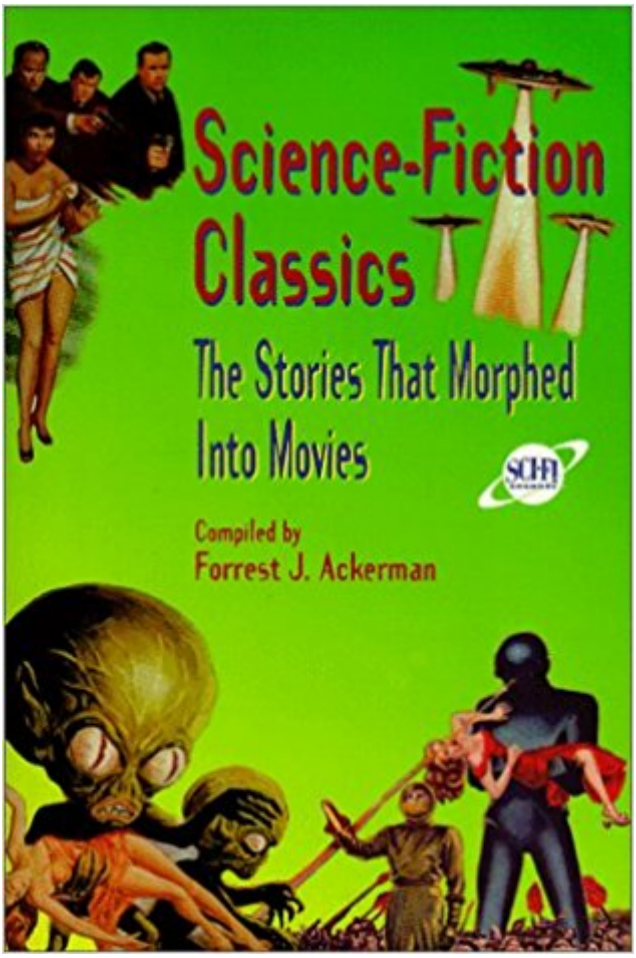
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Science-Fiction Classics: The Stories That Morphed Into Movies



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Synopsis

Book by

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Though it is rich with Twilight Zone-esque images, sexual and racial stereotypes, and charmingly transparent plots, this anthology is surprisingly refreshing. After a full decade of cybermania and nanotech angst, Science Fiction Classics offers a trip through time to a more innocent, earnest age. It’s amusing to see how mistrusting of science our forefathers were, even as they embraced it; but it’s even more interesting to examine the roots of today’s SF and wonder where the next generation will go with it. Science Fiction Classics allows us to graph science fiction’s various incarnations--from dark, paranoid horror stories; drippy fairytales; and florid, pulpy SF to the more modern character-driven sagas; huge-scale space operas; and the aggro-techno seizures of the ’90s. With few exceptions--one of which is "Farewell to the Master" on which The Day the Earth Stood Still is based--these stories are not works of art. In fact, some of them are downright hard to get through. What they are is a loosely focused prism through which we can examine the genesis of a genre. --Jhana Bach

’When the World was Young’ or ’Throwbacks from a lesser age’ might be more appropiate title for some. But don’t take this as being churlish or simply insulting. The truth is these stories are a blast to read. They are more a window into writing and the creative process than when someone simply compiles what they consider premier literature in the hopes that you’ll become a literary expert. As

an example, I was in a Womens' studies program during college and in my literature class, the 2 compilations had a wide variety of stories, good and bad, from pulpish to poetic. It wasn't that they were desparate to find works by female writers. It was explained in their prefaces that they wanted to show a wide array of storytelling to give you greater insight and a wider spectrum of womens' social/societal participation. And Ackerman pretty much says the same thing in his astounding intro to this collection.Anyway, these stories often serve as templates for much larger works. I would love to see someone offer a class where you read the stories and watched the movies in tandem or vice versa in order to get an idea of how the entire creative process that goes into making films occurs. Some of the stories were clearly written as throwaway dimestore novelties that someone saw something far greater in and then expounded into a full length screenplay. 'The Alien Device', which was the inspiration for 'This Island Earth', is a perfect example of this. Others come across as crass exploitation and pandering like the inspiration for 'Devil Girl' (don't have it in front of me, so I might have film title wrong)I bought it because it was one of the few recent collections that has Ray Nelson's '8 O'Clock in the Morning, the basis for John Carpenter's 'They Live'. Not everything in this collection is a clunker, and like I said, almost all of it is great, tremendous fun to read. It also includes Ray Bradbury's 'The Veldt' which isn't one of his stronger stories but is entertaining and I can't leave out Ramsey Campbells' Who Goes There?', the basis for the J.C.'s 'The Thing' as well as the less accurate original 'The Thing from Another World' in the 50's.I'm still not finished reading it all but I would definitely recommend it for anyone who is a sci-fi fan, but defintiely for those who have the slightest interest in writing, screenwriting and/or filmmaking. Who knows when someone else is going to have the moxie to put out a collection that's as comprehensive as this?

