



The House of the Vampire

George Sylvester Viereck

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One of the first psychic vampire novels of its time - where the vampire feeds off of more than just blood - The House of the Vampire is an early classic in its genre. Republished in this new edition, this Victorian novel operates in the continuum of life and death. What has been can be again, though often terribly transformed. Energetically inventive and infused with a relish for the supernatural, especially the trappings of the dark, The House of the Vampire delivers a horror which we know does not - but none the less conceivably might - exist and threaten ourselves. Blurring the lines between fact and fiction, The House of the Vampire is considered a classic among Victorian Gothic stories. He felt the presence of the hand of Reginald Clarke - unmistakably - groping in his brain as if searching for something that had still escaped him. He tried to move, to cry out, but his limbs were paralysed. When, by a superhuman effort, he at last succeeded in shaking off the numbness that held him enchain'd, he awoke just in time to see a figure, that of a man, disappearing in the wall that separated Reginald's apartments from his room.... George Sylvester Viereck (1884 - 1962), remembered today chiefly for his contributions to fantasy literature, was born in Germany and emigrated to the United States with his family at age 11. He was editor of the magazine The Fatherland, and author of Confessions of a Barbarian and Glimpses of the Great.

The House of the Vampire Details

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Author : George Sylvester Viereck

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From Reader Review The House of the Vampire for online ebook

Mirvan Ereon says

I read this book so fast and I really liked it. It is very unique and entertaining. Although it classifies itself as the first gay vampire novel, I do not think it is gay enough. However, I really love the psychic vampire concept and the part where the vampire can suck more than just blood, they can even suck your minds and souls in diverse ways. Truly a wonderful gem that I really like. It reminded me of Dorian Gray actually. I hope it was longer though but then, it is perfect already in its own way.

Paul says

I only read this novel because the ebook site I downloaded it from a) listed it as possibly the first gay vampire novel and b) listed the author as a nazi apologist, which does seem a perplexing combination!

The novel is reasonably well written but shows its age. When compared against a more modern vampire novel (or really any novel) its pace is plodding.

The one redeeming feature of the novel is that the vampire isn't a classic vampire and though you manage to guess his power within the first few pages it was just different enough for me to finish the book.

As for being the first gay vampire novel... maybe you could read between the lines about the relationship between the vampire and his target or between him and his friend, but no I wouldn't count it as the first gay vampire novel.

Jennifer says

What a fun surprise! I'm not really into the vampire thing, but this was a particularly interesting (I thought) view of vampirism from very early in the 20th century. (I don't think it would contain any insights that would be too revelatory for somebody past their 20s, say, but still.) I'm considering using it with a lower-level literature class. It was actually good enough that I went looking for other works by Viereck and discovered (probably on wikipedia or somewhere, so exercise appropriate caution) that he was supposedly considered a great poet by Tesla; this led me to Viereck's poetry, which was such appalling propaganda that I gave up the chase.

Tatum says

A subtly gripping psychological thriller which explores what is possibly one of man's greatest fears; the losing of one's mind to another. Personally, I liked that this wasn't just your standard blood-sucking vampire book, I thought the choice to have the vampire be after something different was refreshing and innovative.

The style and length makes this an easy enough book to pick up and read, the plot is engaging right to the

end and the book has withstood the test of time, something which certainly cannot be said for all novels written around the turn of the century.

(Available free on Kobo, www.gutenberg.org)

Osie says

As you likely already know, this was one of the first psychic vampire stories ever. Somehow it has become a rumor that it is an erotic novel and features bisexual characters. It doesn't, so don't bother if that's the only reason you want to read it. There are a few scenes that come off homoerotic, and you get the feeling that Ernest, as well as Reginald Clarke, are somewhat effeminate, but they are both definitely straight. It is a little slow paced at first; however, I feel it builds up rather well, culminating in a surprising and very well executed ending.

It is also very quotable. One of my favorite lines is when Reginald Clarke spoke of Balzac and unwittingly gave away a clue to his own nature:

“He (Balzac) must have purified the atmosphere around him for miles, by bringing all the evil that was floating in the air or slumbering in men’s souls to the point of his pen.”

As to the style, I would say it’s like a mix of Bret Easton Ellis and Oscar Wilde. A great example is a conversation between Ernest (the protagonist) and his old friend, Jack, about two women they had met earlier that night:

“Susie, was that her name?”
“Yes.”
“So she had a name?”
“Of course.”
“She shouldn’t. It should be a number.”
“They may not be pillars of society; still they’re human.”
“Yes,” said Ernest, “that is the most horrible part of it.”

Steve Goble says

Horror is, perhaps, not the proper category for this book, but it is close enough. The tale features a vampire of a different sort, and is told in brief chapters with a dream-like air. It moves swiftly, despite the languid dialogue. It is an excellent read.

Marts (Thinker) says

With homosexual and supernatural elements, I guess one would expect something either exceptionally thrilling or totally boring... Actually, the plot was interesting, Viereck's writing does keep one asking 'what next', however, I thought the ending a tad bit disappointing. The character of Reginald Clarke was fine but

maybe he could have been a bit scarier, and Ernest, well I felt sort of sorry for him at the end...

Here it is online: http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_House_of_Vampires...

