



The Book of Iod: Ten Tales of the Mythos

Henry Kuttner , Robert Bloch , Robert M. Price , Lin Carter , Earl Geier (Illustrator)

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The Book of Iod is a short story collection containing ten Cthulhu Mythos stories. These stories include: The Secret of Kralitz, The Eater of Souls, The Salem Horror, The Just of Droom-avista, Spawn of Dagon, The Invaders, The Frog, Hydra, Bells of Horror and The Hunt.

The Book of Iod: Ten Tales of the Mythos Details

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Author : Henry Kuttner , Robert Bloch , Robert M. Price , Lin Carter , Earl Geier (Illustrator)

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Isobelle Fox says

Mostly mediocre stories by another acolyte of the Lovecraftian technique. The last 2 or 3 Kutner stories are decent, or better at least than the rest, though he makes silly mistakes like referring to a 6 pointed star as a pentagram even in these. The story by Price is so short and ineffectual that it reads more like an outline. The story by Lin Carter is, as S.T. Joshi has noted, much too close to Lovecraft's Haunter of the Dark.

Timothy Boyd says

A collection of stories based on the writings of H.P. Lovecraft. These are, to me, only slightly better than the original Lovecraft stories. Just not a fan of his writings. Not recommended

The Artificer says

One of the more even collections in Chaosium's "Mythos" series.

Kuttner's writing isn't the strongest here, but the collection overall is very enjoyable to read, with none of the real clunkers many of the other series books seem to have.

Kuttner manages Lovecraftian homage while inventing his own forbidden books, Great Old Ones, places & characters- something August Derleth massively failed at.

Sean Hoade says

Extremely fun tales, each different from any other in the collection. Non-pretentious, but intelligent. I'm quite glad I read it.

Doug Kallies says

This was my first exposure to Henry Kuttner's writing. I must say that his contributions to the Cthulhu Mythos were most welcome. As other reviewers have pointed out, 'The Bells of Horror' bears particular mentioning as a fun story. Recommended if you can find a copy.

Ian Casey says

It was a blazing, cosmic horror spawned by an outlaw universe, an abysmal, prehuman entity

drawn out of fathomless antiquity by elder magic.

Henry Kuttner was among the earliest Lovecraftian authors, and The Book of Iod compiles these ten stories published mostly in *Weird Tales* in the late 1930s.

This ebook edition is rather Spartan compared to the Chaosium release, being absent the Robert M. Price introduction and the three 'bonus' stories by Bloch, Carter and Price himself. It does have an awfully cool cover though, which is the best way to judge a book.

There's nothing groundbreaking even by the standards of its time, but it's a solid dose of 'textbook' Cthulhu Mythos fiction done right. One could fill the bingo card easily with all the standard elements on display. Obscure and blasphemous texts, eldritch horrors from outside conventional space-time, antiquarians and occultists... you get the idea (or else you probably wouldn't have found this book by accident).

A couple of the shortest stories are fantasy vignettes more in the Clark Ashton Smith vein, which is unsurprising considering Kuttner was a pen-pal of both CAS and HPL. For that matter, 'Spawn of Dagon' takes the Robert E. Howard route of a sword and sorcery tale with Lovecraftian elements. It's also collected in the 'Elak of Atlantis' volume.

In short, if you're a fan of 1930s Cthulhu Mythos fiction, this is a worthy example and you've no reason not to read it.

MB Taylor says

Not too bad: eleven stories by Kuttner (one a collaboration with Robert Bloch), one by Robert M. Price and one by Lin Carter.

The Kuttner stories were all OK, Lovecraftian horror from the late thirties (1937-1939). The stories are from early in Kuttner's career (his first stories were published 1936) and are nothing too inspired, but nothing particularly dreadful either. Most of them read like typical Lovecraft pastiches. The stories are in chronological order (by publication date) and they generally get better as the collection progresses.

The Price story (from 1984) was decent; but again nothing to rave about. Another fairly typical Lovecraft pastiche.

I can't comment on the Carter story (from 1988), because I didn't read it. "Dead of Night" is one of his three stories about Anton Zarnak, and appears in another collection from Chaosium: *Lin Carter's Anton Zarnak Supernatural Sleuth*. I thought I'd save it and read all Carter's Anton Zarnak stories at the same time.

Price does his usual nice job as anthology editor, giving us both an introduction and a short blurb before each story (including his own). One comment I found particularly effective. Before the last Kuttner story in the volume ("The Hunt", 1939), Price writes: "One can hardly read this story without imagining it illustrated ... by Steve Ditko." I don't know if it anything more than the power of suggestion, but I pictured the characters as if they were drawn by Ditko, occasionally even flashing on one panel or another from his days at Marvel in the late 50s and early 60s.

Lobo says

Przeczytane ponownie. Niechcący stanęłam przy półce z horrorami i wyciągnęłam Kuttnera, żeby sobie przypomnieć, jak październikowa i opatologiczna była kiedyś fantastyka. Autentycznie lubię te opowiadania, które są wierne duchowi Lovecrafta, akcja osadzona jest w Salem i okolicach, to takie swojskie, znajome i generalnie dobrze napisane. Kiedy wpada w Howardowskie Atlantydy i Cymerie prychnęłam śmiechem. Chociaż tutaj głównym problemem jest chyba to, że wszystko jest pisane na jedno kopyto i fabuły są już tak dobrze znane, i jedyne, co ratuje opowiadania to klimat. A ten nie zawsze został zbudowany.

Głównie ciekawostka na temat tego, jakim kółkiem wzajemnej masturbacji byli Lovecraft, Bloch, Howard, Kuttner i reszta.

Dużo lepiej czytać opowiadania ze "Stosu kłopotów", na które aż nabrałam ochoty i chyba sobie z sentymentu też przypomnę.

Michelle says

Some really pale imitation Lovecraft. I'm sure it was a sincere effort... Or who knows, maybe he was just trying to cash in on a popular trend. Whatever the case it's not very good. Not awful, but nothing to get worked up about. Odd but I don't care for Kuttner or Moore individually; when they team up it's better but their solo work does nothing for me.

g026r says

As far as Golden Age sci-fi and fantasy goes, I admit that I like Kuttner and make no excuses for that. That all said, even as a fan it's impossible to escape the fact that his early work, from which the content of this collection is selected, is far from his best.

Yet to find his own voice, he largely winds up producing pale imitations of other authors — Lovecraft is the most frequent as well as the most obvious, but there are also stories that echo the works of Dunsany and Howard thrown in as well.
