

**Title:** *Creepy Creatures and Other Cucuys*

**Author:** Xavier Garza

**Publication Date:** May 31, 2004 **Pages:** 144 **Price:** \$9.95 **Ages:** 11 and up

**Trim:** 5 ½ x 8 ½ **Format:** Trade Paperback **ISBN:** 1-55885-410-X

The stories in this collection curdle with the creepy and crawling characters of traditional folklore. These stories brim with the supernatural: the mysterious disappearance of children who made deals with *duendes*, evil trolls who live inside the walls of our houses; the ghostly specter of La Llorona who floats along the creek bed, howling, “¡Ay, mis hijos!”; witches that turn into great white owls; a severed hand that hurtles across floors and catches a death grip; and even the Devil himself harvesting wayward souls.

These are all *cucuys*, supernatural beings who have come to haunt the imagination in these tales of wonder and warning. These delicious and frightful stories come down through generations of grandmas teaching children to respect the laws of nature and the All Powerful.

These particular spooky *cucuys* are recounted and illustrated by master storyteller Xavier Garza, just the way he heard them at the knees of other masters when he was growing up in South Texas. Garza has preserved just the right gory detail and startling surprise to frighten the socks off you. And he always insists that you learn your lesson and take heed, or else ...

“Adults should seize this opportunity for families to come together in the spirit of good old fashioned story telling.”—*El Paso Times*

**GENRE:** Multicultural children’s literature, folktakes for young adult, Latin American lore, spooky stories

**SELLING HANDLES:**

- An appealing collection of spooky folktales for intermediate / juvenile readers
- Includes sixteen of the author’s illustrations of the creepy creatures

**AUTHOR CREDENTIALS:**

XAVIER GARZA is a prolific author, artist and storyteller whose work focuses primarily on his experiences growing up along the Texas/Mexico border. He is the author of numerous books for kids, including six shot novels for intermediate readers that feature Vincent Ventura in the Monster Fighter Mystery series / Serie Exterminadoro de monstruos. Graduating from UT Pan American in 1994 with a BFA in Art, Xavier Garza has exhibited his art and performed his stories throughout the United States.

## PRAISE FOR XAVIER GARZA'S MONSTER FIGHTER MYSTERY SERIES:

"This installment in the 'Vincent Ventura' series is full of fun and surprises, with fast-paced chapters and a mystery that is sure to intrigue fans of Latin American folklore. The dual English and Spanish format makes this an excellent choice for youth bilingual and Spanish collections, and the bold artwork interspersed among the chapters is eye-catching and provides an intriguing close-up of the characters. VERDICT: Highly recommended for collections for youth and for readers of retellings, adventure, and fantasy."—*School Library Journal* on *Vincent Ventura and the Curse of the Weeping Woman / Vincent Ventura y la maldición de La Llorona*

"Multifaceted portrayals of legendary spirits add depth to a narrative that is enhanced by dramatic black-and-white art... Nuanced folklore shines in this thrilling beginning chapter book."—*Kirkus Reviews* on *Vincent Ventura and the Curse of the Weeping Woman / Vincent Ventura y la maldición de La Llorona*

"Monster fighter extraordinaire Vincent Ventura battles his latest foe: the dreadful duende! Book 3 in Garza's Monster Fighter Mystery series adds a little psychological horror to Vincent's newest adventure, and this installment [is] a cohesive story centered on friendship and, more importantly, kicking monster butt. A case of lighthearted fun during the witching hour."—*Kirkus Reviews* on *Vincent Ventura and the Diabolical Duendes / Vincent Ventura y los duendes diabólicos*

"This fun, illustrated Spanish/English short chapter book has enough Mexican folklore and American teen angst to keep middle grade and reluctant readers interested in the otherworldly adventures of the monster-fighter extraordinaire."—*School Library Journal* on *Vincent Ventura and the Mystery of the Witch Owl / Vincent Ventura y el mistero de la bruja lechuza*

"Garza's cool series sequel offers a little mystery, a little action, and a lot of fun. A breezy read, Vincent's latest adventure packs folkloric elements in a fast-paced tale that's sure to entice reluctant readers. Similar to its predecessor, this bilingual novel contains both English and Baeza Ventura's Spanish versions, with the latter being superior in readability. A real hoot."—*Kirkus Reviews* on *Vincent Ventura and the Mystery of the Witch Owl / Vincent Ventura y el mistero de la bruja lechuza*

"Garza delves into Spanish folklore and adds action, horror, and mystery to create a wonderfully exciting book. This illustrated series-starter is formatted as a bilingual flipbook, with the Spanish text occupying one half of the book, and English the other. The descriptive Spanish and high vocabulary make it a strong addition to both elementary and middle school mystery sections."—*Booklist* on *Vincent Ventura and the Mystery of the Chupacabras / Vincent Ventura y el misterio del chupacabras*