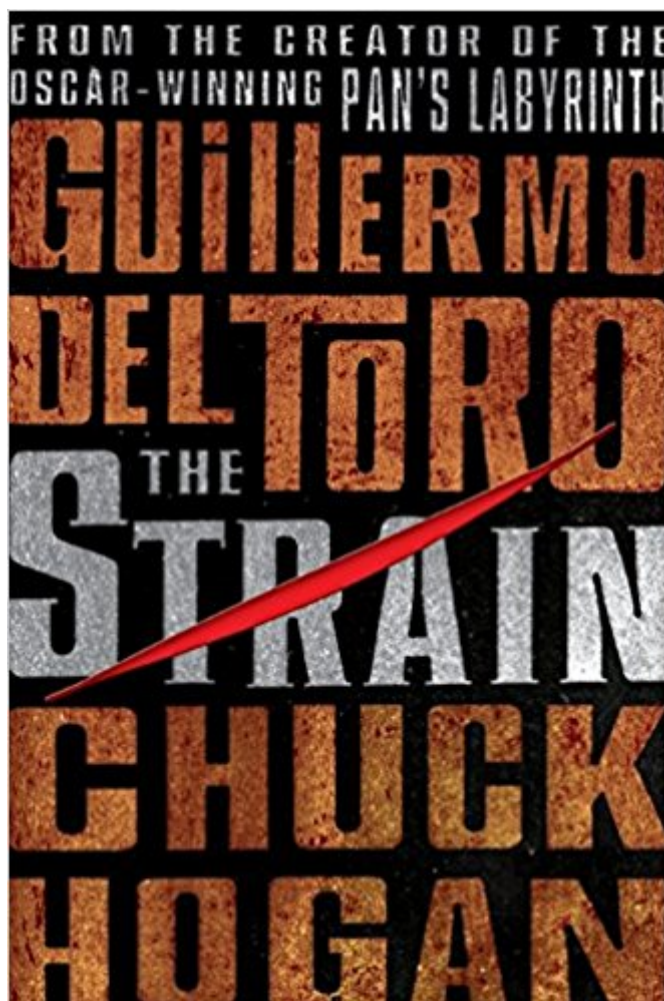


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The Strain: Book One Of The Strain Trilogy



Synopsis

Siempre han estado aquí. Vampiros. En la oscuridad y en secreto. Esperando. Ahora ha llegado su momento. En una semana, tomarán Manhattan. En un mes, el país entero. En dos meses, el mundo. El visionario creador de la película ganadora del Oscar *El laberinto del Fauno* y un escritor ganador del Hammett Award, vuelcan sus imaginaciones en esta audaz novela épica sobre una horrorosa batalla entre hombre y vampiro que amenaza a toda la humanidad. Es la primera entrega de una espeluznante trilogía y un evento editorial internacional extraordinario. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Best of the Month, June 2009: Who better to reinvent the vampire genre than Guillermo Del Toro, the genius behind *Pan's Labyrinth*, and Chuck Hogan, master of character-driven thrillers like *Prince of Thieves*? The first of a trilogy, *The Strain* is everything you want from a horror novel--dark, bloody, and packed full of mayhem and mythology. But, be forewarned, these are not like any vampires you've met before--they're not sexy or star-crossed or "vegetarians"--they are hungry, they are connected, and they are multiplying. The vampire virus marches its way across New York, and all that stands between us and a grotesque end are a couple of scientists, an old man with a decades-old vendetta, and a young boy. This first installment moves fast and sets up the major players, counting down to the beginning of the end. Great summer reading. --Daphne Durham Book

Description The visionary creator of the Academy Award-winning *Pan's Labyrinth* and a Hammett Award-winning author bring their imaginations to this bold, epic novel about a horrifying battle between man and vampire that threatens all humanity. It is the first installment in a thrilling trilogy and an extraordinary international publishing event. *The Strain* They have always been here. Vampires. In secret and in darkness. Waiting. Now their time has come. In one week, Manhattan will be gone. In one month, the country. In two months--the world. A Boeing 777 arrives at JFK and is on its way across the tarmac, when it suddenly stops dead. All window shades are pulled down. All lights are out. All communication channels have gone quiet. Crews on the ground are lost for answers, but an alert goes out to the CDC. Dr. Eph Goodweather, head of their Canary project, a rapid-response team that investigates biological threats, gets the call and boards the plane. What he finds makes his blood run cold. In a pawnshop in Spanish Harlem, a former professor and survivor of the Holocaust named Abraham Setrakian knows something is happening. And he knows the time has come, that a war is brewing . . . So begins a battle of mammoth proportions as the vampiric virus that has infected New York begins to spill out into the streets. Eph, who is joined by Setrakian and a motley crew of fighters, must now find a way to stop the contagion and save his city--a city that includes his wife and son--before it is too late.

