The straight razor is hardcore. It is cut-throat sharp, dangerous, and yet has always maintained its notoriety of providing the benchmark kind of shave to which every other razor is compared. Some joke that straight razor shaving is an esoteric art practiced only by mentally unstable people with a death wish, and a new brand on the market expands on this idea. This article takes a look at an interesting newcomer to the straight razor world: The Blades Grim.

The fundamental goal of The Blades Grim is to produce a precision crafted blade from the highest quality steel that would serve its owner with a lifetime of great shaves. To accomplish this Luke Webster, the founder and owner of The Blades Grim, sought out the consultation of Tim Zowada and Alex Jacques, well-known and respected knife makers, who have been praised by enthusiasts around the globe for their outstanding custom straight razors. Webster is a firm believer in educating men in the benefits of taking up the art of straight razor shaving. He agrees with what I have said many times before: in addition to the shave quality and skin health benefits of proper wet shaving, using a straight razor eliminates the waste from overly expensive mass market disposable razors and cartridges.
When I was first introduced to The Blades Grim Straight Razor, I was immediately impressed by the look and feel of it, especially considering the retail price point at only $195.00 USD. Most commonly available straight razors today are either vintage blades from the mid-1900s or new production blades that generally follow the same basic design format. New production blades from European makers, such as Dovo and Thiers Issard, tend to carry over the same look and feel of their vintage counterparts with some cosmetic variations and are typically offered in standard 5/8 width sizes. Most blades average in retail between $100-200 with some exceptions for special editions or upgraded cosmetic materials. On the other end of the spectrum are the custom razor makers by talented artisans with extensive experience in knife making who have produced razors featuring more exotic materials and designs that are unique and high-quality shaving tools. These custom blades are prized by collectors and straight razor enthusiasts and often cost upwards of $500+ due to the amount of craftsmanship and materials involved with producing them.

The Grim Razor, like most traditional straight razors, arrived in a nice gold-embossed cardboard razor coffin. The razor is shrink wrapped with a plastic to keep it secure during transport. When I unwrapped the razor for the first time, I was immediately impressed with the quality of the fit and finish. The hefty 7/8 square point blade is hollow ground perfectly symmetrically and came out of the box with a very well-polished and shave-ready edge. Almost all new production blades arrive needing a small amount of honing to get them to where I like them, but the Grim razor just needed a quick stropping and it was ready to go. The etching on the blade really kicks up the cool factor even more with a black image of the Grim Reaper holding a scythe, although I learned recently that Grim is transitioning to a newer revision of the logo where the Reaper is holding a scythe-style straight razor, which is fitting for the brand concept.

My razor is scaled in black carbon fiber material that compliments the look and feel of the blade very well. The pivot pin felt like it was a little too tight at first making the razor require a bit of effort to open and close, but after a few uses it broke in well and is now perfect. The razor opens and closes with ease keeping the blade perfectly aligned.

The true test of any straight razor is the quality of the edge. This razor has been my primary razor (with the exception of only a few days that I was in a hurry and reached for the double edge) since I received it several weeks ago. Routine stropping between shaves is all that has been needed and each shave continues to be as good as the last. The edge cuts clean and comfortably every time and the overall weight and balance feel great in my hand.

One caveat is that I have to be extra careful while stropping it. The sharp squared point of the razor can scratch the leather of the strop if I am not deliberate with my technique. This is not a problem with the razor’s design, but just something to consider when stropping before a shave.

My only criticism is that I would have preferred this razor to have jimps on the underside of the tang. Jimps are ridges or notches that provide a textured grip surface on the blade while shaving. I find them helpful, but that also is a matter of personal preference and does not take away from the overall quality of the Grim razor.

The Blades Grim have managed to produce an amazingly well-made straight razor. Quality straight razors are not an inexpensive item; however, an American-made, fine tool-grade steel blade for $195.00 USD is very good price. Grim has successfully taken the Old World concept of the traditional straight razor and used modern materials and manufacturing to produce something very special. Grim razors are also offered in an attractive rosewood as well as a lower cost black acrylic scaled version at $165.00. Every time I pick up my Grim razor to shave, it looks and feels like a blade I would have expected to cost significantly more.

Bottom line: Jax Teller would own this razor. You should, too.