



## 8 Books by Indigenous Horror Authors

Native American Heritage Month is an excellent time to begin a life-long love affair with Indigenous horror fiction.

By [Lisa Quigley](#) | Published Nov 1, 2021



This [post from @indigenizingartsed on Instagram](#) says, “a story is a gift from a creator.” When authors share their worldview, experiences, and interior worlds in the form of the written word, it’s an act of generosity, a gesture of connection. Every author gives us a glimpse into their perspective, background, and lived experience with each word they commit to the page. That’s the gift of books—and also why it’s so vital to read stories from a diverse range of authors: To fill in the gaps created by the individual limitations of our personal experiences.

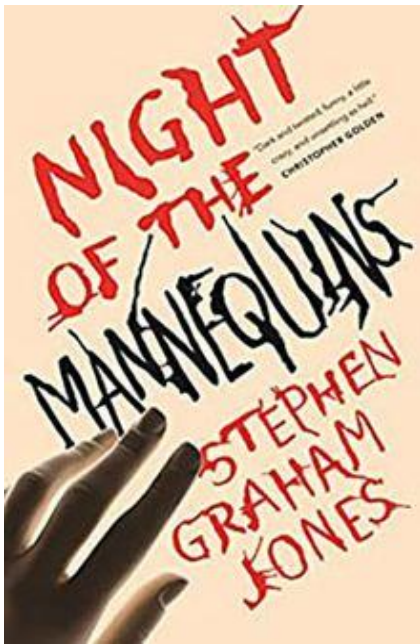
Reading a wide range of stories from a broad array of writers deepens our understanding of the world we inhabit; it strengthens our awareness of the diversity of lived experiences and builds our capacity for empathy. The reader/writer relationship is one of reciprocity. The writer shares their story, and the

reader receives and absorbs it—and transmutes what they've received through their own unique expression. Stories are both how we learn from each other, and how we evolve—and they have been, ever since those first stories told over fires so long ago.

November is [Native American Heritage Month](#)—and as is true for any month formally designated on a calendar as a time to celebrate a historically marginalized culture, ethnicity, gender, or sexual identity, a single month is not enough to contain the richness, diversity, challenges, inequities, triumphs, and joys experienced by any identity group. Despite these complexities, Native American Heritage Month can be a starting point—a time to listen, pay attention, learn more about modern Indigenous culture—and do better. And while we're at it, it's an excellent time to start (and then never, ever stop!) reading horror fiction by Indigenous authors.

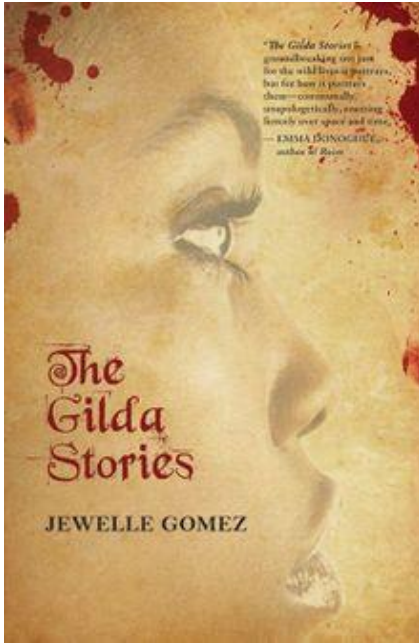
This list is not exhaustive, nor are these books meant to be read in November only. It's a sampling of some of the incredible talent among Indigenous horror authors intended to spur your curiosity, broaden your horizons, and further fuel your passion for reading horror. So without further ado, here are eight books by Native horror authors to get you started on your life long journey to reading more Indigenous horror!

