



To Charles Fort, With Love

Caitlín R. Kiernan

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To Charles Fort, With Love is award-winning fantasist Caitlín R. Kiernan's third collection of short fiction, a haunting parade of the terrible things which may lie beyond the boundaries of science, the minds which may exist beyond psychology, and the forbidden places which will never be located in any orthodox globe.

To Charles Fort, With Love Details

Date : Published September 1st 2005 by Subterranean Press

ISBN : 9781596060340

Author : Caitlín R. Kiernan

Format : Hardcover 270 pages

Genre : Horror, Short Stories, Fantasy, Dark Fantasy, Science Fiction, Weird Fiction

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USS says

What to say besides that Caitlin R. Kiernan is a fantastic author. I first became aware of her work after reading the short story "Onion," published in an anthology edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling. "Onion" instantly cemented her reputation as a top-notch writer. This collection is on the same par, and each page of it is a treasure.

Soccermom174 says

it should make a second book because it was very interesting to read

Terence says

Kiernan nicely characterizes the spirit of this collection in the afterword to "Nor the Demons Down Under the Sea," where she writes:

This is one of those stories which takes very seriously my belief that dark fiction dealing with inexplicable should, itself, present to the reader a certain inexplicability. It's not about resolution nor understanding, but that brief, disturbing contact which usually characterizes actual paranormal encounters. (p. 232)

Recommended.

Jeannie Sloan says

What a wonderful book! I can really see how the author has matured through the years. There is less teen angst here and more mature plots. Great book.

Jeremy Preacher says

It's probably not fair to only give this three stars when my only real issue with it is that I don't particularly care for horror. There's some really fantastic imagery and tight little portraits of characters that make these short stories very neatly done, and if you're into Lovecraft or a creeping sense of unease then I'd definitely pass these along.

I found them a little light on actual plot to my taste - several of them came across more like paintings than

stories, which is not what I'm generally looking for. There are definitely some seeds of neat ideas though, and on most of those the end-notes indicate that one of her novels ended up based around the story.

Ultimately I'm glad I picked it up, but I think I'm going to stick with her novels in general.

Doug says

I read only two stories from this collection. Kiernan gives some sense of the mysteries referred to by the late great Charles Fort as the "damned data"--those annoying facts which might expand our awareness of what this reality is, if we drop the biases and filters of our cultural programming. Anyway, the fiction itself wasn't so revelatory but I applaud the effort and the honoring of Fort.

Karl says

This is copy 201 of 250 signed numbered copies signed by the author.

Annie says

WOW. Caitlin Kiernan is amazing and brilliant - every time I read another book of hers I'm just more and more impressed. I think one aspect I love most is the amazing worldbuilding. It's different than the usual way I think of worldbuilding in fantasy - hers is slower and more intricate, threads of ideas winding through all of her work. The connections built between characters throughout all of her short stories and novels give a really deep sense of history that just gets deeper the more you read. It's exhilarating.

My favorite stories here were "La Peau Verte" and "Andromeda Among The Stones". Both of these are among the longer in the collection, and I think I loved them so much because their length just let me feel lost in reading them. Both of these stories really exemplify something of what Kiernan's so great at, too - leading you right to the edge between worlds, building up an amazingly creepy tension, and then just leaving you there. It's incredibly satisfying and unsatisfying at the same time (and I mean that in a good way).

Plus, she's so freaking smart and it shows. Fantastic book from an author I just keep loving more and more.

Tiffany Lynn Kramer says

3.5

Excluding *La Mer des Rêves* and *The Road of Pins* I highly enjoyed all the stories in this collection. *Standing Water*, with its subtle creeping dread and *Onion* with its dark and clever take on a familiar story trope were among my favorites but I could imagine most of this stories would adapt well to film.

Josh Hesterman says

Lovecraftian with an extra dash of intelligibility and wit, this volume treads the line between the dark worlds we inhabit with graceful ease, and is a great addition to the subtler modern horrors I adore!

Paige Ellen Stone says

CRK is simply the best in her genre and one of the best humans writing in any genre. The value of a collection of previously published short stories, gathered around a theme and devoted to one of her primary inspirations is that, I, the obsessive fan, don't have to hunt all over to find these great short works. I'm not that obsessive that I would hunt down all the periodicals and anthologies in which they originally appeared (but who knows, I may do that anyway). The joyful plus of this volume is that the author comments on each story after you have read it and this gives sometimes fascinating insight into Ms Kiernan's thought processes both currently and at the time she wrote it. Don't ask me to pick a favorite but many of these stories and cycles are worth the price of admission in and of themselves. A wonderful addition for collector's like me.

Eddie Watkins says

I hate to be ungenerous but I just didn't think these stories were that good. Good ideas, yes, but too verbose, and maybe too in-your-face. But I will give it another try some day down the road.

Beastnessa says

Caitlín Kiernan does something a little unusual with her short story collections, in that she organizes them intentionally around a common theme, rather than just chronologically (i.e. "these are the stories I wrote in the past 5 years, here you go"). This is a great way to skip right over the main problem people cite with short collections: the hit-or-miss factor. Even the most omnivorous, egalitarian readers have their personal taste, and not all the short stories in a given collection will be for everyone. Dedicated as it is to Charles Fort, this collection is a celebration of his (I take it, not yet having read his stuff) obsession with the inexplicable, things that hover on the edge of our awareness and defy explanation.

One of my favorite things about Kiernan's writing is that she adroitly avoids explanations of any kind, rational or supernatural alike-- she glories in the truly unknown. That's what these stories have in common. This is an approach that is most definitely not for everyone. It's an approach readers of weird fiction are undoubtedly familiar with, yet for me, Kiernan's style is a bit different from a lot of other weird fiction in that she uses details sparingly, but to great effect. She mines character deeply and sensitively, but minimalistically. She uses atmosphere well and wisely, never losing you in it for the sake of a pretty turn of phrase, though there are many in these pages. An excellent example is the middle entry in the Dandridge cycle, "Nor the Demons Down Under the Sea." It's truly effective horror in which very little actually happens. It operates on suggestion and unease, the building horror springing organically from the tension between two characters. The horror comes from their disconnect, their lack of understanding, not only of each other but of the situation they stumble into. There is also a great device that foreshadows one of my favorite passages in *The Red Tree*, the funhouse stretching of space and time that seemingly traps you in a

given geography, unable to get any closer to your destination.

Nearly half of these stories are also collected in the first comprehensive volume of her short fiction, and are some of my all-time favorites. "Onion," "The Road of Pins," and "La Peau Verte" are stories I rave about to people who don't read horror or fantasy (or whatever genre you'd call this) at all because I think these stories could convert them. Or, because I just want them to have that experience of reading something in daylight, laughing because it's so ephemeral (who could ever find that scary?) and then being up all night, nervously checking your hallway for spectral dogs.

Jeremiah Genest says

Caitlin R. Kiernan's new collection *To Charles Fort, With Love* (Subterranean Press, 2005) is a collection of 13 brooding tales about the darker mysteries of life told with a lyrical intensity and a love of all things fortean. This collection is indebted to Lovecraft and Charles Fort in ways that made me very happy to be reading them. An excellent collection that makes me want to go and find her novels and give them a try. I wouldn't call it horror, its more in the stream of fabulists like Powers or Crowley.
