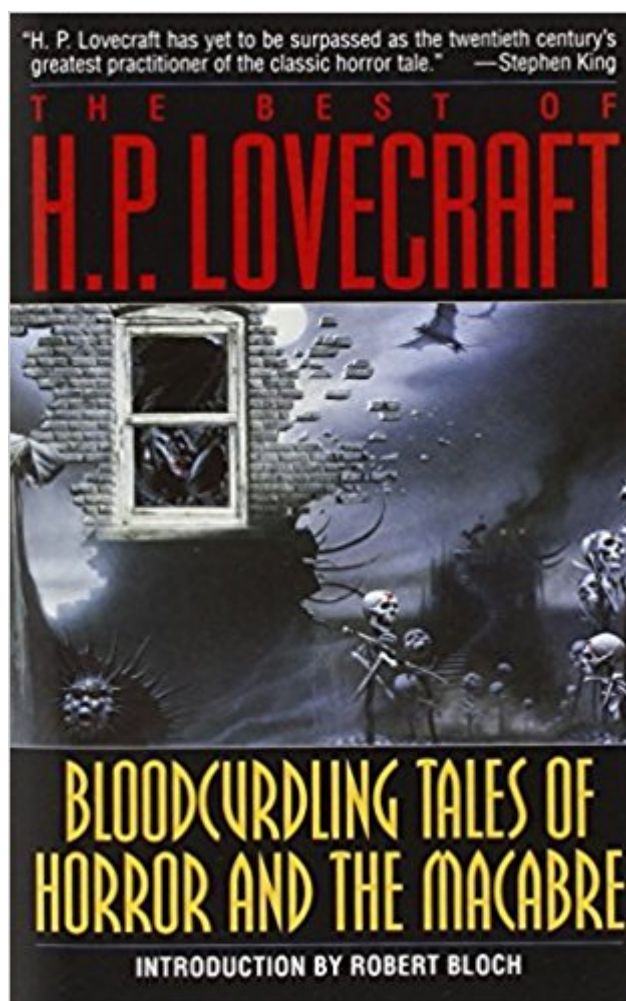


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The Best Of H. P. Lovecraft: Bloodcurdling Tales Of Horror And The Macabre



Synopsis

This is the collection that true fans of horror fiction have been waiting for: sixteen of H.P. Lovecraft's most horrifying visions, including Lovecraft's masterpiece, *THE SHADOW OUT OF TIME*--the shocking revelation of the mysterious forces that hold all mankind in their fearsome grip."I think it is beyond doubt that H.P. Lovecraft has yet to be surpassed as the Twentieth Century's greatest practitioner of the classic horror tale."Stephen King

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Customer Reviews

Lovecraft is "the American writer of the twentieth century most frequently compared with Poe, in the quality of his art ... [and] its thematic preoccupations (the obsessive depiction of psychic disintegration in the face of cosmic horror)," writes Joyce Carol Oates in the *New York Review of Books*. Del Rey has reprinted Lovecraft's stories in three handsome paperbacks. This first volume collects 16 classic tales, including "The Rats in the Walls," "The Call of Cthulhu," "The Dunwich Horror," and "The Colour Out of Space." Introduction by Robert Bloch. Wraparound cover art by Michael Whelan.

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practitioner of the classic horror tale."Stephen King

This is a more recent edition of a collection of some of Lovecraft's best (or best-known) short works that would be indispensable for a collector of classic macabre tales were it not for horrible typos and unforgivable layout glitches. These Cthulhu mythos tales must have slipped into the public domain, allowing any fly-by-night publisher can transcribe a collection from earlier published works; that's the only explanation I can assume for this collection, sold under this imprint and cover, which duplicates an earlier edition with different packaging and an introduction by Robert Bloch that is missing from this edition. The text appears to have been manually re-keyed (i.e. retyped) and many errors introduced that were NOT corrected. You can easily distinguish this by this version's line spaces between paragraphs (which makes for an ugly page layout) and very obvious mistakes in the text. I compared just one story (The Shadow Out of Time) to my earlier edition and saw numerous mistakes confirmed. When I reread this story I was astonished at the intrusive typos and broken type and word fragments that in at least one case appear at the end of a paragraph, a couple of disconnected words ending in a hyphen. That was only ONE example. Even a rudimentary use of a Spell-Check feature would have caught these errors. This publisher obviously doesn't care and is looking to cash in on a fast buck. I recommend buyers look for alternatives before buying this version. The skull on the front is a warning!

