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I.N.J. Culbard (Adapted by) , H.P. Lovecraft

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In a world beyond the walls of sleep, Randolph Carter goes in search of an opulent and mysterious sunset city. First, he must go to Kadath, home of the Gods, where he hopes to be guided to the city of his dreams. No one has ever been to Kadath, and no one even knows how to get there – but that won't stop Carter from trying. In this masterful adaptation of Lovecraft's classic novella, I. N. J. Culbard captures Carter's journey through the dangerous and spectacular Dreamlands in beautiful, gripping detail.

The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath: A Graphic Novel Details

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Author : I.N.J. Culbard (Adapted by) , H.P. Lovecraft

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From Reader Review The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath: A Graphic Novel for online ebook

S.M.M. Lindström says

With Lovecraft's prose being what it is - and with some of us not having English as our first language - I greatly appreciate art heavy adaptions of his stories.

This is a good one. A bit dark, visually I mean, which made some scenes hard to "read". But that said, it slims down a very wordy if interesting story to make it more accessible to, well, everyone.

The story itself? Well, this is one of those stories that I think of as not being completely enchanting but an important influence on things that were written after it. Not that it's a boring story, and it has a very dream like feel to it. It's just smacks a lot of "white middle aged men are *special* and/or the default human". That should not come as a surprise to anyone who's ever read Lovecraft though.

I recommend this book to people who like stories about dreams and most general Fantasy themes. It's **not** a horror story, at least not for people nowadays, I think.

Also, what was up with that last page? Interesting.

Andrew says

So on to the next of my catch up titles.

This is another of the H P Lovecraft titles - however its rather different in that its from his Dream Cycle of stories and is in fact probably the longest of the series.

Here we have the challenges of the famous dreamer Randolph Carter on his quest - for yes you guessed it Unknown Kadath. Okay you know me by now with my no spoilers policy so you will need to read the book (or at least the story) to find out if he finds it or not but like many of these stories there is more often than not more going on while trying to complete the quest than the actual goal at the end of it.

The thing that I think most impresses me with this story is that even though the lands and people are pretty fantastic even for Lovecraft (after all anything goes in the Dreamlands) the artists are still able to capture and convey that sense of wonder and otherness to the page. You actually do feel you are feeling through the underground caverns or charging across the grass covered plains.

for me I think this is probably the most enjoyable of the books (although I have still yet 2 more to collect and read) and I think the artists at least probably had the most fun with it too (it sort of shows). Another great title in the series and I cannot wait to read more.

Michelle Glatt says

The story was more fanciful than horrifying, although the images were strong, and sometimes scarily so. Those unfamiliar with Lovecraft's work will likely be confused by this sparse retelling. Fans will enjoy the imagery as their minds "fill in" the gaps.

The_Mad_Swede says

I. N. J. Culbard may well be the ultimate Lovecraft adapter into the comics medium for me. I have previously enjoyed his take on *The Shadow Out of Time* and *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* respectively, so checking this out from the library was an absolute no-brainer.

Now, the story of *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* is a slightly different one from the types of tales told in *The Shadow Out of Time* and *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* in that it deals more with a phantasmagoria beyond Earth and in a wider cosmic aspect, moving through other realms, but Culbard handles this eminently, and I find myself joyously tagging along for the ride as it were.

Kirsten says

I'd already read this story earlier this year so I was excited to see a graphic novel version. I have a hard time visualizing things in books sometimes. Unfortunately, although beautifully rendered, it was abridged too much for me to give it more than 2 stars.

Derek Royal says

I.N.J. Culbard's adaptation, and illustration, of this Lovecraft narrative is definitely intriguing. However, I wish I had read and was familiar with the original, since that'd give me something more to go on. Reading through Culbard's version, I kept feeling that I was missing something, that there were parts of this story just out of my grasp. But perhaps that's what Lovecraft (and Culbard) intended with this narrative about the dreamworld and its links to the waking life. And as a stand-alone text, without any context to Lovecraft, the story works fairly well.

