter, each time, [is] electrifying. It [lights] up the readerly brain and all the writerly nerves. . . . What we don't have, of course, is any more Angela Carter stories. And how I yearn for exactly this.

• Kelly Link, from the Introduction to *Her masterpiece* . . . Sex isn't a subtext in *The Bloody Chamber*, but the text itself. . . . Eroticism hangs heavy in the air here . . . like an expensive, drugging perfume. . . . Carter produced . . . fiction that was lavishly fabulist and infinitely playful, with a crown jeweler's style, precise but fully colored. . . . Her books are . . . revered by fans of speculative fiction stateside and have influenced writers as diverse as Rick Moody, Sarah Waters, Neil Gaiman, Jeff VanderMeer, Jeanette Winterson and Kelly Link. Salman Rushdie, who became her friend, described her as "the first great writer I ever met." Yet her legacy has been a slow and stealthy one, invisible to many of the readers who have benefited from it. . . . Most contemporary literary fiction with a touch of magic, from Karen Russell's to Helen Oyeyemi's, owes something to Angela Carter's trail-blazing. . . . If our personal and literary spaces feel more wide open now, she's one of the ones we have to thank.

• Laura Miller, Salon: A deluxe edition of her masterpiece, a bold collection of short stories tinged with the supernatural . . . just in time for the 75th anniversary of Carter's birth.

• Entertainment Weekly: *The Bloody Chamber* is such an important book to me. Angela Carter, for me, is still the one who said: "You see these fairy stories, these things that are sitting at the back of the nursery shelves? Actually, each one of them is a loaded gun. Each of them is a bomb. Watch: if you turn it right it will blow up." And we all went: "Oh my gosh, she's right!" "you can blow things up with these!"

• Neil Gaiman, *The Daily Telegraph*: A wonderfully written book, ironical, cerebral, elegant . . . distinguished by bold, inflected language and ornate, indeed often bloody, imagery.

• Joyce Carol Oates, *The New York Times Book Review*: The tales are retold by Angela Carter with all her supple and intoxicating bravura.

• The New York Review of Books: She was, among other things, a quirky, original, and baroque stylist, a trait especially marked in *The Bloody Chamber* "her vocabulary a mix of finely tuned phrase, luscious adjective, witty aphorism, and hearty, up-theirs vulgarity."

• Margaret Atwood, *The Observer*: She writes a prose that lends itself to magnificent set pieces of fastidious sensuality . . . dreams, myths, fairy tales, metamorphoses, the unruly unconscious, epic journeys, and a highly sensual celebration of sexuality in both its most joyous and darkest manifestations.

• Ian McEwan: *The Bloody Chamber* retains its power "because there will never be enough writing this perceptive" or just plain beautiful.

• Flavorwire: The best horror writer of the 20th century you've probably never heard of . . . Her most celebrated book is a high gothic collection of short stories called *The Bloody Chamber* that

you should read immediately if the genre holds any appeal for you. • "New York magazine"™s
Vulture

Angela Carter (1940-1992) wrote nine novels and numerous short stories, as well as nonfiction, radio plays, and the screenplay for Neil Jordan's 1984 movie *The Company of Wolves*, based on her story of the same name. She won numerous literary awards, traveled and taught widely in the United States, and lived in London. Kelly Link is the author of the story collections *Get in Trouble*, *Stranger Things Happen*, and *Magic for Beginners*. She has won the Nebula and World Fantasy awards and has had stories published in *The Best American Short Stories*, *the Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, and *Prize Stories: The O. Henry Awards*. Born in Miami, Florida, she now lives in Northampton, Massachusetts.

This is a retelling of several fairy tales with a feminist twist. When it was first published in 1979, the feminist twist may have been adventurous, if not shocking, but for 2016, it wasn't such a phenomenon for me. I enjoyed the title story--*The Bloody Chamber*--which was a revisioning of *Bluebeard*, as well as the revisioned telling of *Red Riding Hood*, and *Beauty and the Beast*, but other stories, not so much. On a whole I think it's best viewed as a piece of literary history.

This spin on fairy tales is amazing. Really gets the reader thinking about what else could have happened.

Great condition and looks exactly like pictured. I love one story and decided to purchase the complete work for myself.

Great adaptations of commonly known fairy tales.

