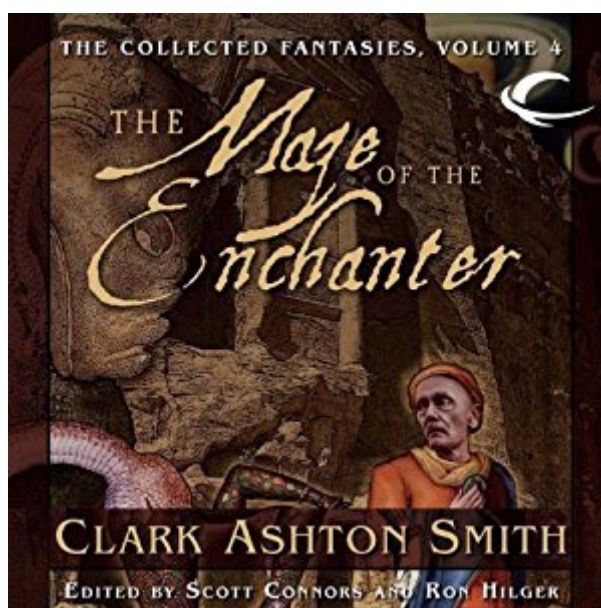


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The Maze Of The Enchanter: Volume Four Of The Collected Fantasies Of Clark Ashton Smith



Synopsis

This series presents Clark Ashton Smith's fiction chronologically, based on composition rather than publication. Editors Scott Connors and Ron Hilger have compared original manuscripts, various typescripts, published editions, and Smith's notes and letters in order to prepare a definitive set of texts. *The Maze of the Enchanter* includes, in chronological order, all of his stories from *The Mandrakes* (February, 1933) to *The Flower-Women* (May, 1935). This volume also features an introduction and extensive notes on each story.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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This 4th volume of *The Collected Fantasies* has some of Clark Ashton Smith's finest tales. "Genius Loci" remains one of my favorite weird tales ever. The story casts a potent spell of dread that most such fictions usually lack. Whenever I read this tale, I am transported. The scene seems very real, authentic. One is swept away by the intensity of the narrative. Smith was indeed a

wizard, who conjured with language. His alien landscapes impress one as strange yet realistic. His language is evocative, as we see in this paragraph from "The Dweller in the Gulf": "None of the three adventurers was overly imaginative or prone to nervousness. But all were beset by certain odd impressions. Behind the arras of cryptic silence, time and again, they seemed to hear a faint whisper, like the sign of sunken seas far down at some hemispheric depth. The air was tinged with a slight and doubtful dankness, and they felt the stirring of an almost imperceptible draft upon their faces. Oddest of all was the hint of a nameless odor, reminding them both of animal dens and the peculiar smell of Martian dwellings." One of the wonders of these books from the magnificent Night Shade Books are the remarkable jackets, with amazing illustrations by Jason Van Hollander and design by Claudia Noble. They are among the finest examples of jacket art and design I have ever seen, an utter delight and ecstasy. Exotic, erotic, enchanting -- the dark phantasy tales of Clark Ashton Smith has it all.

Clark Ashton Smith is a genius... such vivid descriptions! Classic horror in league with Lovecraft... I'd say he's even better than Lovecraft.

The Maze of the Enchanter (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 4) (v. 4) is another installment of the complete short stories of Clark Ashton Smith. I found Smith's stories in the early 70s through the excellent anthologies put together by Lin Carter. Ballantine Books published three volumes, each focused on a different story cycle. I've read them all myriad times, but was disappointed that they didn't contain ALL of Smith's stories. This collection places the stories in chronological order of writing or publication. It isn't as easy to track a story cycle as a focused anthology, but this collection has ALL the stories. At least we don't have to ferret out old copies of Weird Tales magazines. Smith wrote with a very dense elegant style. He was a true master of the English language with a very extensive vocabulary - perhaps he was a power-user of Roget's Thesaurus - who would never run long in his prose. He was also enormously inventive. His Xothique stories center on the last continent of Earth, which orbits a nearly burned-out red sun. Not a pleasant prospect, but the story lines are fabulous. "The Weaver in the Vaults" is one of Smith's classic stories contained in this volume. His stories occasionally have a humorous or ironic passage that is so bone-dry it can only draw a chuckle from the reader in the well-constructed eeriness of the worlds he has constructed. These little surprises are one of the things that keep me coming back to re-read these stories. I can't recommend this Collection Series highly enough. Even for readers who don't care for the macabre, Smith's stories can be a real treat; they are just that well written. The

book itself is quality merchandise - nice print composition on very good paper. First-rate binding.

This series just gets better as it goes along. Highly recommended.

Maze of the Enchanter is the 4th of 5 hardcovers planned to collect all of the weird prose of Clark Ashton Smith (CAS) from the days of pulp magazine publishing. The collection includes 15 or so short stories - CAS did not deal in novels - showing a range from fantasy adventure to interplanetary sci-fi (then called "scientifiction") to weird horror. CAS was a real wordsmith, and it shows: his vocabulary is impressive, his phrasing distinctively impeccable. The mood created in each tale is as much a function of adjectival description as plot. This volume covers the period early 1933 to mid-1935, presenting the stories in the order they were composed, rather than published. Some of the gems here include the titular "Maze", Genius Loci, and The Dark Eidolon. The only thing to note is that these versions of the stories are "director's cuts" so they may be a little different to a previous reading of a particular story. Those changes are always noted in the text, and there are alternate endings provided on occasion. The final (somewhat delayed) addition to the collection, The Last Hieroglyph, is due out in November 2010, and the complete collection will be a fitting monument to CAS' work.

Very satisfied with purchase.

Very glad I've found this author, really wish I could of read these stories years ago. Every story is fantastic, not a dull moment.

This is an excellent book comprised of some of the best weird literature in the world. And by an equally exceptional yet enigmatically obscure author.

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