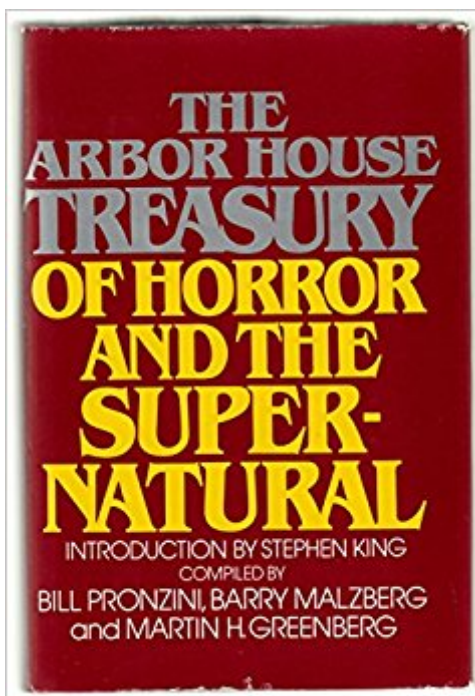


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The Arbor House Treasury Of Horror And The Supernatural



Synopsis

Book by

Book Information

Hardcover: 599 pages

Publisher: Arbor House; First Edition/First Printing edition (1981)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0877953090

ISBN-13: 978-0877953098

Package Dimensions: 9.4 x 6.2 x 1.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.9 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #648,584 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #246 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > British & Irish > Horror](#) #16868 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Horror](#)

Customer Reviews

Book by

This book was published in 1981 and contained 41 short stories by as many writers. As far as could be determined, there were 36 writers from the U.S., 3 from Great Britain (Wells, Churchill, Campbell) and 2 (LeFanu, Stoker) from Ireland. The stories ranged from the 1840s (Hawthorne, Poe) to the 1980s (Joyce Carol Oates, Elizabeth Morton). Two-thirds of the stories were from the postwar era. From the early to mid-1800s, there were Hawthorne, Poe and LeFanu. From the late 1800s through World War II, there were Stoker, Bierce, Churchill, Wells, Henry James, Dreiser, Lovecraft, Faulkner, Woolrich and Bloch. Postwar writers included Capote, Sturgeon, Leiber, Kornbluth, Ray Russell, Disch, Adobe James, Hoch, Silverberg, Lutz, Wagner, Campbell, Evan Hunter, Stephen King and Joyce Carol Oates. Many of the American authors included were also prominent in the crime, SF and fantasy genres, and their stories reflected these backgrounds. Compared to, say, the stories in *The Penguin Book of Ghost Stories* and *The Penguin Book of Horror Stories* -- which contained mainly earlier works by British writers focused on the atmospheric and psychological -- the mostly recent stories here often seemed cruder and more obvious. Few were horrific or atmospheric. A handful of entertaining exceptions were Poe's "Hop-Frog" and Stoker's "The Squaw," both about revenge, Hunter's story about an edgy veteran who was pushed too far, Adobe

James's story about an arrogant criminal who took on more than he could handle, Silverberg's tale set in a future dystopia and Lutz's story about a barman who enjoyed messing with his customers' minds. I was also glad to be introduced to the work of the SF writer Cyril Kornbluth, whose story contained a modern vampire.

Easily one of the greatest collections of horror fiction ever compiled. Editor Bill Pronzini may work primarily in the crime/mystery genre, but his keen eye and impeccable taste prove invaluable here. Not only does this volume contain some of the biggest names to ever work in horror, it features a lot of (regrettably) un-to-little known authors: I'd never heard of Adobe James before this book (or even after), but "The Road to Mictlantecutli" is hands down one of my favorite horror stories. Period. The British Bulldog Winston Churchill himself makes an appearance: He may have been a fine Prime Minister, but his contribution reveals him to also be a literary titan on par with Bram Stoker (whose obscure yet brilliant story "The Squaw" is also featured). The Stephen King story alone (The Crate...which has never been reprinted in one of his collections) is worth the price of admission. Kudos to Bill Pronzini and all involved. As a writer, I would have killed to get into such a wonderful anthology. I seriously doubt I'll ever have the chance, but, hey, The Arbor House Treasury of Horror and the Supernatural is the type of book that comes around once, maybe twice in a millennium. But really...if you love horror, this is a must. Table of contents: 1) Hop Frog; Poe, Edgar Allan 2) Rappaccini's Daughter; Hawthorne, Nathaniel 3) Squire Toby's Will; le Fanu, J. Sheridan 4) The Squaw; Stoker, Bram 5) The Jolly Corner; James, Henry 6) "Man Overboard!"

This book contains numerous stories. So you get a little of everything from Poe to Stephen King. Therefore, some stories are great and some seem kinda dumb. It just depends what you consider to be "horror". Some are violent and others simply focus on mental turmoil, again simply a different kind of "violence". There is sexual content, but it's not explicit. The narration styles vary because there's tons of stories in the book.

It's hard to imagine a better collection of horror stories, with chilling tales by Edgar Allen Poe, Bram Stoker, H.P. Lovecraft, William Faulkner, Truman Capote, and a host of more modern authors, including Joyce Carol Oates and the Michael Jordan of horror writing, Stephen King (King also writes an introduction). This book is special because it pays homage to one of the pulpiest of pulp genres, horror, and combines it with a span of authors who have a significant literary pedigree. By

presenting stories that are cerebral as well as scary, and by giving classic authors such as Poe their due, the book might be slightly less accessible to someone who has grown up equating horror writing with, say, early works by Dean Koontz. But anyone who goes into this collection with an open mind is sure to be blown away by the horror- the sheer horror- of it all.

41 classic tales of horror and the supernatural are presented in 599 pages by the editors Pronzini, Malzberg, and Greenberg in two sections: Grandmasters -- Poe [Hop Frog], Stoker [The Squaw], Bierce, Faulkner, Sturgeon, and others including Winston Churchill [Man Overboard]. Modern Masters -- Hunter [The Scarlet King], Wagner [Sticks], Russell, Kornbluth, Sheckley, and others including Stephen King [The Crate], who also provides a nine-page Introduction in which he writes: "If [this book] proves anything, it proves that the tale of horror and/or the supernatural is serious, is important, is necessary... not only to those human beings who read to think, but to those vast numbers of readers who read to feel".

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