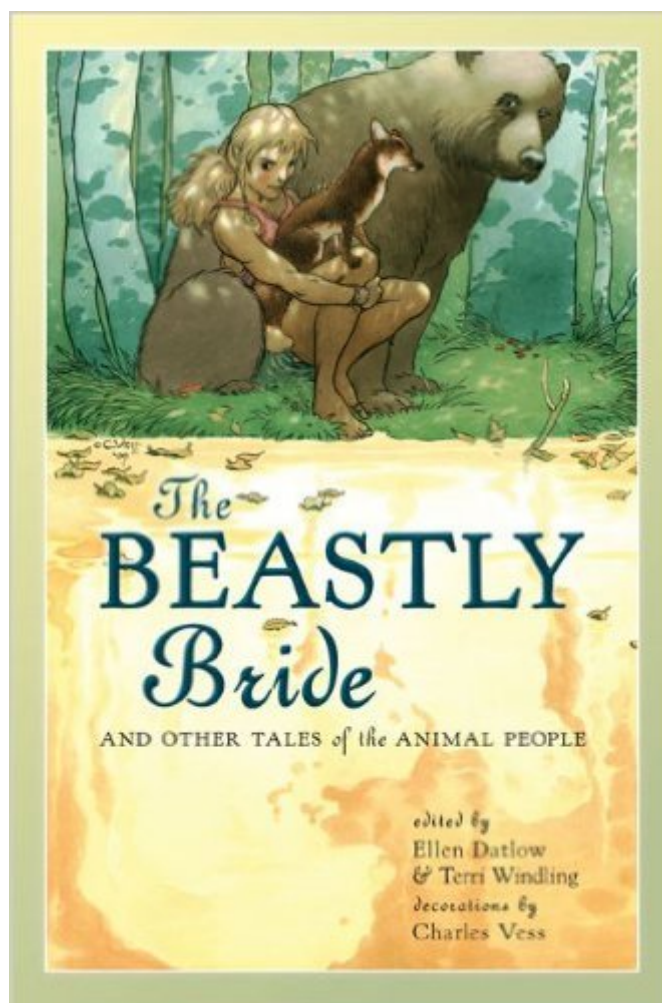


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The Beastly Bride: Tales Of The Animal People



Synopsis

What do werewolves, vampires, and the Little Mermaid have in common? They are all shapechangers. In *The Beastly Bride*, acclaimed editors Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling bring together original stories and poems from a stellar lineup of authors including Peter S. Beagle, Ellen Kushner, Jane Yolen, Lucius Shepard, and Tanith Lee, as well as many new, diverse voices. Terri Windling provides a scholarly, yet accessible introduction, and Charles Vess's decorations open each story. From Finland to India, the Pacific Northwest to the Hamptons, shapechangers are part of our magical landscape—and *The Beastly Bride* is sure to be one of the most acclaimed anthologies of the year.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up — In Datlow and Windling's latest short-story anthology on mythic themes, celebrated contemporary authors explore shape-shifters in fantasy. The stories run the gamut from humorous to tragic and have roots in old tales from many different parts of the world. In Hiromi Goto's "The Hikikomori," outcast Masako finds inner strength when she is transformed into a rat. In Midori Snyder's "The Monkey Bride," Salim's integrity is tested and found worthy by his shape-shifting wife, while in Tanith Lee's "The Puma's Daughter," Matthew Seaton's wild bride tests his credulity and loyalty. Not all are love stories — in Peter S. Beagle's "The Children of the

