

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin purple lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming distinct geometric shapes like triangles and polygons. The overall aesthetic is modern and digital.

When I Arrived at the Castle

Written by Emily Carroll

Published by sanmarco-sf

Table of Contents

When I Arrived At The Castle	1
When I Arrived In Spanish	2
When I Arrived At The Castle Read Online	3
When I Arrived At The Castle Review	4
When I Arrived At The Castle Pdf	5
When I Arrived In French	6
When I Arrived At The Castle Explained	7
When I Arrived Beard Shavings In Sink	8
When I Arrived To	9
When I Arrived John Started To Cook	10

When I Arrived at the Castle

When I Arrived at the Castle

By Emily Carroll

When I Arrived At The Castle

"A castle, a killer, and prey all bound and blurred by lust and blood."

When I Arrived at the Castle

When I Arrived In Spanish

Like many before her that have never come back, she's made it to the Countess' castle determined to snuff out the horror, but she could never be prepared for what hides within its turrets; what unfurls under its fluttering flags. Emily Carroll has fashioned a rich gothic horror charged with eroticism that doesn't just make your skin crawl, it crawls into it.

It was a dark and stormy night!

! when a cat-like humanoid rocked up to the vampiric Countess' castle to slay her. Yup, that old chestnut! But who is the predator and who is the prey?

Emily Carroll's When I Arrived at the Castle is a disappointingly weak and unmemorable lesbian/horror fairy tale, the kind of book I imagine Angela Carter would've produced if she'd made comics. Carroll mashes together elements of Dracula, Bluebeard and Beauty and the Beast into a barely coherent, rambling story wh

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Carroll's art is utterly beautiful though. The splash-pages are intricate and imaginative dreamscapes gorgeously coloured in striking blacks, whites and reds and I loved the highly stylized, baroque designs of the castle. Her take on the Countess is interesting and the character was genuinely creepy with some actually shocking scenes (the keyhole!).

Visually this is an appealing book but the dreamlike story is much less compelling to read. And, like a dream (or nightmare), not long after reading When I Arrived at the Castle I'd already forgotten most of it and moved on! If you've not read it I recommend Emily Carroll's other, much better book, Through the Woods, instead. ...more

When I Arrived At The Castle Read Online

I am a huge fan of Emily Carroll, and very much like *When I Arrived at the Castle*, which might best be described as a lesbian horror fairy tale. Here's a bit of what happens: A cat-eared human visits a Countess's castle to kill her. We don't know why, but she isn't the first to try. She is surprised to find that the Countess is waiting for her. The cat-girl is led to a series of (red) doors, behind each a tragic fairy tale she must navigate to survive and remain sane. It's an ode here to literature, to fairy tales that scare and seduce us. What happens later is the sex part, which gets murky and complicated, as in dreams.

The Countess is a vampire, a femme fatale, alluring and dangerous and creepy, the flame to the cat-girl's moth. But how can we resist her attractions?! And she's a shape-changer: one of the most alarming and amazing sequences happens as cat-girl watches the Countess at her dressing table. Successfully scary!

So it's dark erotic fantasy in Carroll's signature black and white and (bloody) red. A touch of gothic, certainly. Decadent in the way of nineteenth century "decadent" art. A nod to things like *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, after which she takes off in a swirlingly dangerous and delicious direction the Bronte women could not have taken (but possibly allude to). And complicated, in the ways of the best of fantasy, which leave us some space to dream in our own heads and maybe leave us a bit confused if we try to explain it all. Which is to say it prioritizes atmosphere over plot. All about mysterious, intense feelings, in that Poe/Bronte romantic sense. At the intersection of violence and eroticism, which means it is not for kiddies.

And the art style fits the open, reader-based narrative of fantasy; Carroll almost never uses a panel structure at all, favoring (bloody) splash pages in rhapsodic fashion. It's a poetic structure that fits a tale of mystery and imagination, one that allows for the "grotesque."

Maybe for my tastes (ahem!) I like the more the (slightly) more conventional *Through the Woods* tales, but from light fantasy and YA (her illustrated *Speak*) to dark horror, Carroll can do it all, the best there is. And you can find her stuff, wonderful short shorts, on her website for free sampling, too.

I guess I rate this as 4 stars because I think the degree of confusion I still have after two readings is greater than I prefer, but the art is 5 stars, for sure.

...more

When I Arrived at the Castle

This is just one story, but all in striking blacks, reds, and whites like her previous work. A woman arrives at a castle, but why is she there, and who is the person answering the door? Things are not what they seem.

This is not for kids, as the eroticism and violence might be a bit much! Definitely a tale for adults.

I received a copy of this from the publisher through Edelweiss. It came out April 16, 2019.

When I Arrived At The Castle Review

The once was a girl that lived in a deep and damp and dark cellar...

