NEITHER NOR ASHES



KRISTOPHER MALLORY

Neither Gas Nor Ashes

by

Kristopher Mallory

Neither Gas Nor Ashes

A War Horror Story

Copyright



www.StealthFiction.com

Neither Gas Nor Ashes

eBook Edition
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The Price To See The Dead

Attempted

What People Are Saying about Kris's Stories

Neither Gas Nor Ashes:

"A brilliant concept that was heartbreakingly beautifully written." – *SwampYankeeMatriarch*

Neither Gas Nor Ashes:

"You truly have a way with words! That paragraph about his heartbeat syncing with the cadence of the war was elegantly beautiful." – *CrazyJMiles*

Neither Gas Nor Ashes:

"That was captivating." – *manen_lyset*

Neither Gas Nor Ashes:

"This is awesome." – *kaikadragon*

Special Thanks

To no one. Trust no one.

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Neither Gas Nor Ashes

“Listen to them. Children of the night. What music they make.”

~ Count Dracula, Dracula (1931)

Spies everywhere. Trust no one.

Lowering the note to the candle flame, I read Müller's words a final time as each letter burned away.

"I came when I received your message," I said, though only the dead could hear.

Outside, a winter storm howled, drowning the whistle of the air raid sirens as a flurry of snow swept through the shattered parlor window, extinguishing the candle.

"Our homeland had been ravaged. I could only move at night."

I knelt in the dim for several minutes, fascinated by the pale-orange flashes that lit up the skyline. Each explosion sent gray shadows dancing along the stucco wreckage of Main Street. The smell of sulfur and suffering grew stronger with each gust of cold wind. Still, my breathing remained steady. And after a while, my heartbeat synced to the cadence of distant anti-aircraft guns mounted atop mounds of rubble.

"War followed wherever I traveled."

On the streets below, small arms fire exploded all around, providing glimpses of blood-covered barricades and corpses. Overhead, through snow and smoke, the fleet of bombers resembled the Valkyrie of myth as their deadly payloads fell.

"Soon the fighting will end. The world is on the brink."

I sighed and examined the charred remains lying at my feet—Müller and his family.

"Remember the death camps, old friend?"

Müller's lips had melted into a grim, terrifying smile, and pieces of discolored flesh hung from his clawed, skeletal hands.

"SS soldiers killed many at Auschwitz, but together, we escaped the gas chambers."

I sat quiet for a time, waiting until after the last shell exploded. The air raid sirens fell silent. The sound of the bombers' engines faded. The shooting below ceased.

“You once told me they would not stop hunting us until our kind were all dead. After that, I always watched for those black uniforms… silver skull and bones… dual lightning-bolt insignia. Secretly, I admired them. You must have known.”

I rolled my sleeves, took the razor blade from my pocket, and held it to my wrist.

“Before long, those responsible will be dead.”

I pressed down, the sharp edge sinking into my flesh. Blood pulsed from the wound. I held my arm over Müller’s twisted mouth.

“All… dead.”

Far in the distance, a brilliant flash, brighter than the sun, turned night to day. Falling snow sublimated to burning vapor, and a thousand voices screamed out in agony. Then the remains of Müller began to stir.

“Eleven million died during the Holocaust.”

Müller twitched. Burned flesh tore as his fingers clenched into fists.

“So much death.”

Müller sat up, bones crackling.

“And yet…”

Müller cackled. Flecks of blood sprayed from his ruined lips. “They have not found a way to kill us?”

“No, Müller. So much death… and yet… it is not enough.”

Müller shielded his eyes and turned towards the churning mushroom cloud beyond the melted horizon. “Beautiful.”

“New York. Fourth Reich.”

Müller nodded, then looked down at the corpses of his family and frowned. “They are starving.”

“Then let us feed.”

THE END.



About the Author



Born near Baltimore, Maryland, Kris has been writing short fiction since he was a kid. First sharing his ramblings on Stealth Fiction and then on Reddit, where most of his stories were posted to r/nosleep. His stories have been featured on The NoSleep Podcast, Chilling Tales for Dark Nights, Tales to Terrify, and Horror on the Rocks. The recording of The Scarecrow Corpse, read by Markiplier, has been heard hundreds of thousands of times. He lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his wife. And occasionally, he turns into a strawberry.