The Strain: Chapter One "Once upon a time," said Abraham Setrakian's grandmother, "there was a giant." Young Abraham's eyes brightened, and immediately the cabbage borscht in the wooden bowl got tastier, or at least less garlicky. He was a pale boy, underweight and sickly. His grandmother, intent on fattening him, sat across from him while he ate his soup, entertaining him by spinning a yarn. A *bubbeh meiseh*, a "grandmother's story." A fairy tale. A legend. "He was the son of a Polish nobleman. And his name was Jusef Sardu. Master Sardu stood taller than any other man. Taller than any roof in the village. He had to bow deeply to enter any door. But his great height, it was a burden. A disease of birth, not a blessing. The young man suffered. His muscles lacked the strength to support his long, heavy bones. At times it was a struggle for him just to walk. He used a cane, a tall stick--taller than you--with a silver handle carved into the shape of a wolf's head, which was the family crest." "Yes, Bubbeh?" said Abraham, between spoonfuls. "This was his lot in life, and it taught him humility, which is a rare thing indeed for a nobleman to possess. He had so much compassion-- for the poor, for the hardworking, for the sick. He was especially dear to the children of the village, and his great, deep pockets--the size of turnip sacks--bulged with trinkets and sweets. He had not much of a childhood himself, matching his father's height at the age of eight, and surpassing him by a head at age nine. His frailty and his great size were a secret source of shame to his father. But Master Sardu truly was a gentle giant, and much beloved by his people. It was said of him that

Master Sardu looked down on everyone, yet looked down on no one." She nodded at him, reminding him to take another spoonful. He chewed a boiled red beet, known as a "baby heart" because of its color, its shape, its capillary-like strings. "Yes, Bubbeh?" "He was also a lover of nature, and had no interest in the brutality of the hunt--but, as a nobleman and a man of rank, at the age of fifteen his father and his uncles prevailed upon him to accompany them on a six-week expedition to Romania." "To here, Bubbeh?" said Abraham. "The giant, he came here?" "To the north country, kaddishel. The dark forests. The Sardu men, they did not come to hunt wild pig or bear or elk. They came to hunt wolf, the family symbol, the arms of the house of Sardu. They were hunting a hunting animal. Sardu family lore said that eating wolf meat gave Sardu men courage and strength, and the young masterÃ¢â¬âs father believed that this might cure his sonÃ¢â¬âs weak muscles." "Yes, Bubbeh?" "Their trek was long and arduous, as well as violently opposed by the weather, and Jusef struggled mightily. He had never before traveled anywhere outside his familyÃ¢â¬âs village, and the looks he received from strangers along the journey shamed him. When they arrived in the dark forest, the woodlands felt alive around him. Packs of animals roamed the woods at night, almost like refugees displaced from their shelters, their dens, nests, and lairs. So many animals that the hunters were unable to sleep at night in their camp. Some wanted to leave, but the elder SarduÃ¢â¬âs obsession came before all else. They could hear the wolves, crying in the night, and he wanted one badly for his son, his only son, whose gigantism was a pox upon the Sardu line. He wanted to cleanse the house of Sardu of this curse, to marry off his son, and produce many healthy heirs. "And so it was that his father, off tracking a wolf, was the first to become separated from the others, just before nightfall on the second evening. The rest waited for him all night, and spread out to search for him after sunrise. And so it was that one of JusefÃ¢â¬âs cousins failed to return that evening. And so on, you see." "Yes, Bubbeh?" "Until the only one left was Jusef, the boy giant. That next day he set out, and in an area previously searched, discovered the body of his father, and of all his cousins and uncles, laid out at the entrance to an underground cave. Their skulls had been crushed with great force, but their bodies remained uneaten--killed by a beast of tremendous strength, yet not out of hunger or fear. For what reason, he could not guessÃ¢â¬âs though he did feel himself being watched, perhaps even studied, by some being lurking within that dark cave. "Master Sardu carried each body away from the cave and buried them deep. Of course, this exertion severely weakened him, taking most of his strength. He was spent, he was farmutshet. And yet, alone and scared and exhausted, he returned to the cave that night, to face what evil revealed itself after dark, to avenge his forebears or die trying. This is known from a diary he kept, discovered in the woods many years later. This was his

last entry." Continue Reading The Strain

Starred Review. Director Del Toro (who won an Oscar for *Pan's Labyrinth*) makes a dramatic splash in his fiction debut, the first volume in a vampires vs. humanity trilogy, coauthored with Hogan (Prince of Thieves). Just as a jumbo jet on a flight from Germany to New York is touching down at JFK, something goes terribly wrong. When Ephraim Goodweather, of the Centers for Disease Control, investigates the darkened plane, he finds all but four passengers and crew dead, drained of blood. Despite Goodweather's efforts to keep the survivors segregated, they get discharged into the general population. Soon after, the corpses of the tragedy's victims disappear. The epidemiologist begins to credit the wild stories of Abraham Setrakian, an elderly pawnbroker who's the book's Van Helsing figure, and concludes that a master vampire has arrived in the U.S. The authors maintain the suspense and tension throughout in a tour de force reminiscent of Whitley Strieber's early work. (June) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

