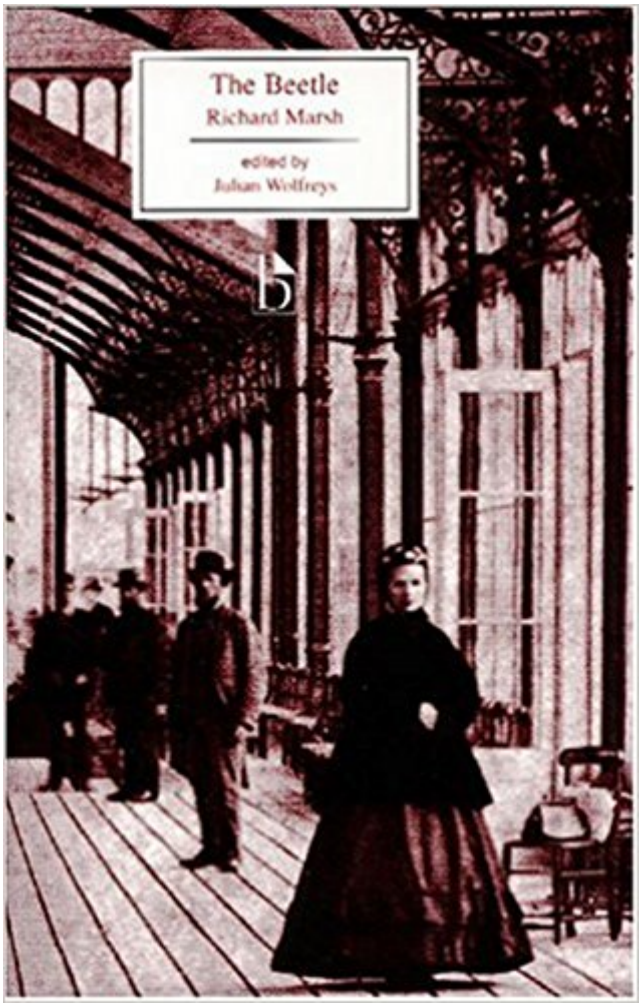
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The Beetle (Broadview Editions)



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Synopsis

The Beetle (1897) tells the story of a fantastical creature, Ã¢â ¬Å“born of neither god nor man,Ã¢â ¬Â• with supernatural and hypnotic powers, who stalks British politician Paul Lessingham through fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle London in search of vengeance for the defilement of a sacred tomb in Egypt. In imitation of various popular fiction genres of the late nineteenth century, Marsh unfolds a tale of terror, late imperial fears, and the Ã¢â ¬Å“return of the repressed,Ã¢â ¬Â• through which the crisis of late imperial Englishness is revealed. This Broadview edition includes a critical introduction and a rich selection of historical documents that situate the novel within the contexts of fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle London, EnglandÃ¢â ¬â„¢s interest and involvement in Egypt, the emergence of the New Woman, and contemporary theories of mesmerism and animal magnetism.

Book Information

Series: Broadview Editions

Paperback: 364 pages

Publisher: Broadview Press (April 30, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1551114437

ISBN-13: 978-1551114439

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 40 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #460,077 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #176 inÃ Â Books > Literature & Fiction > British & Irish > Horror #971 inÃ Â Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Gothic #6225 inÃ Â Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Romantic

Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“The Beetle has it all: itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s at once a ripping gothic yarn, a fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle melodrama, and a document of the fears and obsessions of late imperial culture. Julian WolfreysÃ¢â ¬â„¢ introduction is excellent, bringing lots of fascinating material to bear on the novel and doing so clearly and persuasively. He makes you want to read it.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢ Jonathan Dollimore, author of Sexual Dissidence and Death, Desire and Loss in Western Culture

Ã¢â ¬Å“The Beetle is a great read. As Julian WolfreysÃ¢â ¬â„¢ admirably learned, perceptive, and comprehensive introduction, appendices, and notes show, it is also a wonderful assemblage of many motifs from popular culture at the fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle. I enthusiastically recommend this

book.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢ J. Hillis Miller, University of California, Irvine Ã¢â ¬Å“For far too long we have had to do without an edition of one of the key best-selling novels of the fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle, Richard MarshÃ¢â ¬â„¢s The Beetle. Broadview has once again come to the rescue with a new edition of this lurid classic that at one time outsold Dracula. Featuring useful appendices and with an extensive introduction by Julian Wolfreys, this edition will be coveted by everyone interested in late Victorian fiction.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â ¢ Nicholas Daly, Trinity College, Dublin

The Beetle (1897) tells the story of a fantastical creature, Ã¢â ¬Å“born of neither god nor man,Ã¢â ¬Â• with supernatural and hypnotic powers, who stalks British politician Paul Lessingham through fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle London in search of vengeance for the defilement of a sacred tomb in Egypt. In imitation of various popular fiction genres of the late nineteenth century, Marsh unfolds a tale of terror, late imperial fears, and the Ã¢â ¬Å“return of the repressed,Ã¢â ¬Â• through which the crisis of late imperial Englishness is revealed. This Broadview edition includes a critical introduction and a rich selection of historical documents that situate the novel within the contexts of fin de siÃƒÂ¨cle London, EnglandÃ¢â ¬â„¢s interest and involvement in Egypt, the emergence of the New Woman, and contemporary theories of mesmerism and animal magnetism.

