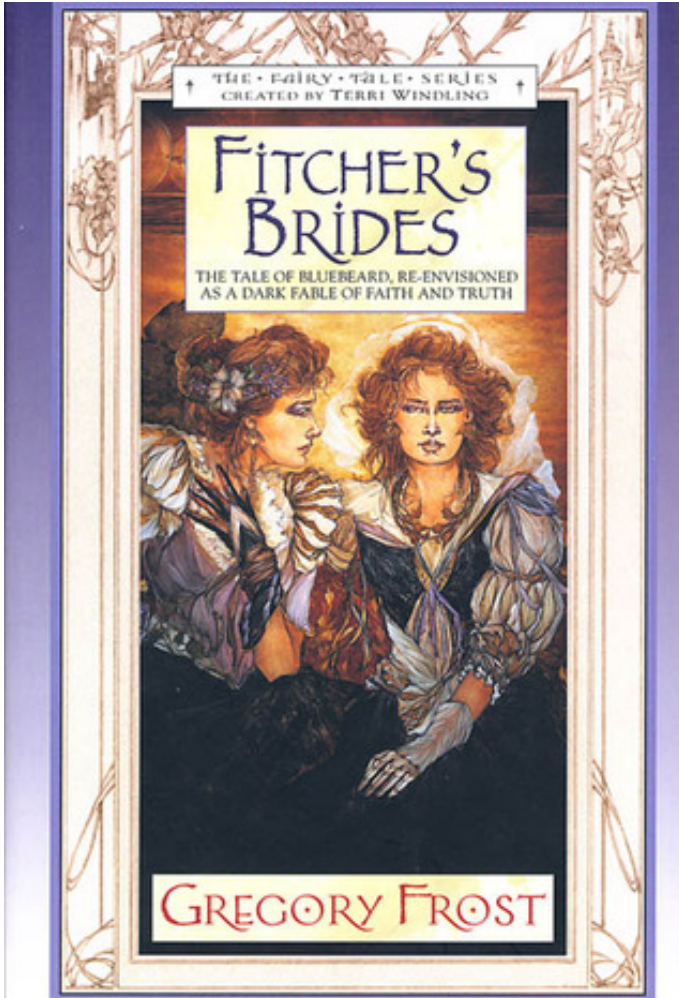

Gregory Frost

Fitcher's Brides (The Fairy Tale Series)



Title: Fitcher's Brides (The Fairy Tale Series)

Author: Gregory Frost

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Description

The tale of Bluebeard, reenvisioned as a dark fable of faith and truth

1843 is the "last year of the world," according to Elias Fitcher, a charismatic preacher in the Finger Lakes district of New York State. He's established a utopian community on an estate outside the town of Jeckyll's Glen, where the faithful wait, work, and pray for the world to end.

Vernelia, Amy, and Catherine Charter are the three young townswomen whose father falls under the Reverend Fitcher's hypnotic sway. In their old house, where ghostly voices whisper from the walls, the girls are ruled by their stepmother, who is ruled in turn by the fiery preacher. Determined to spend Eternity as a married man, Fitcher casts his eye on Vernelia, and before much longer the two are wed. But living on the man's estate, separated from her family, Vern soon learns the extent of her husband's dark side. It's rumored that he's been married before, though what became of those wives she does not know. Perhaps the secret lies in the locked room at the very top of the house—the single room that the Reverend Fitcher has forbidden to her.

Inspired by the classic fairy tales "Bluebeard" and "The Fitcher Bird," this dark fantasy is set in New York State's "Burned-Over District," at its time of historic religious ferment. All three Charter sisters will play their part in the story of Fitcher's Utopia: a story of faith gone wrong, and evil countered by one brave, true soul.

Insightful reviews

Nick: "Fitcher's Brides" is a retelling of the "Bluebeard" story, updated to 19th century upstate New York where a charismatic preacher/leader named Fitcher has created a millennialist utopian community. He mentions the Shakers as a model, though he by no means puts all of the restrictions upon daily living which the Shakers had. Close, but not all. People can get married, for instance. Fitcher, especially, can get married. So a new family moves into the area with three marriagable-age daughters, and Fitcher almost immediately sets his eyes for ... well, I don't think it's too much of a spoiler to say it ... all of them.

So Frost intrigues us at two levels -- 1) the retelling of the Bluebeard story, which is explained in many different manifestations in a prologue, and how close he can relate his "updated" version to any of the originals, and 2) the exposition of this strange religious community which is expecting the end of the world on October 17th of that very year -- something that happened more than a sane humanity would care to remember in 19th century America (and indeed is still happening today).

And it works! The three girls come off as very real characters caught up in a fantastically charismatic situation, and their terror comes off as something they walked into with genuine innocence. The utopian community appears very plausible, and Fitcher the quintessential charismatic leader with a lot of secrets to hide.