Extinction says

Well, this was a let down...somehow, January is really not my best reading month apart from Circe...XD
Anyway...

This was beautifully written and an amazing fit for a vampire story, as expected from books of the era. I was excited at first, thinking I finally found another vampire story on par with the atmosphere and the feeling that Vampire Chronicles and Vampire The Masquerade RPG give me. But in the end, that did not turn out to be the case...all because of one single decision of one single character. In the end, this, like many other old books, did not age well, for the story is much too simplistic and generic. And honestly, this is not a blood-sucking vampire, so there is also that, but I did enjoy this different aspect to this vampire for it worked well and I could still see Vampire The Masquerade type of vampires personified in this one, yet...the main character just had to make a dumb decision and mess it all up.

The decision that was made... I blame the author for, because it made no sense

(view spoiler)

So yeah...things could have gone differently, yet they didn't. How sad. It had the potential, but it was lost. Still, I really enjoyed the writing and the rich description, but unfortunately, as it always is, that is not enough.

Still giving it a generous 3 stars though.

Nikki May says

Well what can I say, I was expecting a little more from a book called house of vampire some more paranormal and horror factor, this book seemed to lack that but it feels intentional like the author was trying to write the book on a more psych level rather than a physical level. The vampire in this book didn't want blood, guts and gore he wanted something different his victims mind, his victims thoughts and well his victims life I guess.

I'm not sure whether I really liked this book or disliked it merely I was confused and left questioning throughout the first half of the book. This book seemed more written for it literature aspect than the horror aspect of it which I'm disappointed by as that's essentially what I was looking for so maybe that's my fault for entirely looking at the wrong book but I just felt that this was a story to show off language and psych and philosophy rather than the horror of vampires, now I didn't expect the whole gore fest of blood and guts but i expected more than this book delivered.

The language and the way it was delivered was beautiful, slightly older fashioned maybe but beautiful in itself.

I can't say I connected with the characters at all because I couldn't really I felt I never got to know them

enough to relate, I felt sorry for Ernest having all his ideas eaten by a vampire never realising then led to believe because of his artistic character he was maybe losing his mind, rather than be able to see the truth that Clarke was feeding upon his ideas.

Janice says

Disappointing. Billed as a vampire story, not so scary, unless you are a poet or something. The "vampire" steals your creativity, your work before it is published. He is an equal opportunity thief because he steals from men and women but mostly men. No death, but madness or brokeness. No chance of being made into a vampire. Again, disappointing.

Read on iPhone.

Skylark says

I thought this one was pretty crummy. It's from 1907 and described as the "first gay vampire novel", but its not really a vampire or gay. He's a "psychic vampire", so he just makes people around him tired instead of sucking blood from them, and people get would have gotten tired on their own anyway, it would just take longer. And don't expect anything sexy at all; this is modest even by 1907 standards. The vampire is popular and lots of people hang around him. Before video games came out, guys did the same things when they hung out as girls do now, which is basically just sitting around and moving from distraction to distraction. If you want to read a book that i read more recently, you're better off reading Nancy drew and the secret of the Old Clock.

Agnes says

The ending was pretty chilling.

Flash Gordon says

One of the first psychic vampire novels of its time - where the vampire feeds off of more than just blood - The House of the Vampire is an early classic in its genre. Republished in this new edition, this Victorian novel operates in the continuum of life and death. What has been can be again, though often terribly transformed. Energetically inventive and infused with a relish for the supernatural, especially the trappings of the dark, The House of the Vampire delivers a horror which we know does not - but none the less conceivably might - exist and threaten ourselves. Blurring the lines between fact and fiction, The House of the Vampire is considered a classic among Victorian Gothic stories. He felt the presence of the hand of Reginald Clarke - unmistakably - groping in his brain as if searching for something that had still escaped him. He tried to move, to cry out, but his limbs were paralysed. When, by a superhuman effort, he at last succeeded in shaking off the numbness that held him enchainied, he awoke just in time to see a figure, that of a man, disappearing in the wall that separated Reginald's apartments from his room....

Engel Gatus says

Literally unputdownable, coming from a guy who has no love for vampires. Mr. Sylvester's writing will have you down on your knees, unrelented and focused on his story alone. He has his own, palatable way to be as gripping as some of the modern suspense, thriller writers, such as Dan Brown. Very much a deviated take on an encounter with a vampire.

Mohsin Khan says

It is hard not to be drawn by originality, and "The House of the Vampire" is anything but unoriginal. Potential readers are warned not to confuse this book for a storyline akin to one of those superficial twilight books. This book is NOT about a silly teenager that falls for a charming vampire. In addition, moving on to the opposite end of the spectrum, this book is nothing like Bram Stoker's Dracula. The House of the Vampire is..... well, simply put, nothing like any vampire story you know. The premise of the story screams out originality because it provides something much more than the exhaustively used paradigm of blood-sucking vampires. The vampire portrayed in this book is...unusually different. Feeding on blood to survive is not central to its existence, since it is highly evolved. What makes the vampire relentless, formidable and outright creepy is that it feeds on the human psyche.

If you want to read an original vampire story, embedded in a dark gothic Victorian setting, then there really is no excuse for you not to read this one. It will surely keep you entertained. 4/5 stars.
