



WRITING HORROR IN

IS THAT SCARY?

2024

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WHO AM I?



Horror Reader

I read my first Stephen King novel when I was eleven and I've always loved writing horror stories and telling horror stories.



Author

Author of numerous horror short stories, a co-written horror series, and a supernatural horror UF series, Thirteen Covens.



Also...

I am the person who will go looking for whatever scary thing is causing the problem and will likely be the first to die.



WHAT SCARES YOU?

Let's talk about it.

What scares us is unique and varies from person to person.

What is your biggest fear?

Is your fear shared by others?



TOP 7 HORROR TROPES IN 1984

No wonder we had the
Satanic Panic!

1. Slashers and Serial Killers
2. Haunted Houses
3. Possession and Exorcism (Demons)
4. Evil Children
5. Cursed Artifacts
6. Small Town Horror
7. Nightmares and Dreamscapes



TOP 7 HORROR TROPES IN 2024

40 Years Later....

1. Psychological Horror - paranoia, fear, existential dread.
2. Haunted Houses - it's a staple, with a twist.
3. Supernatural Entities
4. Body Horror - mutilation and gore
5. Cursed Artifacts
6. Abandoned Places
7. Survival Horror - zombies, creatures, aliens, apocalypse



EXAMPLES

Psychological Horror

1. "The Last House on Needless Street" by Catriona Ward - A tale of paranoia and fear, where nothing is as it seems.
2. "Survivor Song" by Paul Tremblay - A story that delves into existential dread during a rabies-like pandemic.

Haunted Houses

1. "Home Before Dark" by Riley Sager - A modern twist on the haunted house trope, blending past and present mysteries.
2. "The Haunting of Ashburn House" by Darcy Coates - A fresh take on the haunted house with a truly supernatural twist.

Supernatural Entities

1. "Mexican Gothic" by Silvia Moreno-Garcia - Features supernatural elements in a decaying mansion.
2. "The Only Good Indians" by Stephen Graham Jones - A story about supernatural revenge.

Body Horror

1. "Tender is the Flesh" by Agustina Bazterrica - A dystopian novel with intense body horror themes.
2. "The Troop" by Nick Cutter - A tale of survival and grotesque transformations.

Cursed Artifacts

1. "The Book of Accidents" by Chuck Wendig - Involves cursed objects and their terrifying impacts.
2. "The Hollow Places" by T. Kingfisher - Features cursed artifacts and parallel dimensions.

Abandoned Places

1. "The Lost Village" by Camilla Sten - A documentary filmmaker explores an abandoned village with a dark past.
2. "The Deep" by Alma Katsu - Set on the Titanic and its sister ship, blending historical fiction with supernatural horror.

Survival Horror

1. "Devolution" by Max Brooks - A survival horror story involving a Bigfoot attack in an isolated community.
2. "The Luminous Dead" by Caitlin Starling - A claustrophobic survival horror set in an alien cave system.

WHY DO THE THINGS THAT SCARE US CHANGE?

- **Societal Changes:** As societal norms and values evolve, our fears adapt to reflect new cultural anxieties and taboos.
- **Technology:** Advances in technology introduce unfamiliar threats and vulnerabilities, reshaping our fears around the unknown and uncontrollable.
- **Global Events:** Major global events, such as wars or pandemics, shift our fears towards immediate, large-scale dangers and uncertainties.
- **Psychological Shifts:** Changes in collective and individual psychology, influenced by new understandings of the mind, alter what we perceive as frightening.



HOW CAN WE CRAFT SUSPENSE AND MAKE SURE STORIES HAVE EMOTIONAL IMPACT?

- Mind the pacing.
- Work on foreshadowing through setting and mood.
- Include unexpected twists.
- Leave each chapter with a question or something happening.
- Consider how fear affects readers emotionally.
- Balance terror with empathy for the characters.



DISCUSSION

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