

Thirteen Phantasms And Other Stories



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著者:Blaylock, James P

出版者:Ace Books

出版时间:

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780441010141

Thirteen Phantasms does not present the stories in chronological order, but reading them chronologically reveals Blaylock's evolution into a great writer. His first sale, 1977's atmospheric ship-of-fools/bus-of-bozos fantasy "The Red Planet," is creepy, but too mysterious and underdeveloped to please many readers. A decade later, Blaylock would win the World Fantasy Award with the deserving and powerful "Paper Dragons"; set in a world in which matter has become mutable, it is one of the most unusual dragon stories ever written. The most recent story, 1998's "The Old Curiosity Shop," is a tremendous work in which a man who abandoned his wife discovers she has literally dwindled away from grief, and the objects she left behind, curios sold to a strange shop, are so invested with the weight of memories that a man might be crushed beneath a single item.

Most of the stories take place in contemporary California, but three of the exceptions

("The Ape-Box Affair," "Two Views of a Cave Painting," and "The Idol's Eye") are set in an alternate-history England in which H.G. Wells's science fiction must be fact; and they belong to that rarest of subgenres, comic steampunk. These entertaining adventures feature Langdon St. Ives, a Victorian scientist-adventurer after the manner of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Professor Challenger, and the hero of Blaylock's novels Homunculus (winner of the Philip K. Dick Award) and Lord Kelvin's Machine. --Cynthia Ward

Introduction: Five Hundred Dollars

Thirteen Phantasms

Red Planet

The Ape-Box Affair

Bugs

Nets of Silver and Gold

The Better Boy (with Tim Powers)

The Pink of Fading Neon

The Old Curiosity Shop

Doughnuts

Two Views of a Cave Painting

The Idol's Eye

Paper Dragons

We Traverse Afar (with Tim Powers)

The Shadow on the Doorstep

Myron Chester and the Toads

Unidentified Objects

作者介绍:

James P. Blaylock has been publishing singular, literate, evocative stories since 1977, but *Thirteen Phantasms and Other Stories* appears to be his first (and a complete) collection. Its 16 stories have little concern for genre; Blaylock slides from the fantastic to subtle horror to slipstream, sometimes in the same story. His introduction, with its mentions of an antique shop of mysterious orientalia and of aquaria stocked with obscure oddities, perfectly prefigures the concerns of his stories. The past is sometimes the setting, and it often haunts or drives the characters. But this is no simple nostalgia; Blaylock knows the past, irrecoverable yet inescapable, can be a burden and a trap. Mysteries, too, compel or lure many characters, with their strangeness and shadows and dangers. And some characters pursue--or are controlled

by--peculiar obsessions.

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