



Strange Shadows: The Uncollected Fiction and Essays of Clark Ashton Smith (Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy)

Steve Behrends

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Strange Shadows opens a window into the dark, visionary worlds of Clark Ashton Smith, whose verbal black magic was a significant force in the American science fiction and fantasy movement of the 1930s. This annotated collection of his previously unpublished works provides a unique opportunity to savor the full range of Smith's literary contribution. Featuring fantasies and ironic short stories, prose-poems, plays, unfinished stories, and more than 100 story synopses, it offers valuable documentation and commentary on the work of one of the most distinctive and consistently interesting modern masters of the fantasy genre.

An introduction by Robert Bloch (the author of *Psycho*) examines Smith's work and places it in historical perspective. Among the highlights of the collection are the satirical title story; variant drafts of two of Smith's most famous stories--*The Coming of the White Worm* and *The Beast of Averaigne*--and a play entitled *The Dead Will Cuckold You*, which has been hailed as a masterpiece. The editor's annotations include extensive quotations from Smith's correspondence to H. P. Lovecraft, August Derleth, and other important fantasy authors, together with textual commentary and discussion of connections between published and unpublished works. Information on lost writings and lists of published story titles, characters, and place names are supplied. An important resource for fantasy readers and scholars, this book will appeal to those with an interest in dark fantasy, science fiction, and the history of American science fiction.

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