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Greg Cox

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before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Transylvanian Library: A Consumer's Guide to Vampire Fiction (Borgo Literary Guides):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Useful Guide to Vampire Fiction With One or Two Flaws By Jordan P. This is a very useful guide to vampire fiction, arranged in chronological order and covering virtually every English language novel or short story to deal with the vampire theme (with a few European works thrown in.) The book was published in 1993 so if you are looking for listings of more modern vampire fiction look elsewhere. Also, I've found some errors in the publication dates of some stories, though I'll cut Cox some slack on that since it was compiled at a time when such information was not as readily at hand. The book has a couple of problems beginning with the fact that each entry thoroughly spoils the plot points of each story or novel covered. Since the book is subtitled "A Consumer's Guide to Vampire Fiction" this is a bad decision on the author's part. So, beware. Read each work before reading what Cox had to say about it. The other problem is an arbitrary rating system that clearly displays the author's preference for both more modern material and science fiction material. Most distressing to a reader new to vampire fiction and using this book as a guide is that Cox rates a large number of classic works very low, with acknowledged classics such as M.R. James's "Count Magnus," E.F. Benson's "The Room in the Tower," and F. Marion Crawford's "For the Blood is the Life" rated as "average," while obscure works from the small presses and science

fiction magazines of the 1980s are routinely rated as "superior." I suppose Cox is attempting to direct readers to new works (since the aforementioned stories have been anthologized to death) but there is no excuse for rating seminal works of the genre as "average." Also, Cox includes works that are only marginally vampire stories and then rates them low because of it. For instance, he includes Anthony Boucher's 1943 story "They Bite" (not a vampire story at all and erroneously listed as being published in 1942), easily one of the finest horror stories to come out of the 1940s, and rates it as "average" because "The title gives away the ending" and it is "only marginally vampiric." Same goes for his low ratings of some of Robert Bloch's best material, such as "The Cloak" (1939) and "The Yugoslaves" (1986, another publication date error on this one), arguably Bloch's two finest vampire stories, each rated "average." This may all be nitpicking but my advice is to use the book as a bibliography and not as a critical guide.