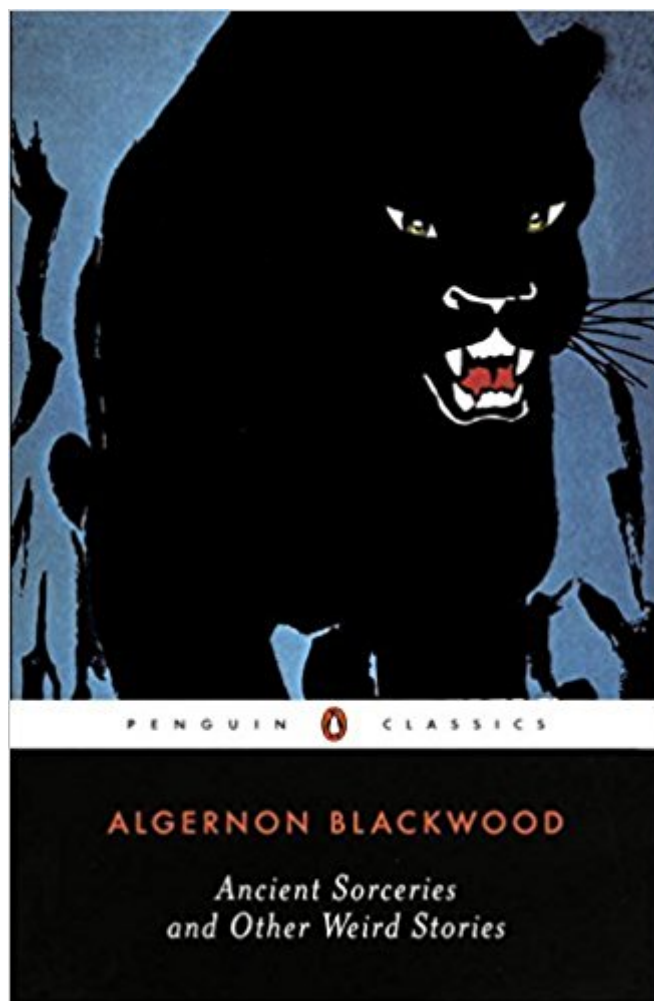


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# Ancient Sorceries And Other Weird Stories (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

By turns bizarre, unsettling, spooky, and sublime, *Ancient Sorceries and Other Weird Stories* showcases nine incomparable stories from master conjuror Algernon Blackwood. Evoking the uncanny spiritual forces of Nature, Blackwood's writings all tread the nebulous borderland between fantasy, awe, wonder, and horror. Here Blackwood displays his best and most disturbing work-including "The Willows," which Lovecraft singled out as "the single finest weird tale in literature"; "The Wendigo"; "The Insanity of Jones"; and "Sand." For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Of the quality of Mr Blackwood's genius there can be no dispute; for no one has ever approached the skill, seriousness, and minute fidelity with which he records the overtones of strangeness in ordinary things and experiences." —H.P. Lovecraft  
"To many, including H.P. Lovecraft, 'The Willows' is the finest story in the canon of supernatural fiction. (Blackwood himself is, arguably, the central figure in the British supernatural literature of the twentieth century.)" —Michael Dirda, *New York Review of Books*

S. T. Joshi is a freelance writer and editor. He has edited Penguin Classics editions of H. P. Lovecraft's *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories* (1999), and *The Thing on the Doorstep and Other Weird Stories* (2001), as well as Algernon Blackwood's *Ancient Sorceries and Other Strange Stories* (2002). Among his critical and biographical studies are *The Weird Tale* (1990), *Lord Dunsany: Master of the Anglo-Irish Imagination* (1995), *H. P. Lovecraft: A Life* (1996), and *The Modern Weird Tale* (2001). He has also edited works by Ambrose Bierce, Arthur Machen, and H. L. Mencken, and is compiling a three-volume *Encyclopedia of Supernatural Literature*. He lives with his wife in Seattle, Washington.

I am very glad I came across this book. Blackwood is a terrific storyteller and these shorts are lots of fun to read. They are very unique and mix lots of creepy and fantastic elements together in order to create exciting tales that, frankly, tell better than some modern short fiction stories I have read! What a imaginative author. Great read at a great price.PS- I have several of the Penguin Classics that involve the eerie and fantastic fiction of authors from the past, such as Clarke Ashton Smith and HP Lovecraft. They are all enjoyable. Fun introductions to the authors if you haven't read them before. Some of these authors are the inspiration for the many weird and scary elements and ideologies involved in our various formats of media today.

-I was recently directed to an outstanding author, famous for haunting, scary, engrossing stories, whose work I hadn't read before. Algernon Blackwood, is his name, and he was called to my attention by the editor of a White Nationalist web page, who posted "Willows" on his web site as example of excellent White art.After reading the story, I couldn't get it out of my mind, so I searched the web for information, and ultimately bought this book from . "Willows," is among the stories collected here, and it is better than most; but, as a whole, the entire book is great entertainment.Blackwood, has been compared to Edgar Allen Poe, in his ability to create psychological tension, and palpable unease that creeps up on the reader, and remains awhile. There is great subtlety in the author's presentation of Nature and its relationship to Mankind.There are nine Blackwood stories in this 374 page book, including about twenty five pages of Explanatory Notes, which shed light on the author and the stories. A number of other Blackwood stories are collected in other books, also available at .A good choice for a rainy night of reading, alone, in an isolated location.

This series is one of my favorites. The Blackwood volume is no exception.

A bit of a letdown. I must be missing something because I heard great things about Blackwood and the stories in this volume did not measure up to his reputation. Suspense built nicely in many of the stories and he often created a sense of mystery and unanswered questions but invariably the stories end by fizzling out with no real climax and many loose ends. After reading Grabinski right after Blackwood the contrast between the two is vivid. Grabinski leaves the reader with questions to ponder and a sense of completion while still leaving much of the action up to interpretation.

Blackwood left me with a sense that he could have continued the story indefinitely and after an arbitrary number of words before basically declaring the story over and having the protagonist go home. The exception to this is Wendigo which I thought built nicely, climaxed effectively, and found the correct balance between explaining too much and being incoherently vague. Worth reading to experience a different style of story-telling, but unless your tastes differ greatly from mine will leave you with the feeling that you've read half a story and then set it aside.

Gift. rad

Perfect!

praise only, no complaints

Good read

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