It was truly luck that I was able to obtain this used book because of that one story that was morphed into movie by the title of "The Day The Earth Stood Still". I knew about the short story in the early sixties and meant to go to the library to check the book out to read it.The title of the short story is: "Farewell to The Master" by Harry Bates. The movie is still very good after over 50 years.

This book has the original stories from which many of my favorite sci-fi movies from my youth were made. It's interesting to see how the stories were changed for the movies. In some cases they seem like totally different stories. The movies actually improved some of them. Most are grade B movies, but entertaining nonetheless.

Nothing exists in a vacuum, science fiction built on previous fictions and science fiction movies often

built on previous science fiction stories. Such is the idea behind this anthology. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Science-Fiction Classics: The Stories That Morphed Into MoviesÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• as edited by Forest J. Ackerman (1916-2008) is neither the first, the last, the worst, or the best of such anthologies. In fact, Ackerman is responsible for two similar previous anthologies containing some of the same stories.******However, the anthology starts off with ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe Adaptive UltimateÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Stanley G. Weinbaum (1902-35), as two doctors have come up with a both a theory, and a serum to test adaptability and evolution, and they test it on a young woman dying of TB. They succeed, but she can now change, skin, hair, and more at will, canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t be hurt or poisoned, and she becomes amoral, sociopathic, and dangerous. So itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s up to the scientists to stop her. A dated, average to mediocre story that is only borderline filler, and basis for the movie ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“She-DevilÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•. Weinbaum died early of cancer and saw relatively few of his many stories in print.******Up next is the first part of the three part serial of the novel ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“This Island EarthÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and the later classic movie. Cal Meachum is a radio instrument engineer, and when he orders some condensers what he gets is something far more advanced than the most cutting edge technology. Then it happens again, and it seems that the orders are being intercepted and replaced. Then he gets a catalogue, and orders everything in it. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe Alien MachineÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Raymond F. Jones (1915-94) is a fairly good representation of the first part of the movie, but stops abruptly on a cliffhanger. A good story, but it has no real ending. JonesÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ sf career lasted thirty-seven years and a retrospective is badly needed.******Paul W. Fairman (1909-77) was a hack, and his story ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe Cosmic FrameÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ shows this. Two young people go on a romantic drive and accidently hit and kill an alien visitor. In an effort to make money from the carcass the parents freeze the body, but the aliens come for the corpse and frame the boyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s family for murder. Considerably changed for the laughable, but fun, movie ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Invasion Of The SaucermenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s remake ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The Eye CreaturesÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•. And while it would seem impossible, but it is, the story makes even less sense than the movies, which comes across as better than the source material. Fairman would later become an editor, and was equally mediocre at that.******In direct contrast to the above story is ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœDeadly CityÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Ivar Jorgeson (Fairman). In the near future a motley group of five people, a bully, a sociopathic killer, a suicider, a charwoman, and a mugged man wake up in different locations in an abandoned metropolis. They gradually come together to figure out what is/has happening/happened. Then they find that thereÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s something out there in the dark abandoned city that wants to kill. Fairman

