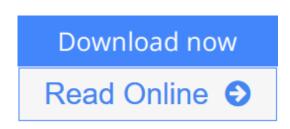


# A Night in the Lonesome October (Rediscovered Classics)

By Roger Zelazny



# A Night in the Lonesome October (Rediscovered Classics) By Roger Zelazny

Loyally accompanying a mysterious knife-wielding gentleman named Jack on his midnight rounds through the murky streets of London, good dog Snuff is busy helping his master collect the grisly ingredients needed for an unearthly rite that will take place not long after the death of the moon. But Snuff and his master are not alone. All manner of participants, both human and not, are gathering with their ancient tools and their animal familiars in preparation for the dread night. It is brave, devoted Snuff who must calculate the patterns of the Game and keep track of the Players—the witch, the mad monk, the vengeful vicar, the Count who sleeps by day, the Good Doctor and the hulking Experiment Man he fashioned from human body parts, and a wild-card American named Larry Talbot—all the while keeping Things at bay and staying a leap ahead of the Great Detective, who knows quite a bit more than he lets on.

Boldly original and wildly entertaining, *A Night in the Lonesome October* is a darkly sparkling gem, an amalgam of horror, humor, mystery, and fantasy. First published in 1993, it was Zelazny's last book prior to his untimely death. Many consider it the best of the fantasy master's novels. It has inspired many fans to read it every year in October, a chapter a day, and served as inspiration for Neil Gaiman's brilliant story "Only the End of the World Again."

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# **Editorial Review**

### From Publishers Weekly

Leaving his ever-popular and ever-expanding Amber series behind for the nonce, Zelazny delivers a cheerful, witty, well-crafted fantasy narrated by Snuff, dog-companion to Jack the Ripper. It seems that Jack is in fact a sorcerer and his gruesome exploits were perpetrated in the service of his magic. But the Ripper's killings are tangential to the tale of an upcoming struggle between magical personages. In a rare occurrence, the cosmic forces are in alignment, permitting an opening for the Elder Gods to return to Earth. "Openers" are contending with "closers," who want to keep the Elder Gods shut out. Snuff recounts the day-by-day preparations as players size up the competition, gather their magical arsenals and make and break alliances. Snuff himself maneuvers among other familiars (a cat named Graymalk, a snake called Quicklime, etc.). An instantly recognizable gothic compliment of characters includes a mad doctor trying to reanimate a patchwork corpse with lightning, a werewolf named Larry Talbot and a "Great Detective" who haunts the sidelines. Zelazny handles this material with a charm few can match, and while this novel does not approach the depth of his best work like Lord of Light , its deft, understated good humor and spare, poetic prose reaffirm Zelazny as one of fantasy's most skilled practitioners.

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#### From Kirkus Reviews

After years of unprepossessing folderol--the wearisome Nine Princes in Amber retreads are depressingly typical--Zelazny bursts forth with, well, ``Victorian light supernatural fantasy" just about covers it. Narrator Snuff, a guard dog who performs complex thaumaturgical calculations in his head, has many duties: to keep various Things firmly trapped in mirrors, wardrobes, and steamer trunks; to accompany his master, Jack--he of the magical blade--on weird collecting expeditions into the graveyards and slums of Victorian London; and--for a single hour each night--discuss the day's goings-on in human speech. Snuff's neighbors include: Jill the witch and her familiar, Graymalk the cat, with whom Snuff forms a friendly alliance; Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Frankenstein, Dracula, a werewolf, and a satanic vicar. The witches, detectives, doctors, vampires, etc., along with their equally industrious familiars, trade information and scheme for advantage as the full moon of Halloween approaches; at that time, a magical showdown to decide the fate of the Earth will occur. Some of the characters are ``openers," equally resolved to keep the magical door nailed shut; and a few are involved yet stand outside the Game altogether. Snuff's problem is to discover who is which. Sparkling, witty, delightful: Zelazny's best for ages, perhaps his best ever. -- *Copyright* ©*1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.* 

### Review

"Sparkling, witty, delightful: Zelazny's best for ages, perhaps his best ever." -Kirkus Reviews

"A cheerful, witty, well-crafted fantasy.... Its deft, understated good humor and spare, poetic prose reaffirm Zelazny as one of fantasy's most skilled practitioners." —*Publishers Weekly* 

"The last great novel by one of the giants of the genre." -George R. R. Martin

"Jack the Ripper meets Dracula, Dr. Frankenstein, Sherlock Holmes, and a few other choice individuals in this romp through the annals of literary horror and mystery.... Zelazny's quirky humor and Wilson's

appropriately creepy drawings complement each other in grand style." -Library Journal

"A madcap blend of horror tropes and fantasy.... There aren't many authors who would set out to write a novel in which the Wolfman and Jack the Ripper were the two heroes.... And I'm not sure anyone else could have made it work." —*Science Fiction Chronicle* 

"Bewitching . . . a supernatural romp." — Philadelphia News

# **Users Review**

### From reader reviews:

### **Cheryl Grosvenor:**

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