Wow! A must-read for any Victorian horror fan.This novel does have that particular British xenophobic "Oriental mysticism" thing going on that Wilkie Collins and Rudyard Kipling are also guilty of. It’s a bit fainter than in the works of those other two authors and pretty level-headed for having been written 3 or 4 decades into the English occupation of India.There are some pretty shocking and disturbing details that surface toward the end of the book, more like what you might expect from a 70’s pulp novel. I haven’t looked up the history of The Beetle’s publication, but it seems really surprising that it made it to print at all. Or maybe people were openly discussing sex way before I thought they were.The style of the horror in this book is totally different from anything I can think of from the 1800’s. It has some Kafka-like "speculative" horror about it (I don’t just mean because of the man-beetle) and then will abruptly snap back to polite, sane Victorian society in the next chapter.

This book was an assigned reading for an English class that I had. I have to admit, I was concerned given that it is the oldest book I’ve ever read. I’m surprised at how much I loved this book. There are tons of articles online that go in depth on the imperialism, and having read it in depth, I learned a lot about that perspective. I would encourage anyone who likes to read, to read this book. It is an easy

read, and the characters are not too complex.

The Beetle is one of those rare books that positively throb with symbolism and significance - while gripping you by the throat with a terrific tale. In 1897 it was a popular sensation outselling Dracula, which was published the same year.The characters are well drawn: Paul Lessingham, a budding cabinet minister with an ominous gap in his past; lovely Marjorie Linton, a witty New Woman caught between her Radical lover (Paul) and her Tory father; madcap young scientist Sydney Atherton who also adores Miss Linton and is meanwhile working on weapons of mass destruction for the glory of the British Empire; Robert Holt, down-and-out clerk who falls into the clutches of the Beetle.As for the Beetle, this amorphous, androgynous nightmare transmigrates at will between a barely human form and a sadistic Egyptian scarab. An accomplished mesmerist, the Beetle can make a slave of almost anyone (including the reader). Why is it hiding out in civilized London instead of pursuing its hideous prehistoric rituals back in Egypt? Paul Lessingham, to his horror, is the unwilling magnet drawing the vengeful Beetle ever closer.The plot offers a steady stream of dramas and crises peppered by exciting chases on foot, by cab and by rail. There are quite a few comic moments, despite the heavy nature of the threat to everyone’s life and sanity. That, in fact, is one of the most remarkable aspects of the book. It’s both a Kafkaesque plunge into paranoia and a Shakespearean comedy of errors, a confrontation with unsavory eroticism and a pure love story.I’d recommend the Broadview edition above all others because of its readable format and thought-provoking scholarly content.But don’t read the introduction before the book. Save those insightful interpretations of The Beetle for dessert! Approach The Beetle without preconceptions and have your own visceral experience of the Uncanny, just as readers did in 1897.

It’s a classic! What a treat to receive such an enjoyable book at no charge from for Kindle readers. I’d like to thank the publisher for generously providing the material free of charge.

...made memorable by passages like "...this could be nothing human-nothing fashioned in God’s image could wear such a shape as that. Fingers were pressed into my cheeks, they were thrust into my mouth...the blubber lips were pressed to mine-the soul of something evil entered into me in the guise of a kiss." Gave me the creeps and I did like it.

An entertaining Edwardian adventure, contemporary with Stoker’s "Dracula". It’s distinguished by a certain coyness in the supernatural elements (as to whether they’re real, or the result of

post-hypnotic suggestion) and a fairly humorous romantic triangle subplot (Sydney Atherton, spiteful jilted suitor and would-be inventor of chemical warfare is a new hero of mine). The ending is unfortunately anti-climactic (imagine "Dracula" ending with the Count's ship spontaneously capsizing and sinking off the Rumanian coast), but it's a diverting tale until you get there.

No denying there are dated cultural, sexist and racial attitudes here, attributable to the time the novel was written. But for those who can work that out, and enjoy the book anyway, it is a truly interesting and fun read. I'm entertained by characters crafted by the writers of the time, and find the situations that puzzled, moved and frightened the readers to be refreshingly genuine and fanciful. I really enjoyed reading this book.

This book was assigned for me to read in my 19th Century British Literature class. When I read the first part of this book, I didn't know whether to be freaked out/repulsed or intrigued. I couldn't tell if I liked the book so far or if I found it too weird to go on reading. But, of course since this was a book I had to read because my grade depended on it, I kept reading. Part 2 gave the story a new light and I found myself unable to put the book down. I wanted to figure out the mystery of the Beetle SO badly! What a great read it was. My only complaint is the ending...it seemed to end so abruptly and I would have liked to see some kind of battle or confrontation of the men and the Beetle. I also would have liked to see Paul save Margery...that would have been cute and romantic. Despite those complaints, the book is awesome. It is worth the read!

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