

Library Lines by Lily Collins, CCS senior and Kirkland Town Library staff person

I've never really enjoyed the horror genre. I don't know why, but it just never really sat right with me. I didn't like the books, or the movies, or comics or anything else. I wasn't grossed out by the gore, or terrified of the genre, it just wasn't something I really enjoyed. However, that changed when I read *The Cask of Amontillado* by Edgar Allan Poe in 9th grade english class. For whatever reason, I absolutely love horror stories in the short story format. I wonder if it is just due to the fact that I can only take small doses of horror, or if the concentrated story works better. No matter why, here are some of my favorite scary short stories to enjoy during the spookiest month of the year!

The Cask of Amontillado by Edgar Allan Poe

One of my favorite stories of all time is *The Cask of Amontillado*. It is the story of two "friends" at a Italian carnival who go down into Montresor's wine cellars to try wine. However, Montresor feels that his friend has wronged him, and has much more nefarious plans than just a wine tasting. In my opinion, this is the perfect introduction to short horror stories, it is both well written and very creepy!.

The Jaunt by Steven King

I love science fiction, so a story about futuristic teleportation gone wrong immediately piqued my interest. I was fascinated by the story, an embedded narrative of a father, about to "jaunt" with his family, telling his children the story of "jaunting" came to be. The story of a family moving from New York to Mars was somewhat interesting, and combined with the story of how a scientist figured out the secret teleportation- and the costs of that discovery- was fascinating. I was honestly not expecting the twist at the end of the story, it's definitely worth a read!

The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Now, the next title is debatably in the horror genre, *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. It's not even a story that would never happen, it was inspired by very real events. *The Yellow Wallpaper* tells the story of a woman who experienced a "temporary nervous depression," most likely postpartum depression, and is forced to do nothing but rest and recover. However, spending so much time alone in a room with nothing to do, she fixates on the yellow wallpaper, which leads her further down her spiral. It is a captivating work!

The Lottery by Shirley Jackson

Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery* a remarkable look at humans, and how traditions can haunt people for generations. The short story follows a small town as they go through a yearly ritual known as the The Lottery. With no information on what the Lottery is, the story leaves the reader on the edge of their seat until the truth is revealed! It also provides a fascinating look into human nature- but it was very controversial when it came out, and was even banned in South Africa.

Some of these stories are in the public domain, which means they can be downloaded for free online, while others are available through the Mid-York system. Please give the library a call at (315) 853-2038 or go to kirklandtownlibrary.org.