***Night of the Mannequins* by Stephen Graham Jones**      **Night of the Mannequins**  
By **Stephen Graham Jones**



At this point, any horror reader worth their salt knows who Stephen Graham Jones is—and in 2020, his novel [The Only Good Indians](#) was a New York Times Bestseller that received endless praise. But likely you already know about that book, so the one I want to share today is his novella [The Night of the Mannequins](#)—also released in 2020. It has great slasher movie vibes—and yet, as is always the case with SGJ's work, it's utterly surprising and original. When a teen prank goes very, very wrong, a teenager has to make some really tough decisions in order to protect the people he loves. Or ... is he just a psychopath? It's a fast read, and the morally ambiguous dilemma tucked within the pages will stay with you long after you turn the final page.

## ***The Gilda Stories* by Jewelle Gomez**

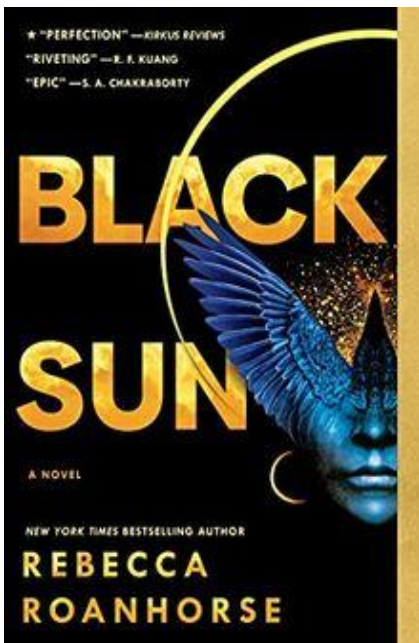


## **The Gilda Stories**

**By Jewelle Gomez**

This features a lesbian, multiracial, feminist vampire as the main character—a woman who escapes enslavement and learns about freedom in a brothel. There, she is initiated by two other women into the eternal life of a vampire. This provocative novel became an instant classic when it was first published in 1991, dealing with themes of race, class, sexuality—and the eroticism inherent in the vampire ethos.

## ***Black Sun* by Rebecca Roanhorse**



## **Black Sun**

**By Rebecca Roanhorse**

While not a horror writer per se, Rebecca Roanhorse is an author who's fiction defies genre—and her work is doing incredible things for science fiction, fantasy, and horror combined. *Black Sun* is no exception; it's epic fantasy with strong body horror elements. Think *Game of Thrones*—but better! A solar eclipse is coming, and legends in the holy city of Tovalegends prophecy the return of a god. The weight of history, the struggle of individuals in restrictive and harmful systems, the capacity of the human heart for both altruism and depravity—despite its fantastical elements, this tale has never been more relevant.

***Anoka: A Collection of Indigenous Horror***  
by Shane Hawk



**Anoka: A Collection of Indigenous Horror**  
By **Shane Hawk**

*Anoka: A Collection of Indigenous Horror* is Shane Hawk's debut short fiction collection—and it is receiving a lot of attention by the horror community, [including Stephen Graham Jones](#). The stories in this collection use the lens of Indigenous life to explore themes of grief, loss, family, identity, and loneliness. The book certainly delivers on its tantalizing promise to be an unsettling blend of fiction and historical fact. This emerging horror author is one to watch—Fall 2023 will see the release of *Never Whistle At Night: An Anthology of Indigenous Dark Fiction*, co-edited by Hawk.

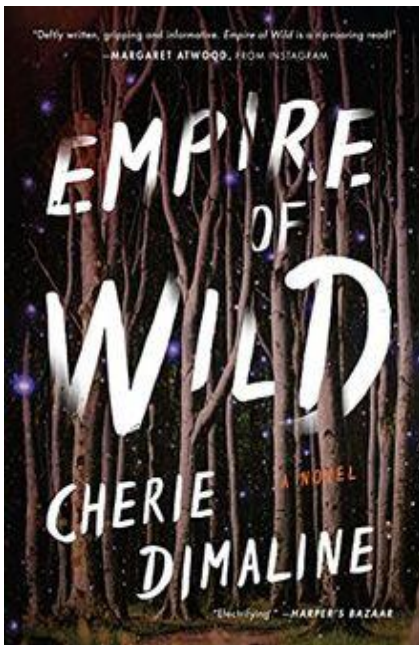


**Coyote Rage**

By **Owl Goingback**

This latest from Bram Stoker Award winning author Owl Goingback is a heart-stopping tale that grabs you by the jugular from the first page and doesn't let go, only sinks its teeth deeper. The murderous trickster Coyote is hell-bent on destroying the rule of human kind—but Raven won't allow this to happen so easily. Rich with Native folklore and electric with suspense, it's a fast-paced ride that's sure to appease thrill seekers of all stripes.



