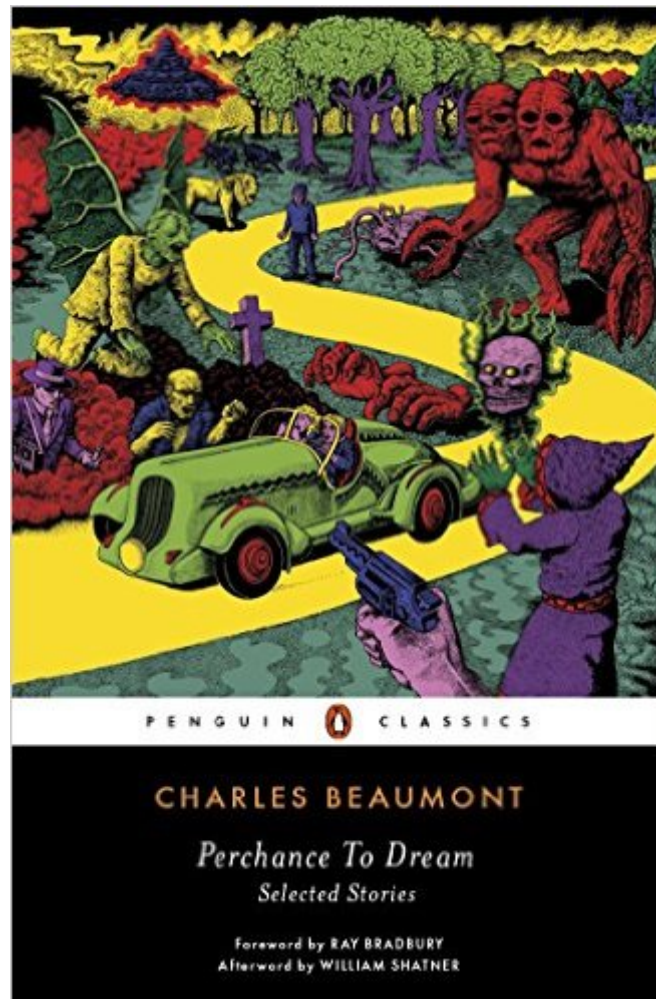


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Perchance To Dream: Selected Stories



Synopsis

The profoundly original and wildly entertaining short stories of a legendary Twilight Zone writer, with a foreword by Ray Bradbury and an afterword by William Shatner—It is only natural that Charles Beaumont would make a name for himself crafting scripts for “The Twilight Zone” for his was an imagination so limitless it must have emerged from some other dimension. Perchance to Dream contains a selection of Beaumont’s finest stories, including seven that he later adapted for Twilight Zone episodes. Beaumont dreamed up fantasies so vast and varied they burst through the walls of whatever box might contain them. Supernatural, horror, noir, science fiction, fantasy, pulp, and more: all were equally at home in his wondrous mind. These are stories where lions stalk the plains, classic cars rove the streets, and spacecraft hover just overhead. Here roam musicians, magicians, vampires, monsters, toreros, extraterrestrials, androids, and perhaps even the Devil himself. With dizzying feats of master storytelling and joyously eccentric humor, Beaumont transformed his nightmares and reveries into impeccably crafted stories that leave themselves indelibly stamped upon the walls of the mind. In Beaumont’s hands, nothing is impossible: it all seems plausible, even likely. “[Beaumont’s] imagination, as Perchance to Dream amply shows, was more than most writer’s enjoy in the longest of lifetimes.” —NPR For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Penguin Classics (October 13, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0143107658

ISBN-13: 978-0143107651

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.6 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #149,958 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #115 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Short Stories #121 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction >

Customer Reviews

Charles Beaumont is a five-star talent and hopefully this Penguin Classics retrospective of his work will go a long way to bring his fine work to a wider audience. Unfortunately, this collection, due to some questionable omissions, is only partially successful in encompassing the best of his work, and I can't imagine the goal would have been otherwise since the author's work hasn't been in print in nearly twenty years and is unlikely to remain in print hereafter. The best part of this collection is that it includes seven stories that were later adapted for television on Rod Serling's *The Twilight Zone*, almost all of which were adapted by Beaumont himself for the show. For those interested, these stories are: "The Howling Man," "The Jungle," "Perchance to Dream," "In His Image," "The Beautiful People" (filmed as "Number Twelve Looks Just Like You" from a teleplay by John Tomerlin), "Song for a Lady" (filmed as "Passage on the Lady Anne"), and "Traumerei" (filmed as "Shadow Play"). This collection should also have included the stories, "The Devil, You Say?" and "Elegy," both of which were also adapted for the show by Beaumont, "The Devil, You Say?" as "Printer's Devil," for no other reason than to completely collect the Beaumont stories associated with the show. The collection also neglects one of Beaumont's finer stories that is also connected to *Twilight Zone*, "Gentlemen, Be Seated," which Beaumont also adapted into a teleplay and submitted to the *Zone* before, incredibly, it was rejected for production by the show's fifth season producer.

If the name "Charles Beaumont" strikes a familiar chord with you, it is likely because you have seen that name in the opening or end credits of any number of popular entertainments. Beaumont was the screenwriter for the 1958 sci-fi shlock classic "Queen of Outer Space," "The 7 Faces of Dr. Lao," and the Roger Corman films "The Premature Burial," "The Intruder" (featuring William Shatner's finest performance ever, sez me), "The Haunted Palace" and "The Masque of the Red Death." More likely, however, you have seen his name at the ending of various episodes of the classic television program "The Twilight Zone"; Beaumont contributed 22 screenplays to the series, more than his buddies Richard Matheson (15) and (the very recently departed) George Clayton Johnson (5), but of course far, far fewer than series host Rod Serling's almost superhuman tally of 88 of the program's 151 shows. Fewer people, perhaps, know that Beaumont was also an author, with dozens of short stories and two novels to his credit. The new collection from Penguin Classics, however, may help bring Beaumont's skills as an author to a wider audience. Entitled "Perchance to Dream," the collection brings 23 stories together in one 300+-page collection, from the 10-year

period 1952 to 1961. As it turns out, this is a very wide-ranging collection, with stories in many genres. Most impressively, Beaumont changes his style of writing, seemingly effortlessly, to match any one particular story. Some of the tales are simply written, while others feature lush, almost poetical turns of phrase. Some of the tales are humorous; others quite grim. Many feature surprising plot twists; others are more straightforward.

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