Shark God," siblings Keawe and Kokinja risk perilous journeys to confront their absentee father. These tales and many others explore all manner of shape-changers, from werewolves to mermaids. Despite differing styles, the stories flow smoothly from one to the next. Windling's fascinating introduction details the history of shape-shifters in legends from around the globe. This collection will appeal to fantasy lovers as it provides both stories by beloved authors and exciting new voices to discover. —Misti Tidman, Boyd County Public Library, Ashland, KY (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Twenty-two short stories and poems speak to the fascination with therianthropy (animal-human metamorphosis). From riffs on Beauty and the Beast to original tales of sexuality and an adolescent yeti, well-known fantasy and sci-fi authors create morsels that address themes as varied as coming-of-age and the environment—all while changing people into animals and vice versa. Following up on earlier anthologies that covered forest folk (The Green Man, 2002), faeries (The Faery Reel, 2004), and tricksters (The Coyote Road, 2007), this is the fourth exploration of mythology from the editorial team of Datlow and Windling. Selections are consistently well written, and each ends with a very brief bio and a short statement that provides a window into the authorial process of creating the tale. In addition to a rather scholarly preface and introduction, there is also a fairly long list of additional reading. This collection would make an interesting supplement for a high-school mythology class, and a chance to include contemporary authors and new treatments of transformation myths from many cultures. Grades 10-12. --Cindy Welch

A Collection of twenty-two short stories with the theme of: Shape-shifting. My favorite quote comes from Teri Windling's introduction. She quotes Boria Sax, who explains, "The marriage between a person and animal in myth and fairy tales joins humanity with nature." Midair Snyder's "Monkey Bride," is romantic. Thimbliggery and Fledglings by Steve Berman, is a version of: "Swan Lake," with the focus being centered on Odile, the Black Swan. The Flock by Lucius Shepard is a blend of: "Friday Night Lights," and Hitchcock's: "The Birds." At the conclusion of the collection, the editors include a two page list of other books and authors who feature the same themes.

I was expecting much more shape changer romances and marriages from this book. The focus, instead, is on families, which is fine, but not what it says on the tin.

Both the book, itself, and the dust jacket are in great shape; A wonderful anthology worth adding to

my library.

I actually ordered this book a long time ago and cannot remember exactly my favorite or least favorite parts. However, I remember how difficult it was to put down. For how large this book was, I believe I went through it very quickly. I am excited to read more books like this one!

At least as far as genre fiction goes, Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling may just be the best editors/anthologists currently working. Together or individually, their anthologies usually manage to feature a wide variety of authors and story-telling styles under whatever theme they are gathering stories for. *The Beastly Bride* is the fourth volume in what they call their "mythic fiction" series, "each volume dedicated to a different aspect of world mythology." (The previous volumes were *The Green Man: Tales from the Mythic Forest*; *The Faery Reel: Tales from the Twilight Realm*; and *The Coyote Road: Trickster Tales*.) This time out, the focus is clearly on shape-shifters of all sorts: gods masquerading as human to woo humans, animal spirits taking human form, humans who can transform into animals for any number of reasons, and in one case animals that don't really bother to even pretend they're human in order to wreak havoc on an unsuspecting community. Clocking in at 500 pages, there is bound to be something to appeal to everyone in the book but of course not every story will work for every reader. That's the blessing, and the curse, of short story collections. My favorite stories were Steve Berman's "Thimblerrigery & Fledglings," Lucius Shepard's "The Flock," Ellen Kushner's "The Children of Cadmus," Tanith Lee's "The Puma's Daughter," E. Catherine Tobler's "Island Lake," and Gregory Frost's "The Comeuppance of Creagus Maxim."

Werewolves, vampires, and mermaids all have one thing in common: they are shape-changers. This book is a compilation of their stories. From Finland to India, the tales cover everything from an unruly bride to new world explorers. Some are humorous, while others are tragic. These Immortals' stories have come together to confound, delight, and, most of all, entertain. *THE BEASTLY BRIDE* is an excellent anthology of some of the best stories from around the world. Some tales will seem familiar, while others will not. The enjoyment of them, however, will not change. The layout is done quite well, the forward is well-written, and the bibliography well-laid out and easy to reference. Readers who like fantasy, shapeshifters, and anthologies will all enjoy this book. Reviewed by: Kira M

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