More stories: StealthFiction.com

What's Next?

LET ME TELL YOU HOW I LOST MY EYES

A Short Story Collection by Sammy Fowler

Coming one day. Maybe. Probably not.

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Hear It Read Aloud

Some stories are better heard in the dark.

Neither Gas Nor Ashes has a complete full-cast reading in digital voices: Gerrit narrates, and every other character has a voice of their own. It runs 5 minutes and it's free: play it online, or download it as an MP3 or an audiobook with chapters.

Listen free at stealthfiction.com

More from Kristopher Mallory



THE SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS OF MR. EVERETT

This Christmas horror story is now available on Amazon. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

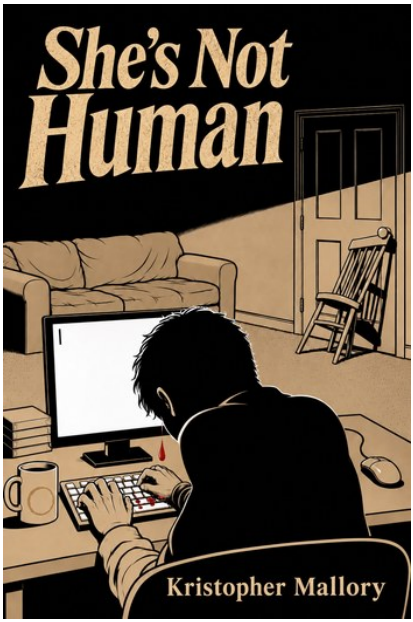
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Christmas Eve, a blizzard, and Hank agrees to sit with old Mr. Everett, twenty-two-time winner of the town's decoration contest, who insists he is not going crazy.

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Praise for The Special Christmas Ornaments of Mr. Everett:

"Quite a story, mixing snowy Christmas magic with delightfully dark humored chills." – *leavnsoon*



SHE'S NOT HUMAN

This psychological horror story is now available as an eBook. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

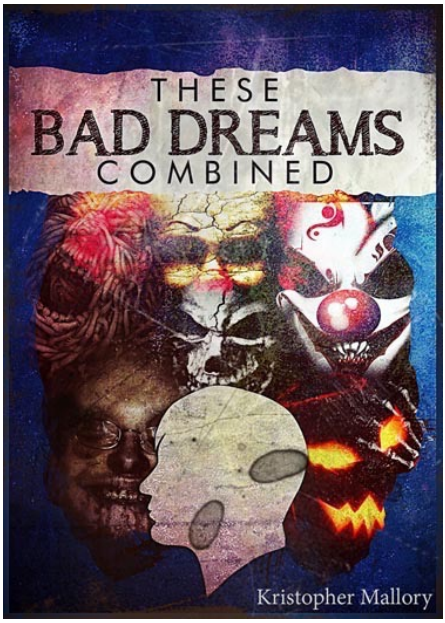
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Nose bleeding onto the keyboard, a man types out his side of the story while the woman he has locked in the bedroom begs him to open the door.

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Praise for She's Not Human:

"You'll change your mind about who to believe three times before the last line." – *Stealth Fiction*



THESE BAD DREAMS COMBINED

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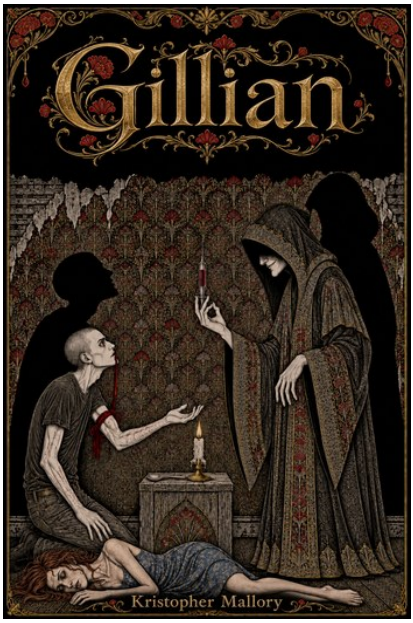
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A man struggles to deal with severe nightmares. A new medical trial is his last chance at a normal life.