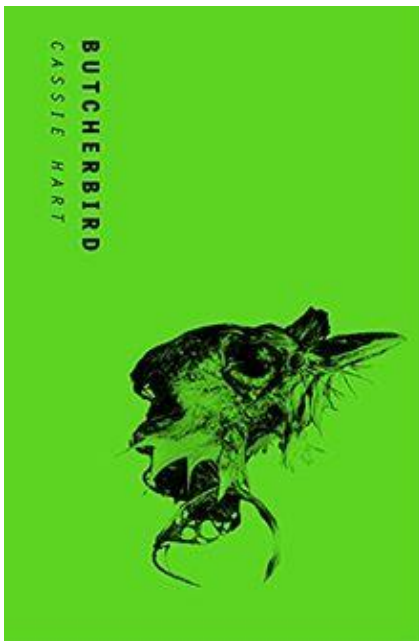


## Empire of Wild

By **Cherie Dimaline**

This gripping novel is a must-read for those who enjoy exploring the edges of belief, as well as the liminal spaces between folklore and reality—where anything is possible. Because of the way the old gods interface with modern-day humans, some readers have compared *Empire of Wild* to Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*. Inspired by the traditional Canadian Métis legend of the Rogarou (which is a werewolf-like creature in some Native people's mythology), this novel explores relevant real-world issues amidst a heart-pounding dark fantasy tale.

## ***Butcherbird* by Cassie Hart**



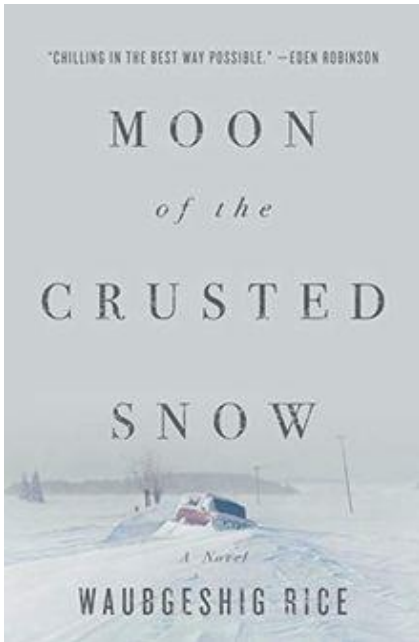
## Butcherbird

By **Cassie Hart**

This tense psychological thriller follows Jena Benedict's family, who once unleashed something monstrous long ago. Shrouded in secrets, the family wants to keep the mysterious events of the past buried. Jena is determined to unearth them—and in so doing, perhaps something more evil than she could have ever imagined. While Hart is Māori (Indigenous to New Zealand rather than North America), this book is just too good to pass up—and it's a good reminder to read Indigenous literature from cultures across the world.

***Moon of the Crusted Snow* by**

**Waubgeshig Rice**



**Moon of the Crusted Snow**

By **Waubgeshig Rice**

For those who like their horror a bit quieter (though no less unsettling) enter *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. Winter is on the horizon for one small northern Anishinaabe community—but then everything goes dark. The small community is cut off from the rest of the world and confusion ensues. The weather gets colder, food supplies dwindle—panic is imminent. Unexpected visitors arrive from other crumbling societies, initiating tense power struggles. The community turns to the ways of their ancestors in hopes of restoration. Amidst the despair of this post-apocalyptic tale, there is hope: something new can be built out of that which crumbles.