Rachel says

Turns out I haven't read H.P.'s unfinished original which would explain why this took me so off-guard. Talking cats?! Zoogs?! Gugs?! What is this shenaniganery?! The art was wonderful, as usual, if not as remarkable to me as this story adapts really easily to comics (it's a quest!). Gorgeous colors, though, equally lovely and frightful; I'm going to try and get through more of the original before the year's out, though I read for what felt like hours last night and managed all of 8 H.P. pages.

Alex Watts-barnett says

I love the original and jumped at the idea of there being a graphic adaptation available however, there's not enough meat here either for fans of the original or newcomers. Lovecraft wrote the "Dreamquest" with a considerable amount of detail but the somewhat minimalist art style appears to be incapable of capturing the vast majority of it. The artist seems to have taken many liberties with a number of creature and location designs that seem to be at odds with what I thought were fairly cohesive outlines in the original book. I don't mind artists taking creative freedoms, but blandness is never a good look.

Major story beats, are also glossed over as the writer opts to tell rather than show, reducing what were a number of rather compelling moments in the original to quick exchanges of dialogue between characters rendered uninteresting by bland designs and limited presence and impact. At 140-odd pages, the story feels rushed as well. I finished the whole thing on my lunch break with only a couple of frames really holding my attention for more than a few seconds. An honest-to-goodness adaptation with all the appeal of the original likely would have required multiple volumes or at least twice the amount of pages, to capture all the little moments that make the original so interesting.

For me, the detail is what makes Dreamquest standout as a rare (because Lovecraft didn't write much pure-fantasy) and unique (because I don't know of too many other stories in which an army of house-cats battles a gelatinous alien-race on the moon) bit of Lovecraftian fantasy, and when you scale that back, all you get is a story about a guy going on a quest in an unremarkable fantasy world, and there's plenty of stories like that around. Not a terrible graphic novel as far as graphic novels go, and I admit I'm being a bit of a hard-ass here because I love the source material, but it's a disappointing adaptation that I'd have trouble recommending to anyone for any reason other than completing one's collection of Lovecraftian paraphernalia.

Randolph says

Another good adaptation of Lovecraft by Culbard. Because he uses images he does not include all of the text, which has its advantages and disadvantages, so the reader should be familiar with the Lovecraft novella before looking at this. It would definitely have lost some understandability without prior knowledge. But this is the audience Culbard is aiming for anyway. If you want all the words, look to Jason Bradley Thompson's graphic novel *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath & Other Stories* which has the disadvantage of not having color.

Culbard, like Thompson, has the positive of being a faithful adaptation without any additions or embellishments (or any "updating") to the Lovecraft story. Those graphic novelists that have tried to out-Lovecraft Lovecraft have usually failed. Better your own original or at least original Lovecraftian story.

Sam Quixote says

Randolph Carter dreams of a sunset city and decides to go looking for it(?!). His nutty friend tells him to pray to the dream gods or something and they'll let him find it again (!?). Bonkers bullshit ensues!

The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath is plotted using dream logic, ie. anything goes! Carter rocks up in a forest of giant mushrooms with talking rodents. He sets sail on flying ships full of humanoid monsters, meets the Cats of Ulthar (who, of course, also talk) all so he can travel to a mountain with a face on the side.

Like a dream, you can't really make sense of the story, you can only let it wash over you. And that's why it leaves so slight an impression. It's a quest story where the end goal is never very clear and the resolution is puzzling. Everything that happens along the way is similarly confusing and random so it's hard to care about any of it.

This is HP Lovecraft at his most free-flowing and least horrific, and yet completely uninteresting too. It's wholly unengaging as nothing in the story feels like it matters. Sure, INJ Culbard's art is great, especially as he's given more range with this story to cut loose and draw big, exotic, fantastical landscapes and creatures, but Lovecraft's rambling, barely coherent story is totally forgettable.