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Praise for These Bad Dreams Combined:

"I have no idea WTF is going on here, but I'm fascinated!" – *ali*



GILLIAN

This dark fairy tale is now available as an eBook. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

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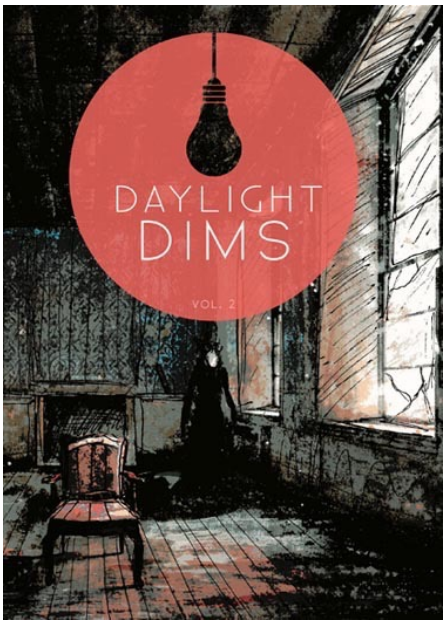
Some addictions run deep and others summon demons too strong to overcome.

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Praise for Gillian:

"A fairy tale with the sugar scraped off, and a love story that refuses to stay buried." – *Stealth Fiction*

More from Stealth Fiction



DAYLIGHT DIMS
VOLUME TWO

This horror anthology is now available. For more information on this book, please visit the Daylight Dims website.

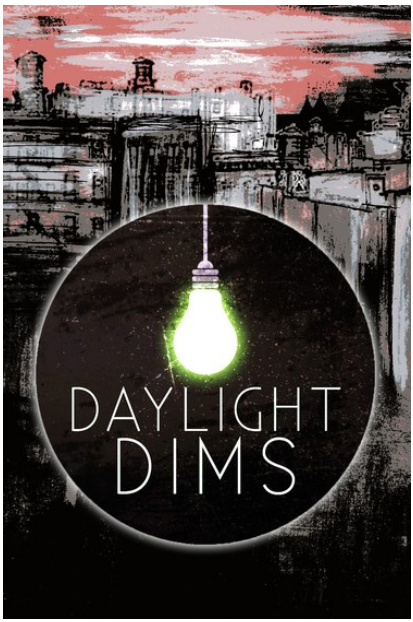
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Darkness descends again. Daylight Dims Volume Two features thirteen stories that cross the genres of surreal, dark fantasy, and heart-pounding dread. This annual horror anthology is guaranteed to twist your perception of horror. From the common, comfortable tropes to the more taboo, these handpicked tales have a literary aspect designed to showcase what true horror can be.

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“This was probably one of the most entertaining collections of horror stories I've ever read. And I don't say this to suck up or to stroke any tail feathers. I was happy to have the opportunity to read through this before release, and I implore anyone on the fence about picking this up to do themselves a favor and take the plunge into the abyss. You will not be disappointed.” – *Human Gravy*



DAYLIGHT DIMS

VOLUME ONE

Second Edition — now with two new stories from the editors.

This horror anthology is now available. For more information on this book, please visit the Daylight Dims website.

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The editors chose 13 stories from over 100 premium submissions. DD contains some of the best horror around.

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Praise for Daylight Dims:

"This is a fantastic horror anthology. All 13 stories are exquisite. The book was not what I expected initially, as I thought that it might be all vampire or werewolf tales. Not so! These are original stories from authors of the macabre. From dark fantasy and pure suspense to classic horror tales, it shows the extraordinary scope of fantastical fright fiction. The stories in this anthology are a tour de force of fear, which will haunt you, terrify you, and stay with you." – S. Mahaffey, *"neverjudge"*