For years, since I heard of the works of the late Angela Carter, I've wanted to get this book in my hands. Some time ago, I managed to obtain a digital copy of it, and after reading it over and over, I knew I had to buy it. However, because this book is virtually impossible to buy in my country, I had to search it here, and for some reason, the cover arts I saw in other editions weren't my cup of tea. This one, on the other hand, caught my eye as soon as I saw it. The wraparound art is gorgeous, and I lamented that the book didn't include illustrations for the stories, which are still as enjoyable as when I read them for the first time. On the stories themselves: As many reviewers (and Carter

herself) said: these stories are not adaptations of classic fairy tales (from Perrault and the Brothers Grimm with some european folklore, to be exact) but more like clever revisitations of them, written with a rich, sometimes baroque (perhaps too ornamented for some readers) language, where one is transported not just to the tales themselves, but to Carter's world: a realm where young girls become aware of themselves as sexual and self-sufficient beings, where beasts (specially wolves) can be husbands or lovers, where mothers and pets are saviors, and where blood runs like water. Yes, *The Bloody Chamber* may be considered as feminist fiction, but don't be scared, those of you who fear the F-word: While Carter was a feminist, she was one that didn't take herself seriously to the point of being Politically Correct or pretending to create a thin-veiled pamphlet with *The Bloody Chamber*; in fact, many of the words and situations in her stories might upset of the most sensitive readers (violent sex, explicit sex, nudity, necrophilia, animal and human escathology, and of course murder), and even those readers who aren't into any wave of feminism may enjoy several of the stories. After all, the works of Carter inspired several famous writers nowadays, such as Neil Gaiman, J.K. Rowling, Salman Rushdie, Kelly Link (who wrote the foreword to this Anniversary Edition) among many others. There is one negative detail I must mention for those who want to buy this edition: When mine arrived, the edges of some of the pages weren't smooth but with a rough texture, like from a pulp edition (Mind you, the pages themselves were okay, the printed words looked in good conditions, the diagramation was in order, and none of them was torn). So, if you are fastidious with details like these when you order a book, you may want to think twice before buying it online, and going to a bookstore and checking the pages yourself instead. Other than that, *The Bloody Chamber* is the best and most known of Angela Carter's work on fiction, so if you like fantasy stories with the dark edge that characterized old fairytales, you can give it a try.

These comments specifically pertain to the 2015 '75th Anniversary Edition'. Nobody ever used language quite the way Angela Carter did--few would ever dare in this dumbed-down day and age of ours. Yet still, more than thirty years after the author's untimely death, her unique way with words continues to captivate, inspire and intoxicate like tongues of Dionysian fire dancing upon the blessed lips of each new generation. These are words to make the heart sing and the imagination soar; beautiful yet exquisitely precise, evocative, fearless, erudite, occupying that rarefied realm where prose and poetry seem to share the self-same space like lovers in disembodied ecstasy. 2015 marks the diamond jubilee of this beloved and widely influential author's birth and Penguin Classics has seen fit to mark the occasion with this handsome, high-quality paperback edition of '*The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*', perhaps Carter's best-known and most-of-cited short story collection,

originally published in 1979. This Deluxe Edition features handsome, comfortably readable fonts (considerably larger than the ubiquitous compact 110-page school edition in circulation for the last several years--compare that stingy iteration with this generous 162 page volume), and gorgeous pen-and-ink cover art by Alex Konabin. A fine, thorough-going, affectingly personal introduction by author Kelly Link lends an appropriate sense of celebratory occasion to the undertaking. And, of course, the stories themselves are truly exceptional, masterpieces of the fabulist's craft, from the eerie and foreboding Gothic atmosphere of the title tale, based on the Blue Beard legend, to the ribald feline commedia dell'arte shenanigans of 'Puss in Boots', the evocative eroticism of 'The Company of Wolves' and 'The Tiger's Bride', and the more sinister sensualism of 'The Erl-King' and 'The Lady of the House of Love'. If you've never read Carter; or if you don't have a copy of 'The Bloody Chamber'--or, more likely, have worn out your old one-- or, perhaps, know of some young, aspiring writer in search of that simple igniting spark of lifetime inspiration, I consider it my good turn for the year to commend this superb edition!

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