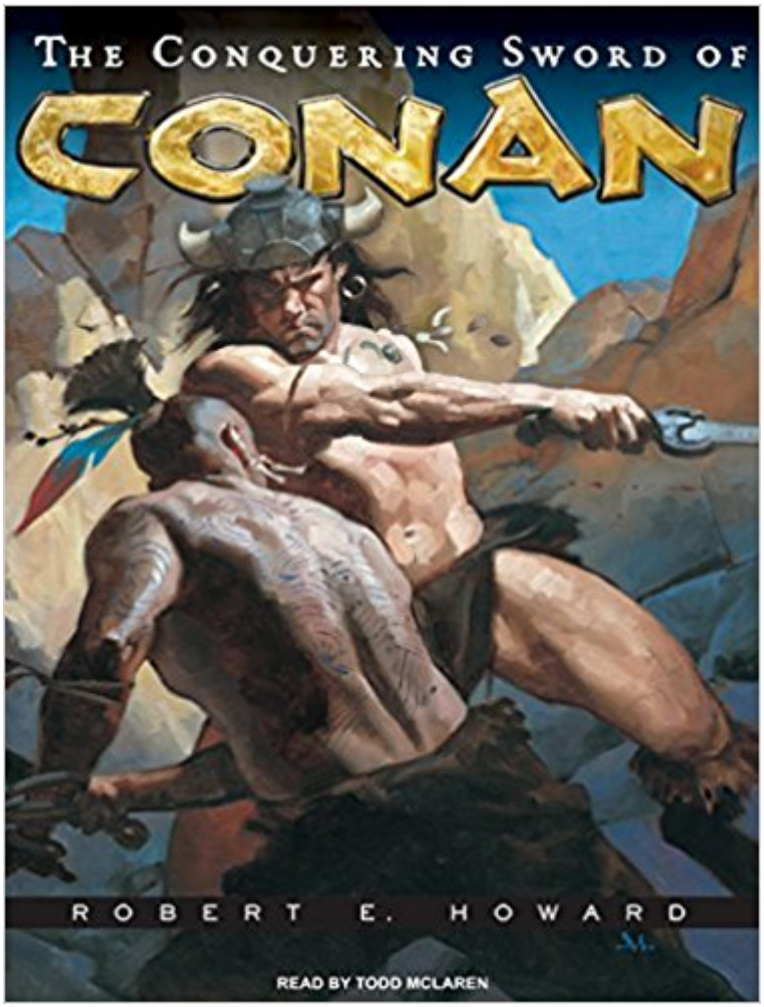
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The Conquering Sword Of Conan (Conan Of Cimmeria)



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Synopsis

In a meteoric career that covered only a dozen years, Robert E. Howard defined the sword and sorcery genre. In doing so, he brought to life the archetypal adventurer known to millions around the world as Conan the barbarian. This collection features Howard at his finest and Conan at his most savage. Truly heroic fantasy at its best, this volume contains "The Servants of Bit-Yakin," "Beyond the Black River," "The Black Stranger," "The Man-Eaters of Zamboula," and "Red Nails," which is perhaps Conan's most famous adventure.

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Customer Reviews

"McLaren's presentation of the complexities of [Conan] makes him believable as an adventurer who has wide experience." ---AudioFile

Robert E. Howard (1906Ã¢â ¬â œ1936), an American pulp fiction writer who is best known as the creator of Conan, wrote a huge number of stories in a variety of genres, including fantasy, westerns, horror, and even boxing stories.Todd McLaren was involved in radio for more than twenty years in cities on both coasts. He left broadcasting for a full-time career in voice-overs, where he has been heard on more than 5,000 TV and radio commercials, as well as TV promos, narrations for documentaries on such networks as A&E and the History Channel, and films.

Howard’s frenetic prose and stark vision are on full display in this work. The final volume in the collected works of Conan displays Howard’s growth as a writer and cements his legacy as one of the greatest contributors in the fantasy genre. At last, Howard offers his uncompromising view of civilization against the contrast of barbarism in two tales taken from this collection: "The Black Stranger" and "Red Nails". That he explores these themes as thoroughly and powerfully as he does, his message is only magnified by the vehicle he uses to advance his story; the savage barbarian Conan, a figure as elemental as the world in which he thrives.While "Red Nails" is arguably the penultimate Conan tale, I find myself still thinking about "The Black Stranger." Perhaps it is the mix of the ingredients in the story: an exiled noble and his family; a makeshift fortress far from civilized lands, surrounded by barbarians; a strange treasure, hidden in the wilds; and the presence of several different persons, all with radically different goals and morals (the noble, pirates, a barbarian that has some experience with civilization). Oh, and a curse and unrelenting demon, to boot. While the story is rich with metaphor and example, one passage seems to beautifully distill Howard’s view; "I know what it is to be penniless in a Hyborian land. Now in my country sometimes there are famines; but people are hungry only when there’s no food in the land at all. But in civilized countries I’ve seen people sick of gluttony while others were starving. Aye, I’ve seen men fall and die of hunger against the walls of shops and storehouses crammed with food." A bold statement, as true today as when Howard wrote it. Indeed, there can be no doubting its veracity even during the ancient time when Howard envisioned this story taking place.Another tale, "Beyond the Black River", offers a similar view in much plainer language. "Barbarism is the natural state of mankind," the borderer said, still staring somberly at the Cimmerian. "Civilization is unnatural. It is a whim of circumstance. And barbarism must always triumph." This passage not only gives voice to a recurring theme in Howard’s work, but states a perceived truth bluntly, almost poetically.Even with the presence and potency of the themes so very present in this last batch of tales, Howard never loses his ability to hypnotize with his prose. Another quote from "The Black Stranger

The original Conan stories are a real eye opener for people only accustomed to the popular movie depiction of the character. Conan is a cunning and dangerous man who is less of a barbarian than people might expect of him. This collection has four stories, including Beyond the Black River and Red Nails, as well as almost 100 pages of assorted material such as story drafts, letters, and maps. Howard’s writing style is raw and evocative, though some people will take issue with his depictions of women and non-whites. It’s easy to see why Conan was so inspirational to generations of writers and movie-makers.

Horror and adventure are constant companions of Conan. Excellent writing and fascinating stories.

Crom!!!! Let me tell you the tales of high adventure!!! These books are the standard of fantasy writing. Robert E. Howard is the pinnacle. While these books are paper back the price is outstanding for all these collected stories. The stories are a fast ready and very memorable.There are few other characters that stand up the test of time. Sherlock Holmes, Robin Hood, Rambo if you will and definitely Conan.You definitely can not pass up these amazing works!

This review is of third and final volume of Del-Rey definitive edition(s) of Conan, The Conquering Sword of Conan; as the stories are published in the order Howard wrote them, it stands to reason that as his skill as a writer grew over time, so should Conan. You'll find this in all the stories in this volume, the best of which are, The Black Stranger, Beyond the Black River, and Red Nails. There are five stories in all, The Man Eaters of Zamboula and The Servants of Bit-Yakin rounding out the stories. Also included are drafts and synopsis' of the listed tales as well as a letter from Howard to P. Schuyler Miller to and a map of the Hyborian Age. Also included is a fine essay by Howard scholar Patrice Louinet and notes on various chronologies, texts and typescripts. All in all, a very good book, I've been waiting years for a book like this. Del-Rey and Howard scholars are to be congratulated for stepping up bring forth definitive volumes of all of Howard's work. Here be adventure!

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