Carroll has crafted another beautifully atmospheric and decadent novel that skirts the line of horror and the gothic. A curious and courageous cat-eared girl braves the castle of a vampiric countess with plans to destroy her. Plans change and go pear-shaped when the strange catgirl instead finds that the countess is waiting for her. Soon, the girl is sent into a maze of tragic fairy tales and stories that she must claw her way th The once was a girl that lived in a deep and damp and dark cellar...

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This story is a rich work that you need to read a few times to get all the meanings. It is beautifully executed, much is conveyed in the simple palette of three colors; bone white, black, and blood red. It is gothic; ornate when it needs to be and simple when it doesn't. The backgrounds are simple with repeating patterns, but still very useful. It is a hauntingly scary work for a short graphic novella much in the style of her other novels (Out of Skin, Through The Woods) and shouldn't be missed. ...more

Gothic erotic violent bloody and disturbing, as one expects horror by Emily Carroll to be. A cat-like girl arrives at a castle out of the cold and rain and is greeted by a beautiful woman of seductive beauty. But others have been to the castle before and her arrival was expected. Nothing is what it seems and the beautiful woman is only a skin inhabited by a horrible vampiric beast. Somehow our girl must kill this demon who has slayed the other innocent girls who came to eliminate her before. The Gothic erotic violent bloody and disturbing, as one expects horror by Emily Carroll to be. A cat-like girl arrives at a castle out of the cold and rain and is greeted by a beautiful woman of seductive beauty. But others have been to the castle before and her arrival was expected. Nothing is what it seems and the beautiful woman is only a skin inhabited by a horrible vampiric beast. Somehow our girl must kill this demon who has slayed the other innocent girls who came to eliminate her before. The story seems mostly an excuse for Carroll's gorgeous illustrations and is deliberately convoluted. Definitely not for children, with lesbian erotica and lots of disturbing bloody violence. David wrote an excellent review some hours back that had me thinking I shouldn't even attempt my own review and should just post a link to his. Can't do that on my phone but will provide when I am at my computer next. ...more

When I Arrived at the Castle

When I Arrived At The Castle Pdf

2 stars for content but 5 stars for artwork.

When I Arrived at the Castle is a Gothic adaptation mixing Dracula and Alice in Wonderland so I was very intrigued to pick this up. I thoroughly enjoyed Carroll's previous publication, *Through the Woods*, but felt this effort wasn't up to the same standard in terms of storytelling. There is something delightfully macabre and deliciously wicked about Carroll's illustrations but, in this case, the actual story wasn't that coherent and a bit confusing at 2 stars for content but 5 stars for artwork.

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The Cheshire Cat and the Queen of Hearts fistfight in hell in this unsettling and gory tone piece.

When I Arrived at the Castle

When I Arrived In French

Emily Carroll's bloody, beautiful, suggestive, ornately grotesque artwork is masterful, as always, but the story lacks coherency. I'm all for evocative mood and ambiguity, but I honestly do not understand the story after reading it twice; it's spare and poetic and effectively so, but more confusing than any folkloric story should be. I think I needed a little more (view spoiler)[to figure out the cat, the girl, the seductress, and the two(?) castles (or was it the same castle?). (hide spoiler)]

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So, 5 stars for the artwork, and the interplay between the art and the story; 2.5 to 3 for the story itself. ...more

Omg, how gorgeous was this book? It's a gothic romance with a heaping spoonful of body horror and dark fairytale. It's spooky, it's erotic, and it's an absolutely engrossing read. The coloring is genius and the style is mesmerizing. Emily Carroll is an absolute master and she strung me along by the nose start to bloody finish.

When I Arrived at the Castle

When I Arrived At The Castle Explained

What Elena said.

Feminist lesbian body horror at it's best!

I'm a big fan of Emily Carroll's work, namely Through the Woods and her prolific webcomics, which are absolutely amazing. With striking two-tone artwork and an enthralling, bloody, terrifically-paced narrative, When I Arrived at the Castle delivers.

The best way I can describe it is this: Victorian Gothic, specifically Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's Carmilla meets the likes of Angela Carter or Karen Russell. Wonderfully nuanced and full of surprises.

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Thank you to Koyama Press for an advance reading copy. ...more

When I Arrived at the Castle

When I Arrived Beard Shavings In Sink

5 stars for artwork but maybe 2.5 for story because it was beautiful but I'm confused by what I actually read? I mean a lot was left up to interpretation but too much was unexplained. I think if it had been longer I would've given it a higher rating. Still I'll read anything she creates. So there's that.

I didn't fully understand the story, but I loved the creepy, erotic tone.

When I Arrived To

Whaaaaaaaaattttt?!?!?!?!?

This book is exactly like a nightmare; I've never seen anything capture how bad dreams look and feel and seem so effectively. Also, titties.

