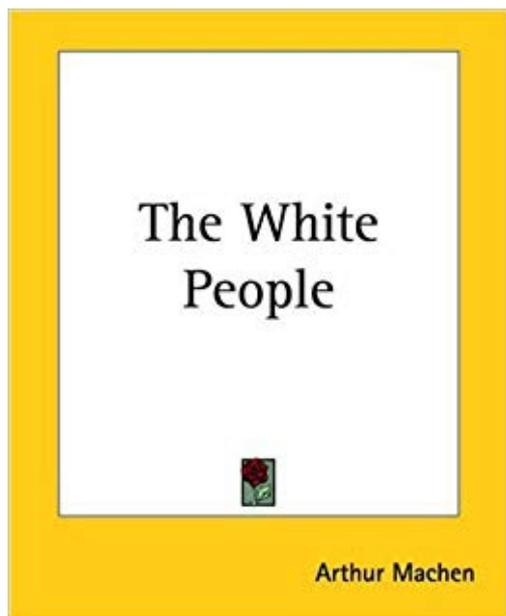


The White People *by* Arthur Machen



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It was winter time, and there were black terrible woods hanging from the hills all round; it was like seeing a large room hung with black curtains, and the shape of the trees seemed quite different from any I had ever seen before. I was afraid. Then beyond the woods there were other hills round in a great ring, but I had never seen any of them; it all looked black, and everything had a vooor over it. It was all so still and silent, and the sky was heavy and grey and sad, like a wicked vooorish dome in Deep Dendo.



Reviews of the *The White People* *by* Arthur Machen

happy light

Arguably the greatest Welsh author of all time, Arthur Machen is one of the most legendary and influential writers of his time; although, his work can be hard to find these days where people tend to shy away from older literature. Penguin Classics always provide a great introduction to any author for new readers, as well as an excellent compilation for seasoned fans of Machen or other weird tales. Machen, a Welshman that hit the scene a few decades before Lovecraft, is one of the fathers of supernatural literature, fantastical tales, horror stories, and most of all: the so called "weird tale"

which is an eclectic literary splicing of all three. This book is a must have for any fans of Lovecraft or the aforementioned genres. In addition to Arthur Machen, some of his contemporaries and other similar authors that I highly recommend, all of which have a wonderful Penguin Classics edition of their tales as well, include Algernon Blackwood, Ambrose Bierce, Clark Ashton Smith, and Lord Dunsany.

Scoreboard Bleeding

I read *The White People*, by Arthur Machen in advance of Halloween, trying to get in the mood for the macabre. It was a good choice. *The White People*, a short story, was first published in 1904, and Machen crammed a lot of creepy into the 50 or so pages.

It's an odd set up. Two men are discussing the nature of good and evil, and one of them tells the other about the "Green Book," a diary purportedly written by a young girl as she wandered deeper into an occult world of strange creatures, forgotten races, eerie rituals and witchcraft. We, the readers, are then able to read directly from the diary.

The power of the story lies in tension between the rich, terrifying supernatural world hidden just beneath the surface of everyday life — revealed to the young girl by her nurse who is familiar with all the old legends — and the childish, wonder and naiveté of the diarist as she is drawn deeper and into the world of the White People. The almost casual, earnest descriptions of the scenes of wonder revealed to her are especially unnerving.

"But I made up my mind I would try again, so I went to the wood where the pool was, where I saw the white people, and I tried again. The dark nymph, Alanna, came, and she turned the pool of water into a pool of fire..."

Machen is a Welsh writer, and ably brings to life the legends and magic of Wales dating back hundreds of years. It's an era I enjoy, not the least because the thought of a world behind this world is so appealing.

It was a fun, unsettling read and I enjoyed it enough to purchase another one of his books, *The Great God Pan*.

Ddasuk

There is inevitable to think in Murakami's *1Q84*: strange "people" and secret worlds invade the reality to whom can see them or get captured in them. Of course both are different books.

The story opens with a conversation about pure good and pure evil with a mad man. Then we read the memories of a special person that since a baby has been contacted by mysterious beings... she is one of the few that can connect to a powerful, but banishing in oblivion, world. The journey we witness is surreal and unique, is like falling in madness along the protagonist.

Mr Jeñson

This book is fantastic it gives you a great example of his writing skills and the stories will blow you away anyone who loves suspense horror and action will love the stories.

Aloo

I can definitely see how this author influenced Lovecraft. The story *The Terror* especially has a haunted feel. Enjoyable read.

Bolv

I attended last night's Penguin Classics signing by S. T. Joshi, and although they had gobs and gobs of the newly-published Deluxe Edition of *THE CALL OF CTHULHU AND OTHER WEIRD STORIES*, they had but ONE copy of the Machen. I had already ordered it here at Amazon, and thus I was happy to see some other fellow who really wanted it and bought that copy.

S. T. said that Penguin were initially hesitant to publish the book, but they finally told him that if he

could get Guillermo del Toro to write a Foreword, they'd publish it. It looks like they commissioned a new cover illustration of Pan, and that's odd since "The Great God Pan" does not appear in the book. The Contents are:

"The Ecstasy of St. Arthur," Foreword by Guillermo del Toro
Introduction by S. T. Joshi
Suggestions for Further Reading
A Note on the Texts
The Inmost Light
Novel of the Black Seal
Novel of the White Powder
The Red Hand
The White People
A Fragment of Life
The Bowman
The Soldier's Rest
The Great Return
Out of the Earth
The Terror
Explanatory Notes

Some people don't like Notes and Annotations. I love them and find that they enhance my enjoyment of an author. S. T. is so well read in the weird fiction field that he has a vast knowledge of things therein, and so his Notes are always illuminating. He begins each note with the writing/publication history of the tale, and the Notes then pertain to foreign words, historical aspects and the like.

This is a good solid selection of Machen's amazing weird fiction. The strangeness that these tales evoke, the threat of lingering aspects of the past, the trespassing into arcane realms, is in a class all its own. Machen had a magnificent and unique imagination, and he wrote in a plain yet literary style that flows easily. I highly recommend this book to all who enjoy excellent weird fiction.

"Of living creators of cosmic fear raised to its most artistic pitch, few if any can hope to equal the versatile Arthur Machen, author of some dozen tales long and short, in which the elements of hidden horror and brooding fright attain an almost incomparable substance and realistic acuteness."

--H. P. Lovecraft

Joni_Dep

The White People one of the most macabre stories I have ever read. Machen was a genius.

It's my thing, admittedly .

It's not for everyone.

especially if you are more accustomed to the popular fiction today.

It's ironic, somewhat misleading, as in the theme is not quite what the reader is led to believe.

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