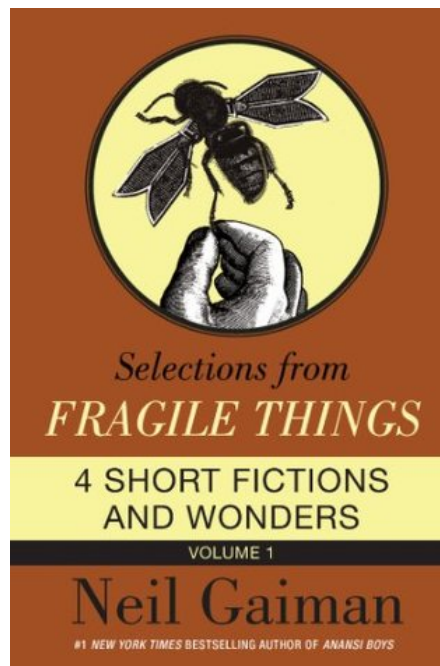




Selections from Fragile Things, Volume One

Neil Gaiman

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Selections from Fragile Things, Volume One Neil Gaiman

A mysterious circus terrifies an audience for one extraordinary performance before disappearing into the night. . . .

In a Hugo Award winning story, a great detective must solve a most unsettling royal murder in a strangely altered Victorian England. . . .

Two teenage boys crash a party and meet the girls of their dreams; and nightmares. . . .

These marvelous creations and more showcase the unparalleled invention and storytelling brilliance; as well as the terrifyingly dark and entertaining sense of humor of the incomparable Neil Gaiman. By turns delightful, disturbing, and diverting, *Fragile Things* is a gift of literary enchantment from one of the most original writers of our time.

Selections from Fragile Things, Volume One Details

Date : Published by William Morrow (first published January 23rd 2009)

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Author : Neil Gaiman

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From Reader Review Selections from Fragile Things, Volume One for online ebook

Michelle says

I Love this book. It has a place next to my bed so that it's ready to be read at anytime. Again and again. While there are many stories in Fragile Things I love, my favorite without a doubt is "October Sits in the Chair."

Lady ♥ Belleza says

Some entertaining stories from Neil Gaiman. A story about aliens, a poem, and the months of the year telling stories.

Lauren Deland says

There are hits and misses in this collection of short fictions and poems, but "Sunbird," "Bitter Grounds," and "Keepsakes and Treasures" are particularly good.

Tess says

It's hard to categorize Gaiman's short stories, so I categorized this with all semi-applicable bookshelf titles!

Some of these were more brilliant than others, but they were all captivating.

Stacey says

From the introduction, I thought I was getting several stories. However, this only contained 3. Four if you count the "Mapmaker." Lovely writing. I found A Study in Emerald weird, but well written.

James Hill says

from Jordan:

The Monarch of the Glen by Neil Gaiman, a novella from the Fragile Things collection, is a sequel to Gaiman's American Gods. The story follows protagonist Shadow while visiting Scotland. It explores some of Scotland's mythos in the same way American Gods explored the old and new gods of America.

To say too much about the plot would spoil it, but there you garner interesting tidbits about Shadow as he

tries to escape the escapades that occurred in America. For one, you learn his real name, which clarifies the information you learned in American Gods about his parental lineage.

It's well worth the few hour read and acts as an interesting bridge to the forthcoming American Gods full-length sequel.

Ruth Caves says

Shorts

This collection definitely made me think after reading the selections. Very enjoyable. Definitely need to read more by this author.

Jeremie says

Bottom line: Selections from Fragile Things is a good pick of short stories (3) and a poem (1) from the larger collection. The picks made me want to buy the full Fragile Things collection.

These stories went from fable, "The Mapmaker", to mystery, "A Study in Emerald", to a fairy tale/poem in, "The Fairy Reel", to a campfire tale, told by a month of the year, "October in the Chair".

These are real "story" stories, as much worthy of being told hundreds of years ago as they are adequate for being told today. Timeless.

I'm sure the full collection reads the same way.

Stephen says

Sherlock Holmes meets the **Cthulhu Mythos** in one of the best, most original **mash ups** of all time...plus a wonderful **GAIMANesque** ghost story in honor of **Ray Bradbury**.