It wouldn't be a stretch to say that H.P. Lovecraft is to horror what J.R.R Tolkien has been to fantasy. Sure, he's not nearly as beloved and the movies made from his writings could generously be described as less than stellar but the world he created is just as rich and imaginative. It's just a whole lot creepier. Lovecraft crafted his realm around his own Cthulhu mythos but unlike Tolkien whose stories took place in Middle-Earth, Lovecraft set his tales in a re-imagined New England within fictional cities like Innsmouth, Dunwich and of course Arkham the location of the enigmatic Miskatonic University. Along with his own creative geography Lovecraft developed an extensive pantheon of Cthulhu gods or 'Old Ones' including Yog-Sothoth, Nyarlathotep, Azathoth and an endless parade of bizarre, otherworldly manifestations of terror. The 'Best of H.P. Lovecraft' features time travel, dimensional travel and space travel, aliens from other planets, ancient gods, giant invisible blobs and even a brain in a jar. The Lovecraftian world is one of lost magics, sprawling cyclopean structures with weird inhuman angles, smooth blubbery creatures with octopoid features, ancient nightmares and strange extra-terrestrials capable of traveling through the cold vacuum of space without mechanical means. Through it all Lovecraft manages to place his stories in such

believable environments that they almost seem plausible. The tales and events frequently focus on the power of hidden knowledge particularly those held within dusty tomes like the fictional Necronomicon which gets a mention in nearly every story. Lovecraft combines the occult with science including references to the still fledgling field of quantum mechanics. He also has some fun teasing the reader with the possibility that the newly discovered planet of Pluto may be the home of alien life forms who come to earth to mine our minerals and remove our brains. Most stories are told as first person accounts where the protagonists are lucky if they manage to escape with a shred of sanity after just a glimpse at the horror of the old ones. I discovered that if a story is told from any point besides first person it's a sure sign that the main character failed to survive. Lovecraft's style is about creating atmosphere and an ever pervasive tone of doom. Although the stories are self contained, each one takes place in the same bleak world, like small separate pieces of a larger horror. Beyond his vibrant imagination Lovecraft is just flat out a fantastic wordsmith. It almost seems like this kind of quality writing is a dying art and despite being over 80 years old his stories never feel dated. Instead, the age of the stories add to their mysteriousness and antiquity as if the reader was privy to some unearthed nightmare. The writings of Lovecraft are such a treasure trove that it's no mystery why so many movies are inspired by his works. If ever a movie was made based on Lovecraft's stories that approached the quality of the Lord of the Rings I have no doubt that interest in his tales would soar and, unlike Tolkien, Lovecraft has a tremendous amount of source material to work from. This is the first book I've read by Lovecraft but I have to say it more than exceeded my highest expectations.

I like Lovecraft's writing; if you have never read any of his work, this is an excellent introduction. If you have read other Lovecraft works, and enjoyed them, you will enjoy this (There may be some duplication of stories that you've already read.) Lovecraft's horror is more centered on the unseen, and implied, rather than graphic description and depiction. He relies on your imagination to fill in the details in a very disquieting manner; I find his tales quite terrifying---just not in the same way as the "Texas Chainsaw Massacre." This is a worthy addition to anyone's reading diet, especially if you like fantasy.

Upon reading the first glimpse of reviews, I had believed that this obviously was an extensive collection of some of the best of H.P. Lovecraft. Imagining the top review and seeing myself with 16 of his best works, cross-researched to ensure they really were all they seemed to be up to be, I bought the book assuming I would receive a copy of at least the most popular "The Dreams in The

Witch House", "The Colour Out of Space", "The Haunter of The Dark", and more promised-to-be masterpieces by the author. The one star isn't for the quality of the work, although if you read some other reviews you'd think the quality is horrendous by the amount of 'intentional' typos and semi-transparent text. Not disregarding the included works of horror that is collected, the rating I've given is for the unmistakable absence of 10, NO LESS, 10 stories. A complete hoax and lie if you ask me, to advertise this CreateSpace version as being anything close to the original RandomHouse edition. As others have said, the cover itself even seems shabby. I won't disrespect anything else except the misleading reviews of this work being the full collection it's named and advertised, by text of reviewee, to be.

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