

DREAMING IN DARKNESS

“...for in that sleep of death, what dreams may come...”

Shakespeare, *Hamlet*



June 13th 2013 was a very special date in the Lovecraft calendar: it marked the launch of *Dreaming In Darkness*, a collection of four Lovecraft-inspired novellas, at the World Horror Convention in New Orleans. The hardback will go on general release in July, and will also be available as an eBook on all major platforms.

Project creator John Prescott said; “I wanted to do a novella collection for a while with some other writers. I saw a piece of art a year or so ago and just fell in love with it. I knew there was a story buried there somewhere. I forgot about the piece for a while, and when I saw the piece of artwork that graces our cover the ideas meshed and fell into place pretty quick. I have worked and shared stories in anthologies with the three other authors that are in this collection. I knew they had the same strong interest in Lovecraft as mine, so it wasn’t a hard decision to ask them if they were interested in the project. Thank goodness they were and that they all agreed to it. After reading all the novellas in our collection I feel that this book can and should sit comfortably in any horror fan’s special Lovecraft section on their bookshelf.”

Each writer – two Americans and two from the UK - brought a unique spin on the themes of cosmic horror, madness and despair, so prevalent in Lovecraft’s fiction.

THE STORIES

THE ORDER, by Aaron J French:

“...a Next Age will follow, in which everything will be undone and made whole again.”

A bizarre murder in a New York museum takes retired detective Carl Sanford on a grim journey into the sinister world of the Order of Oriphiel...but he is not alone on his quest. An archangel, who speaks to him only in dreams, accompanies him for its own purposes...

“Since discovering H.P. Lovecraft back in high school, I’ve been a fan, and I’ve read just about everything Old Gramps has written,” says French. “His particular mode of horror and suspense is one I admire, and one I try to emulate in my own fiction. Bridging the gap between magical and mundane, bleeding one into the other, is something Lovecraft excelled at, and in my opinion it’s the most effective way to create horror, suspense, and awe. Since discovering Lovecraft way back when, my interests have broadened to include esotericism, consciousness studies, radical forms of theology, and the modern-day craze of intellectual thrillers such as Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code*. ‘The Order’ is my attempt to introduce Lovecraftian themes (as well as my other various interests) into such a literary genre, in hopes they will produce a harmonizing effect.”

SHADRACH BESIEGED, by Adrian Chamberlin:

“...King or Parliament. Cross or Prophet. What happened to you, Shadrach? What unholy wars have you fought?”

An unholy icon stolen from its guardians during the First Crusade reveals its devastating true nature in the English Civil War, while a mysterious warrior, reborn in blood and fire, invokes demonic powers in an attempt to destroy its evil...

“My passion is history, and I have a particular fascination with the English Civil War,” says Chamberlin. “As the novella progressed I realised this would just be the beginning of Shadrach’s adventures. Further instalments will take him to other theatres of war in the seventeenth century, to do battle with more Lovecraftian entities as well as all-too-human enemies. ‘Shadrach Besieged’ takes place in the fictional coastal village of Fairlight, which appears in many of my short stories and is the setting for my next novel.”

THE SERPENT’S EGG, by Jonathan Green:

“When oblivion comes, it is forever, as endless as the slumber of those beings that lie buried beneath the roots of the world, dreaming in darkness.”

A writer's research into the legend of the Lambton Worm takes a horrifying twist when he uncovers the true origin of the story: a legend that stirs, knowing the time for its rebirth is near...

"The Legend of the Lambton Worm caught my imagination from the very first time I came across it in Carey Miller's *A Dictionary of Monsters and Mysterious Beasts* when I was about 8 or 9 years old," says Green. "I think this was in part because the illustrator had naively drawn the worm itself as a giant earthworm rather than in the form of a dragon, as it should have been. But that image stuck.

"I have incorporated elements of the legend in my work before – most noticeably in my very first book *Spellbreaker* (1993) and more comprehensively in the short story 'Conqueror Worm' (2009). This isn't the first time I've incorporated the worm into the Cthulhu Mythos either. What you have in 'The Serpent's Egg' is effectively a sequel to an as yet unpublished story called 'The Scottish Patient'. Perhaps one day you will be able to read both together, but only time – and the whim of dark gods – will tell."

NEW HEAVENS, by John Prescott:

"I watched in horror, feeling an impending and inescapable sense of doom and damnation, as the New Orleans monolith broke in two."

Alien obelisks rise from the oceans, their appearance a mere prelude to the horror that will befall the world. The heavens have changed; our planet has been translocated to another part of the universe, where entities older than time greet Earth's arrival with an alien hunger...