What does not work for me so much is the level of supernaturalism in the story. It seems to be put in there to make the story conform to the various legends, moreso than to make the story plausible. I was intrigued by the emphasis on Mesmerism, and I almost wish the supernatural elements had been left to that, almost as a way of explaining the fantastic events in a physically plausible fashion.

But all in all, it's a truly creepy and suspenseful read.

Tabitha Vohn: What do you get when you mix a classic tale of a mythical serial killer with a New England, Messianic cult at the turn of the century? A ripping good tale, that's what. In Fitcher's Brides, Frost combines the faery stories of Bluebeard and Fitcher's Bird in a wholly unique and engrossing account of three sisters who all fall prey to an enigmatic cult leader who lures his members with promises of salvation from the apocalypse.

While those of us familiar with the faery tales will be able to "see it all coming", Frost nevertheless fills his story with mystery and mysticism. We tear through the pages hoping to unravel the mystery of the ghost within the wall of the sister's home, or the Dark Angel that the cult members fear, or the strange men that the sister's encounter in Fitcher's notorious third floor of his mansion. Frost does not disappoint though, and all secrets are revealed by the novel's conclusion in a satisfying manner. Another aspect of this story that makes it a gem is that we are given a glimpse in the workings of Fitcher's mind, in a way that the faery tales don't allow for. Lastly, the sisters are filled with personality, they are humanized, and they are likeable, which adds to the reader investment in the piece.

I love a good thriller, and Fitcher's Bird is fascinating and not devoid of darkness, but not overtly perverse either (think Tanith Lee and her installment to this series).

Windling's introduction is also wonderful; a nice little lecture for those of us who love faery tales.

Wealththeow: Another in Terri Windling's Fairy Tale series, in which a common story is retold. In this case, Frost chose to translate Bluebeard into 1840s America. Quite good.

Michelle Wardhaugh: The collector in me is blissful I obtained it so as to add to the series. The artwork lover in me likes the Thomas Canty portrayal at the cover. The tale lover in me is joyful I simply paid \$1 for it. The place a great fairy story sums up the violence in one sentence, Frost takes pages to explain the gore of running, spouting, viscous blood. You get to learn from the viewpoint of the 1st bride as she watches her physique after her head has been severed from it. The finale is any such feverish pitch of task and rigidity that not anything may possibly stick with that would not be slightly a enable down, now not with the prerequisite "happy" ending. In lots of methods this novel met with my expectations. Any increased telling of "Bluebeard" or "The Robber Bridegroom" might nearly must be ugly and terrifying. It is a fairy story of a serial killer, after all. Horror is usually to not my taste, and this suits too good into that category.

Kerry: Fitcher's Brides is the most recent ebook I have learned from the Terri Windling Fairy story series. Many of the books in that sequence (like Windling's The wooden spouse and Jane

Yolen's Briar Rose) are outstanding whereas others like Tanith Lee's White as Snow have tragically long past horribly, horribly wrong. Unfortunately, Fitcher's Brides are within the latter category. the writer appeared to imagine retelling of Bluebeard set within the compound of a nineteenth century apocalyptic cult would not be spooky or bizarre sufficient so he additional components that have been simply bizarre. whereas some, just like the egg Fitcher supplies every one of his wives, are found in diversifications of the Bluebeard tale the main points he provides onto them are ordinary to claim the least. For example, the egg reasons orgasmic stupors in a single spouse which was once relatively disturbing. I additionally came upon the spirit speaking to the ladies / the Angel of loss of life plotline really silly and suggestion that at the least one of many other halves used to be so disagreeable that i used to be expecting her inevitable end. All in all, this is often the second one booklet during this sequence that I want I had skipped and if it were not for the truth that there were superb gemstones in it, i would not danger a third.

Brittany: an enticing retelling of the story of Bluebeard and The Fitcher fowl in a single (Bluebird? Fitcherbeard?). The Bluebeard personality this time around is a preacher named Elias Fitcher, who has decided that the top occasions are quickly to return and he wishes a bride within the hereafter. He units his attractions on 3 sisters, marrying them each one in turn. the tale is a bit sluggish to get started, yet as soon as it relatively starts off stepping into the connection of Fitcher along with his brides, it becomes a true page-turner. it is so fascinating to work out the spiritual fervor point extra to the story, and the way Fitcher preys at the person insecurities of the other halves (the moment is confident she is going to by no means have a natural soul, and is hence whipped each evening yet by no means absolved of her sin). If it can have picked up swifter than it did, or went extra extensive with the darker features sooner, i'd have cherished it greater than I did, yet it is nonetheless an outstanding learn and a brand new interpretation that works.

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