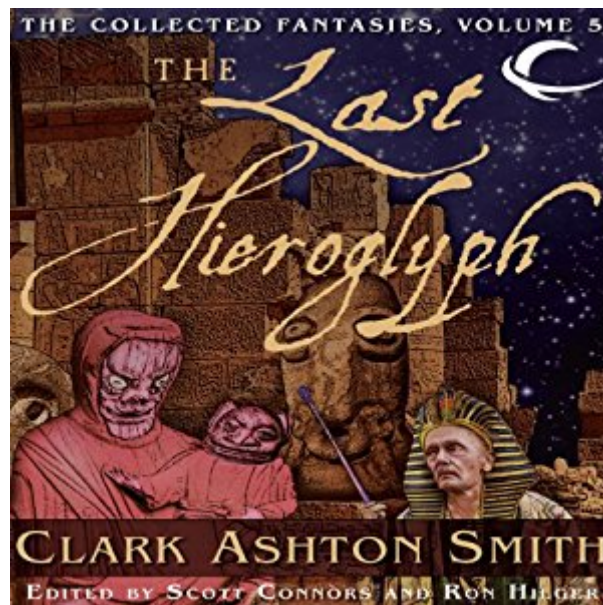




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# The Last Hieroglyph: Volume Five Of The Collected Fantasies Of Clark Ashton Smith



## Synopsis

The Last Hieroglyph is the fifth of the five-volume Collected Fantasies series. Editors Scott Connors and Ron Hilger have compared original manuscripts, various typescripts, published editions, and Smith's notes and letters, in order to prepare a definitive set of texts. The Last Hieroglyph includes, in chronological order, all of Clark Ashton Smith's stories from "The Dark Age" to "The Dart of Rasasfa".

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Clark Ashton Smith was one of the greatest writers of the 20th century. His work will live on while many of the supposed great writers will be forgotten. This series of books is amazing. If you find you hate CAS these volumes are not for you. If have found something beyond simple entertainment in his writing then this volume and its companions are priceless.

Another of the volumes I haven't as yet gotten to but I now have all the five volumes in my collection. Had read many of C.A. Smith's works before so I know what a great writer he was... a style akin to Lovecraft but still different. It's just nice to have all the collected volumes in a set.

The Last Hieroglyph (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 5) (v. 5) is the last installment of the complete short stories of Clark Ashton Smith. I found Smith's stories in the early 70s through the excellent anthologies put together by Lin Carter. Ballantine Books published three

volumes, each focused on a different story cycle. I've read them all myriad times, but was disappointed that they didn't contain ALL of Smith's stories. This collection places the stories in chronological order of writing or publication. It isn't as easy to track a story cycle as a focused anthology, but this collection has ALL the stories. At least we don't have to ferret out old copies of *Weird Tales* magazines. Smith wrote with a very dense elegant style. He was a true master of the English language with a very extensive vocabulary - perhaps he was a power-user of Roget's Thesaurus - who would never run long in his prose. He was also enormously inventive. His Xothique stories center on the last continent of Earth, which orbits a nearly burned-out red sun. Not a pleasant prospect, but the story lines are fabulous. "The Witchcraft of Ulua" and "Necromancy in Naat" are great exemplars of Smith's style. His stories occasionally have a humorous or ironic passage that is so bone-dry it can only draw a chuckle from the reader in the well-constructed eeriness of the worlds he has constructed. These little surprises are one of the things that keep me coming back to re-read these stories. I can't recommend this Collection Series highly enough. Even for readers who don't care for the macabre, Smith's stories can be a real treat; they are just that well written. The book itself is quality merchandise - nice print composition on very good paper. First-rate binding.

I have all five of the books in the Nightshade collection, and enjoyed each. This is the final installment and I believe it shows Clark Ashton Smith (CAS) at his best. The book itself is well made and feels sturdy, just like the previous four. If you look at the previous four, you will notice the price on skyrockets after Nightshade stops publishing them. Get your copy while you can. Like the series, this collection contains a mixbag of genres, including post apocalypse, mystic fantasy, and cosmic horror. According to the publisher these stories are arranged by publication date rather than by story content. CAS's style is definitely not for everyone. These tales often have morbid and fatalistic themes, even the tales with a happy ending come with a dose of salt. I recommend this book and the collection to anyone who likes the styles that of H.P. Lovecraft, C.L. Moore, Henry Kutter, Robert Bloch, and Richard Matheson. I could review each story, but I do not want to spoil the fun. I find the details at the end of each of the collections to be worthwhile in themselves. They offer some insights to CAS's thought process and in a few cases alternate text to the published story. I only regret that these stories spell the end of the collection.

Clark Ashton Smith was a contemporary to and a correspondent with H. P. Lovecraft. Unlike HP, Clark Ashton was at once more varied in his writings, and less unwilling to compromise his art for

profit. Clark Ashton had elderly parents to take care of, and would allow editorial changes, even those that he was actually quite opposed to. The editors of this anthology series, Scott Connors and Ron Hilger, have done what is nearly impossible - gathered the most pristine versions of all of Clark Ashton's work into five volumes. These are the stories as Clark Ashton always wanted them to be told, as he had written them, as they were meant to be. And what volumes they are - well printed on a fine paper, well documented, the epitome of what Clark Ashton always wanted. Nightshade Books ([...]) are to be praised for their commitment to excellence and to the wishes of the author. Clark Ashton was a poet, and his work shows this, being closer to prose poetry than to Lovecraft's tales, even HPL's dream cycle. The horrors that are are horrors which could easily be - in a dream that you or I would forget before we awoke. Clark Ashton could bring these dreams to life, to love, to hate, to sorrow. He evokes a sense of wonder at far off places that are visible only to those to whom dreams are as real as any other experience, and not merely the rumblings of a brain on hold from the reality of the day. You may have read Clark Ashton in other settings, but if you are a fan, you need to treat yourself to the original stories, in order, in all their glory. The End of the Story (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 1) The Door to Saturn (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 2) A Vintage from Atlantis (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 3) The Maze of the Enchanter (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 4) (v. 4) The Last Hieroglyph (The Collected Fantasies of Clark Ashton Smith, Vol. 5) (v. 5) This is a truly fabulous set.

A great collection, getting into prime Smith territory.

Very satisfied with purchase.

I bought this as a gift and the recipient was very pleased with the book. I was told that many of stories he had not not so it was a win win purchase

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