Lovecraft wasn't just a shaky writer but quite often he was a weak storyteller too as shown by Dream-Quest. His strengths lay in the horrific visions he conjured up that leapt off the page. A few panels are like that here but not nearly enough to call this anywhere near compelling or worth seeking out.

The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath is the weakest in the Culbard/Lovecraft adaptations. Maybe this has connections to Lovecraft's Great Old Ones mythos but I'm not that big a fan to say. Kadath, what/whoever it is, remains unknown!

Stenjohnson says

I.N.J. Culbard's graphic novel of H.P. Lovecraft's "Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath" is ambitious, to say the least. The original 1926-27 novella, a dense, Lord Dunsany-influenced near-psychadelic dream travelogue, offers unique challenges: baroque descriptions that somehow defy precise visuals, a rambling story-line, and narrative logic more appropriate to dream-life than the printed page. At its best, it's fantasy in its purest sense, with many sustained sequences of surreal wonder. Culbard tackles this seemingly impossible project by grounding the tale in compelling artwork and earthbound dialogue, often telling the story through wordless, evocative panels. Recommended for Lovecraft fans and graphic novel enthusiasts alike.

Dan Schwent says

Randolph Carter wanders the dreamlands in search of Kadath, home of the gods, in order to find a path to the sunset city of his dreams.

First off, I'm going to say something that may get me eaten alive by a swarm of zoogs but I've never held the writing of H.P. Lovecraft in high regard despite loving a lot of his concepts. Untold aeons ago, I read the prose version of The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath. When I saw the graphic novel version, I decided it was time to revisit it.

The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath works fairly well as a graphic novel. The adaptation has a somewhat disjointed feel, which I think fits the tale since it is a dream, after all. Unlike a lot of Lovecraft tales, it's a quest story rather than a race toward insanity. Randolph Carter encounters all manner of Lovecraftian beasties on his journey and I.N.J. Culbard depicts them rather well. Much like the pacing, the art contributes to the dreamlike feel of the story.

Even though I only have vague recollections of reading the prose version of this story, I felt like something

was missing at times. The transitions from scene to scene were a little rough in places. Overall, though, I felt this was a worthwhile adaptation. Three out of five stars.

Forrest says

A worthy effort by I.N.J. Culbard. This is a good, though not great adaption, of H.P. Lovecraft's quest-adventure. There are some outstanding cinematic moments, but this work is not nearly as compelling at Jason Thompson's version of the same. Completists will want the Culbard version, but if you're looking for "bang for the buck," I would definitely go with Thompson's incredible work.

Special thanks to the always wonderful Dan Schwent for turning me on to this version and generously sharing an e-peek at it.

Crystal Starr Light says

Bullet Review:

This was...good. I don't think I was nearly as excited about this as *The Shadow Out of Time*, but it was interesting and unique. Really bizarre, as you would expect from a graphic novel about a dream. I can only imagine how challenging it might have been for Lovecraft to intricately detail this world, given he had only words to use - the graphic artist has an arsenal of tools so that you can see what the narrator is seeing. The author can only use words.

Anyway, it was a good read, and I'm glad I chose the graphic route to read Lovecraft.

Harper Jean says

I recall being completely enchanted by the original Lovecraft novel when I read it in high school. I must have mixed up some of my memories of it with other stories, though, and my memories of the actual plot faded, because this wasn't quite what I expected. I did really enjoy his adaptation - the art is beautiful and it really captured the mood of the book well in parts - it is dreamlike, hypnotic, and spooky, though seldom quite as much so as I remember the original being. I felt the pacing was a bit rushed, leaving out bits of the story, jumping ahead - though the book itself does a fair amount of that, so I can't be too sure - and possibly leaving the reader unfamiliar with the original the feeling that they're missing something. Still, it's quite lovely.