"For my contribution I wanted to do something a little different that I had not done in previous works," reveals Prescott. "In my previous works God was prevalent. In this story God does not exist and the world is thrown into total mayhem by people walking into the oceans, followed by the appearance of three hundred foot monoliths from the oceans of the world. What follows is so amazing it leaves the world's scientists baffled, while the people of Earth are herded like cattle for food to strange Elder Gods. Travel with a small group of people as they try to restore the world and save humanity."

What makes *Dreaming In Darkness* so special is not just the stories, but the astonishing artwork. Not content to stop with the superb cover art supplied by artist Nebezial, John Prescott commissioned James R Powell to create a piece for each story.

"I first met John Prescott at a convention about three years ago," explains Powell. "We were both just hanging out, and a mutual friend introduced us. We started talking and the friendship was almost instantaneous. And I remember John finding a small plastic statue of Cthulhu in the Dealer's Room, and I went nuts over it and had to get one too! I've been a fan of Lovecraft's work for over twenty years. My very first published piece of art involved

Cthulhu, so there's an added amount of fondness there. When John approached me about doing the interior illustrations for *Dreaming In Darkness*, I jumped at the chance! It was exciting to work with each individual author, combining our imaginative forces. It's like making a big pot of soup. They gave me their recipes, and I went down into the fruit cellar to collect the ingredients. Of course, it's that Lovecraftian part of the cellar, where the jars generally contain something not quite of this world, and not quite living and not quite dead!"

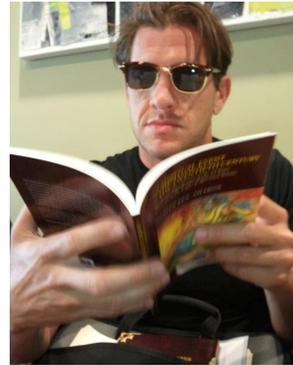
THE ARTWORK

Clockwise, from top left: The Order, Shadrach Besieged, New Heavens, The Serpent's Egg.



THE CONTRIBUTORS

Aaron J. French (a.k.a. A. J. French) edited *Monk Punk*, an anthology of monk-themed speculative fiction, and *The Shadow of the Unknown*, an anthology of nü-Lovecraftian fiction. His next anthology *Songs of the Satyrs* will be published in 2013-14. Aaron's recent article on Thomas Ligotti appeared in issue #20 of *Dark Discoveries* magazine, where he is also an Associate Editor. Aaron's fiction has appeared in many publications including *Dark Discoveries*, *Black Ink Horror*, *Something Wicked*, *After Death...*, *Bedlam Journal*, and *The Lovecraft eZine*. He is also the Reviews Coordinator for *Hellnotes* and a member of the Horror Writers Association.



Jonathan Green is a writer of speculative fiction, with more than forty-five books to his name. He has written everything from Fighting Fantasy gamebooks to Doctor Who novels, by way of numerous Black Library publications and myriad short stories. He is also the creator of the Pax Britannia steampunk series for Abaddon Books. To find out more about his current projects visit www.JonathanGreenAuthor.com.



John Prescott lives in the deep south and spends time with his two sons, Grafton and Gavin, and his wife and two cats. Author of the hugely popular Revelation Chronicles trilogy (the third and final volume, *The End of All Things* will be released at the end of 2013) and co-author of the forthcoming YA fantasy *Elli Caskell: Monster Hunter* with Catherine Swinford. He is the President of White Silver Publishing where he wears many hats. He works full time and umpires girls fast pitch softball. He loves all facets of art and has a huge passion for anything fantasy-based.

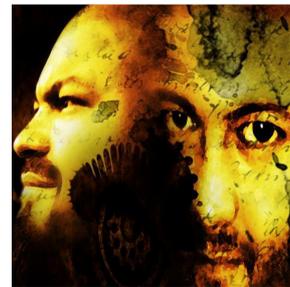


Adrian Chamberlin lives in the small south Oxfordshire town of Wallingford that serves as a backdrop to the UK television series *Midsomer Murders*, not far from where Agatha Christie lies buried, dreaming in darkness. He is the author of the critically acclaimed supernatural thriller *The Caretakers* as well as numerous short stories in a variety of anthologies, mostly historical or futuristic based supernatural horror. He co-edited *Read the End First*, an apocalyptic anthology with Suzanne Robb (author of the acclaimed thriller *Z-Boat*) and has many other projects in the pipeline.



Say hello to Mr Golien at www.archivesofpain.com

James R Powell is a native of Mississippi, where he quietly resides, surrounded by the dark woods that provide inspiration for much of his work. He has numerous cats, and a vast accumulation of old books and weird things. He has worked with a variety of authors, including Neil Gaiman, Brian Hodge, and Scott Nicholson. He has done design work for actor Lance Henriksen, and has painted guitars for Eddie Van Halen.



<http://greyhaven.weebly.com>