A triumph of art, story, and design, *When I Arrived at the Castle* is an erotic, dreamlike graphic novel that combines gothic horror and fairy tales into an indefinable work of terror and beauty and the delicious fear that results when the two collide. The narrator, a cat-like young woman, arrives at a castle to kill the Countess, a vampiric monster who has been expecting the young woman's arrival. Any further attempt to explain the plot would do very little to convey the eerie, transformative nature of this book; imagine a Hammer film starring only femmes fatales, directed by Clive Barker, with a script by Lewis Carroll (no relation). Surreal and sumptuous, this is Emily Carroll's most innovative and breathtaking work to date.

The interior of the castle is a marvel, a black, white, and blood-red maze that looks like M. C. Escher by way of Jim Steranko. The perspectives loom and disorient, pulling the reader in to the Countess's seductive and terrifying game of cat-and-mouse. Just like the halls of the castle, reality loops back in on itself; Carroll layers stories on top of stories, leaving the reader no choice but to surrender themselves to the phantasmagorical narrative. This is a book you will re-read obsessively.

The Countess is a remarkable character. She's alluring and frightening in equal measure, constantly slipping out of and into different skins as the mood strikes her. In one particularly Eisner-worthy sequence, the unnamed narrator watches through a keyhole as the Countess sits at her dressing table. Initially the Countess appears as a beautiful human woman, pinning up her hair and regarding herself sensually in the mirror. What happens after she drops her human disguise is, simply put, horror at its finest.

I'd like to continue waxing rhapsodic on this keyhole sequence, but I'm heading into spoiler territory, so consider yourselves warned: SPOILERS AHEAD. Please skip the paragraph below if you want to remain unspoiled.

I read this on my laptop, flipping through pages individually rather than viewing the typical two-page spreads of a physical book, and for the first time in my life a comic book page made me jump out of my seat. Having seen the layout of the physical book, though, I can safely say that I would have jumped just

When I Arrived at the Castle

as high while reading a "cereal" book as I did while reading my eARC. Carroll plays with reader expectations and crafts an impeccably-timed jump scare that is organic to the story and gorgeously illustrated. (Jump scares may be looked down upon by some horror fans, but I maintain that when they're done well, they're brilliant examples of what makes horror great. This six-page sequence from Emily Carroll is one such example of what makes horror great.)

YOU ARE HEREBY MARKED SAFE FROM SPOILERS.

This haunting, surreal graphic novel further demonstrates what Emily Carroll's fans have known for years that she is one of the most talented and intriguing creators in horror comics. With *When I Arrived at the Castle*, she reaches new heights of terror and artistic achievement. Her hypnotic illustrations and eerie, poetic storytelling ensnare the reader in a labyrinthine fairy tale that they'll never want to escape.

My thanks to Koyama Press and Edelweiss+ for providing an advance copy in exchange for an honest review. ...more

When I Arrived John Started To Cook

Every work of Emily Carroll's I've seen is just magnificent. I still don't quite know how she does it; I honestly don't believe I'm a skilled enough artist to fully grasp it.

Her horror reads like poetry, Poe-like and deeply evocative, rhythmic and hypnotic. Her imagery is so delightfully drippy (typically with blood), oozing with just the right amount of gore, full of crazed eyes, flowing fabrics, ghostly hands and fingers, looming darkness and jarring swatches of light. Her characteristically limited palette (black, red, and white) always serves her well, and no line is ever wasted.

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I also found myself appreciating more than ever, reading this latest -- which I'd been waiting on the release of for months, then had to spend at least a good 20-30 minutes savoring -- how her images progress. They coincide just right with the way her words are read, somehow knowing just how to best match reading rhythm to the intake of the visuals. She does not really ever do traditional panels, nor does she have to; she has incredible skill for laying out each page (and this includes two-page full spreads) in such a way that your eye is always drawn where it needs to go, even if it needs to move in a way it might not naturally do. This is an easy gift to miss if you don't know to look for it, because when something like this is done so well, the entire point is that your mind does NOT see it.

There is always at least one slight twist of character or plot, even in her shortest stories, that drops my mouth open to just the right degree of delicious horror. All of these things and more are why I feel there is no one better making horror graphic novels today. Her work is unmistakable, distinctive, hugely effective, and eerily beautiful. I want to re-read and stare at it for hours, and ultimately probably will, I'm sure. ...more

I'm not really sure how I want to rate this just yet!

For artwork, Emily Carroll is the best, mixing in this volume her signature reds and grayscale/bold blacks and whites, while also featuring some solely white and grey pages to contrast with the bolder colouring on other pages. I genuinely think she's a master of colour, especially in horror stories told in a graphic format, she's truly one of a kind.

I always love her focus on the relationships between women, too; this one especially is a tale I'm not really sure how I want to rate this just yet!

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I always love her focus on the relationships between women, too; this one especially is a tale about a human with cat features who arrives at the home of a Countess, a vampire-like shapeshifter, and the horrors she witnesses there. While it's not the strongest of her stories that I've read- my particular favourite is *The Nesting Place*-, it's still very much an erotic, Gothic story that really has a great atmosphere to it.

Highly recommend this one! ...more