Fragile Things, Comprehensive Review Part I...and so it begins. This collection is in my All Time Top 5 for best single author compilation of short fiction ever. If you are a fan of Neil Gaiman's novels or his work on Sandman and have never read his short fiction, this is a wonderful place to start. I have now read/listened to the collection twice and enjoyed it even more the second time around. When I saw that the book was available in ebook format as multiple selections (each containing up to 9 stories depending on the length), I thought it might be helpful to do a more detailed review for each story which this format accommodates nicely. Otherwise, I would have ended up either skipping over stories or doing one giant monstrous review that may have just been too much. Anyway, hopefully this is helpful***.

*****NOTE:** *Each of the six different "Fragile Things" selections will have their own review but the opening paragraph above will be substantially similar in each. I wanted to try and have each review stand on its own as well as contribute to the overall whole. Therefore, if you are reading this note for the first time and want to read the other 5 reviews, you can skip down to the BEGIN REVIEW for the other installments.*

BEGIN REVIEW:

This first selection contains the following stories:

1. *Introduction*,
2. *Mapmaker*,
3. *A Study in Emerald*,
4. *The Fairy Reel*, and
5. *October in the Chair*

Overall, these first five pieces get 4.5 stars with the two BIG STANDOUTS being *A Study in Emerald* and *October in the Chair*. The best part about sampling these first five stories is that if you are not taken with at least the two standout stories than it may be that Neil Gaiman's prose style and subtle endings are not your cup of tea (as much as that pains me to say).

In the Introduction, Gaiman discusses the history of each of the short stories in the collection and how the ideas originated in his noggin. He also provides some personal insights into some of his favorites. Normally, I wouldn't bother reviewing an introduction, but this one was very interesting and I really enjoyed it. *4.0 stars*.

Buried within the introduction is a tale called Mapmaker about a ruler in China who is obsessed with creating a perfect map of the entire country down to the last detail. It's a fine story but in the end someone forgettable. *3.0 stars*.

Next is our first home run, A Study in Emerald which won the 2004 Hugo Award and the 2005 Locus Award for best short story. It is a Sherlock Holmes pastiche set in an alternative Victorian England in which the "Elder Gods" of the **Cthulhu Mythos** have taken over the world. This is a truly original and superb combination of two distinctly different genres. You have the logical, **uber rational** world of Sherlock Holmes coming **face to tentacled face** with the indefinable, chaotic world of Lovecraft's Cthulhu stories. I really don't want to give away any plot details but I think that it is fair to say that if the story sounds interesting to you than it is likely that you will enjoy it. For me, it is one of my all time favorites. *6.0 stars*.

EQUALS

Next is a short Poem called The Fairy Reel about the problems that can occur when one spends too much time between the world of man and the world of the Fae. For the most part, I was not a huge fan of the poems and "non-story" material in this collection, but they are all short and easily skipped over if you find you don't love them either. *2.0 stars*.

Finally, we get to the second standout story of this collection, October in the Chair, which won the 2004 Locus Award and was dedicated by Gaiman to Ray Bradbury. It is actually a story-within-a-story and begins with the Months of the Year gathering together in a secluded forest to eat, drink and tell stories. Each Month takes a turn telling an original tale of their own creation that reflects their specific nature. I thought this was a great opening and shows Gaiman's trademark originality and mastery of prose.

From there, October proceeds to tell a story of a small boy everyone calls Runt. Runt is constantly picked on by his older twin brothers and basically ignored by his parents (who dote on the aforementioned twins).

Eventually Runt decides to run away from home and search for a better life (he also has strong hopes that his family will come to regret how they treated him and want him to come home).

After taking a bus for a while and then walking he finds himself in a new town. The place seems deserted until he meets a boy named "Dearly." The two boys play and enjoy each other's company until Runt is forced to make a critical decision at the end of the story. Beautifully written, deeply evocative and with a subtle but deeply powerful ending. It is the kind of ending that will float right into your head and settle like mist on top of your brain...until it begins to squeeze!! 6.0 stars.

One final note for those interested in audio books, the audio version is read by Neil Gaiman himself and he is an outstanding narrator. There is nothing better than an author reading their own work when they can do it well and Mr. Gaiman knocks it out of the park.

Next up in Volume 2:

The Hidden Chamber,

Forbidden Brides of the Faceless Slaves in the Secret House of the Night of Dread Desire (one of the best titles ever),

The Flints of Memory Lane,

Closing Time,

Going Wodwo, and

Bitter Grounds.

You can link to the review for these stories here: [My Review of Fragile Things Volume 2](#)

Laura says

Book features only Neil Gaiman's intelligent and fun short stories. Gaiman writes with apparent ease because of his immense talent. The New Yorker profiled him a few weeks ago.

<http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/20...>

Happily I call myself a dedicated fan.
