

author

## Jesse Bullington

### *The Sad Tale of the Brothers Grossbart*

#### Bio

Born and raised in rural Pennsylvania, Jesse Bullington spent his childhood alternating between deep pine woods and rich libraries. Before moving with his family and completing his adolescence in North Florida, he spent a formative year living in the Netherlands. He currently conspires with his lovely wife to escape the muggy climes of the South for the Pacific Northwest.

Upon receiving his Magna Cum Laude Bachelor degrees in both History and English Literature from Florida State University, he immediately set to work on *The Sad Tale of the Brothers Grossbart*. While he published a multi-award nominated short story in the anthology *The Book of More Flesh*, he favors the complexity and depth only a novel can provide.

His film reviews have been featured in several publications and websites.

The author's love for the historical and the fantastic have shaped both his life and his writing.



#### From Jeff VanderMeer

"I read the first ninety pages of what looks to be a remarkable novel last week... The odds of being handed a novel by a new, relatively young writer and being blown away by what you read are...very low. But that's exactly what happened."

#### **The Sad Tale of the Brothers Grossbart**

World, Orbit USA, Fall 2009

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## ***The Sad Tale of the Brothers Grossbart***

### **Overview**

In the plague-wracked and devil-haunted darkness of Medieval Europe, an elite few enjoy opulent lives while the majority ekes out a miserable existence in abject poverty. Hungry creatures stalk the deep woods and desolate mountains, and both sea and sky teem with unspeakable horrors. For those ill-fated masses not born into wealth, life is but a vicious trial to be endured before the end of days.

Hegel and Mengele Grossbart could give a toss. Being of low birth means little, after all, when the riches of the mighty wait just inside the next crypt. The graverobbing twins know enough about crusading to realize that if one is to make a living from the dead, what better destination than the fabled tomb-cities of Egypt?

Embarking on a naïve quest for fortune, the pious yet ignoble and murderous Grossbarts attempt to keep their faith no matter the consequences.

Theirs is a world both familiar and distant; a world of living saints and livelier demons, of beguiling beauties and cruel tragedies, of monsters and madmen. The Brothers Grossbart are about to discover that all legends have their truths, and worse fates than death await those who would take the red road of villainy.

### **Excerpt**

Taking a long pull of the drink, Ennio thought of a certain lady in Venice who would make him forget all about mysterious towns, strange passengers and frigid necropoli. He thought of her olive skin and green eyes... Then he saw Hegel remove a prybar from his bag and jam it into the door of the crypt, and Ennio spit beer all over himself.

“What you do this?” Ennio coughed.

“Pipe down,” said Mengele.

“You mean to enter it?” Ennio gasped.

“Course we do,” Mengele snapped, digging the snow out from the bottom of the door.

“Got it?” Hegel asked, setting down the prybar.

“Yeah,” Mengele sighed, “but they got us good, too. What you make a this?”

Hegel hunkered beside his brother. Thick stones and masonry sealed the bottom of the door. The Grossbarts had encountered worse. They each dug in their bags while Ennio paced, staring aghast at them.

“What could the inside tell us of the town? Or that stink by the gate?” Ennio demanded.

“Nuthin.” Hegel said, pulling out a hammer and chisel.

“Less than,” said Mengele. “Inside a graves only tell the future, not the past.”

“Common misconception.” Hegel agreed, setting the chisel in place.

“What?” Ennio’s head swum. “What nonsense are you speaking?”

“Well,” Mengele said, raising his hammer. “The content a this here stone-house’ll tell us what’s to come. If it’s full a riches, then we’s rich, and if it ain’t, we ain’t.”