After watching the excellent TV show, I thought I would give the novels a try. Books are almost always better, right? No exception here! Follow the delightfully creepy adventures of Ephraim Goodweather, a CDC doctor-turned-vampire hunter; Abraham Setrakian, a now-frail Holocaust survivor who has been waiting his entire adult life for this showdown; and Vasiliy Fet, whose fascinating ability to think like his prey has developed over years of serving as a New York city exterminator, as they try to save the world from a rogue vampire bent on taking over the world. The characters are very relatable; they are human beings with flaws and baggage, and as such they are easy to love. The vampires are not your typical Dracula type in that they don't have pointy teeth or funny accents, and the show follows the book pretty closely. I think fans of horror novels will enjoy this book very much regardless of whether or not they've seen the show. I am well into the next book in the trilogy, *The Fall*, and have yet to be disappointed.

I think that people too often attempt to apply harsh literary standards to fiction and what is essentially supposed to be simple entertainment and that often leads to bad reviews. If you are used to reading *Moby Dick* and *The Scarlet Letter*, then books like this might be tripe to you. However, I was thoroughly entertained and I really enjoyed the story! What I liked best was the intro. This book had one of the most intriguing, engrossing, and scary intros I have read in a very long time! The only problem I had with this book was 1) the pacing...it seemed to bog down at times and lose its

momentum...and 2) I had seen the concept before (Blade II). That being said, I've already purchased book 2 and will be finishing the story with book 3!!

Instead of the pretty boys, hot sexuality and six-packs that you find in many vampire stories, Guillermo Del Toro goes for the viral approach in the strain. His vampires are neither pretty, sexual or witty, and their bodies are not perfected in any way. This is more a story of a virus introduced and starting to run amok, with the CDC virologists, Ephraim and Nora doing everything possible with their Canary team to stop the spread. The action and pacing in this book is non-stop. It is literally like an express train; you get on at page one and you are still on that train after you read the last page, because you are still thinking about the book and everything in it. Setrakian was my favorite character. He is a little boy at the beginning of the book, having soup with his grandmother while she tells him a scary but true story. Later, he is escaping from the Nazis with his family. He also is a prisoner at Treblinka, where he meets his first vampire. He later becomes a University Professor, a Vampire Hunter and a Pawn Broker as well as a specialized arms dealer. By the time the book ends he is an old man, but still hunting vampires. He gets together with the folks from the CDC to try and stop the plague of vampires. You see, someone in the U. S. purposefully brought the strain into the country. Someone with much wealth and influence. The next book should be quite exciting. The only downside that there was to the story is that many of the characters don't have a lot of depth, not only emotionally, but from a sheer sense of backstory. Even the main characters have limited backstory with the exception of Setrakian. I don't know if this is the cinematic influence or not, but I was surprised that Nora, Zack, Kelly, Matt, Vaz and Ephraim have little to no backstory. There were tidbits of Zack, Kelly and Ephraim but these were more like tiny sound bites. All we know about Matt is his job and that he is average and fearful. The book would have reached another level if readers could have really connected deeply with the characters. It would have made this book a classic if the action had been teamed with world-class characterization - then it would have been truly world changing. This is why I gave it 4 stars, the characters, outside of Setrakian felt rather flat to me. I have to say I enjoyed the novel immensely and was riveted to my seat the entire six hours it took me to read the book. I highly recommend this novel to anyone looking for good action novel, a Vampire novel, or just a good thumping read, with the caveat that some of the characters are a little thin - though that doesn't get in the way of the story, if you don't let it.

Then this book is for you. By all appearances this reads like a vampire story that uses pathology to explain the outbreak from loosely medical terms. But it completely ignores basic human behaviour

and any plausibility. I hate long reviews so I will only give one example but it's a big one. The four survivors of some mysterious illness or attack on a plane resulting in the deaths of 206 others are allowed to leave CDC quarantine in less than 24 hours of being found. All 4 showing symptoms of illness. The book seemed to want to blend a vampire story with a sense of reality. But the actions and the reactions of the characters never felt realistic. The protagonists were so idiotic that I couldn't feel sympathetic to them. And, thus, I hoped the vampires won. I'm not going to bother with the subsequent books.

I bought this 1st book in the trilogy because I simply love the TV show but, I was really surprised at how much written background you pick up. Some of the people that I don't particularly like in the TV show, I came to like in the book. This is a short read but, it does get you soooooo interested in the next book. Buy it if you love the show or....if you like Vampire stories with a really hard twist!

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