was a hack who always did the bare minimum to get published, but when pushed he could rise to the challenge. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœDeadly CityÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ is a surprisingly good bit of cynical adult surrealism. Turned into the movie ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Target: EarthÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• this piece of apocalyptic noir is something for Fairman to have been proud of. Who knows why he squandered his talent.******Henry Kuttner (1915-58) is a classic author that got little respect under his own name during his life. In ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœDr. CyclopsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ we have again a disparate bunch of people, a biologist, his pretty assistant, a mineralogist, their native guide, and a native handyman end up at Dr. ThorkelÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s South American jungle camp. Quickly the group is at odds with the (very) mad scientist, and then soon they become part of his experiments, being shrunk down to being mouse-sized. Escaping, they flee into the nearby jungle as one of them is murdered. The story then becomes a cat and mouse game as the group tries to stay alive as Thorkel tries to kill them. Published in 1940, the war in Europe is referenced, and this was made into an excellent movie. Sure the science is ludicrous, but, what can you do? Fast-paced and action-packed, this is Kuttner at his flaky best before he would marry fellow author C. L. Moore.******In ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe Diminishing DraftÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ a distinguished professor is having an affair with the winsome Jeanne Briand, and he makes the mistake of hiring her as a lab assistant. Then there is a discovery that the anti-bacterial agent baroturpinol actually SHRINKS parameba instead of killing them. Then there is the discovery that baraturpinal also works on higher forms of life and the effects can be reversed by salt. Things escalate as Jeanne, in a fit of desperation uses it on herself. Published in 1918 the science is beyond ludicrous, and the attitude towards women is beyond patronizing and insulting, as not a paragraph seems to pass that the author doesnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t use to make Jeanne seem any less than airheaded, immature, and infantile, while the professorÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s wife is portrayed as a shrike. Filmed twice, this story was a waste of paper, and of my time. Waldemar Kaempffert (1877-56) only wrote one sf story, and one too many.******George Nada is hypnotized and then he awakes, totally awakes, and now that he is totally awake he looks about him and finds that mankind is being ruled and controlled by the alien Fascinators. George then goes on a rampage, and sets up a revolution in six short pages. Has a twist ending that is illogical based on what has preceded it. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœEight OÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢Clock In the MorningÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Ray Faraday Nelson (1931-) is a short amusing filler, and reads more like an outline for a longer story. Had a longer shelf-life that it deserved when it was made by John CarpenterÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s into the heavy-handed satire ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“They LiveÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•.******The movie ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The Day The Earth Stood StillÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• was based on the story ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœFarewell To The

MasterÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Harry Bates (1900-81), and the story is significantly different than the movie in that it stars Cliff Sutherland, a freelance photographer, and heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s trying to get a story on the landing of a spaceship near the Smithsonian Institute where Gnut, Gort in the movie, the robot has been perched since the spaceship landed and its human companion Klaatu was murdered. Both are very good in their own right, but it seems that the story ends just when it was getting good. This story appeared in 1940 in ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Astounding StoriesÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• under the editorship of John W. Campbell (see below), a magazine Bates himself founded in 1930.******In ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe 4-Sided TriangleÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by William F. Temple (1914-89), Bill is in love with Joan, but Joan is in love with Will. If this were a crime story we know where this tale would go, but itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s not a crime story, but a sf story, and so itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s considerably less interesting. Together all three of them have created a series of replicating machines. So Bill learns how to recreate living creatures, and since Joan has married Will, he wants to replicate Joan so he can have a ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“JoanÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• for himself. She agrees and this leads to a very predictable twist, or series of them. Incredibly sexist and maudlin.******George and Lydia Hadley are parents for whom nothing is too good for them, or their children, so they have a home that does everything for them. It bathes them, makes and cuts their food, dresses them, and even dreams for them. Unfortunately, they have become too indulgent, and now their children are spoiled, and when George and Lydia decide to be parents again, well, it may be too late, the children are going to take charge. The audience is never quite sure if what happens in ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe VeldtÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Ray Bradbury (1920-2012) HAS happened, or IS happening. A cautionary tale dealing with technology, and the pathology of children. Bradbury has gone there before with stories like ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe Small AssassinÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢.******In the future, motor racing is a blood sport, and Willie Connors is the greatest gladiator of them all. Willie is going to beat his record on the New York to Las Angeles run. All heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s gotta do is get there in the quickest way, and to hit as many people as possible, and have the highest body count. Then Willie grows a conscience and he comes to the realization that what heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s doing is wrong. Like BradburyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s story ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe RacerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ works best as a metaphor, but itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s still a great story thatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s been filmed three times and Ib Melchoir (1917-) would later make his bones as a filmmaker.******When I was a child I saw the movie ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Fiend Without A FaceÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and I always wanted to read the source story, and now here it is. While in ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe Thought-MonsterÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Amelia Reynolds Long (1904-78), a

series of horrible and inexplicable deaths occurs in an isolated town, we end up having a story that is considerably different than the movie. The creatureÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s creation is the same, the creation through the experimentation of making thought projection solid, but the creature and everything else are completely different. A simple terror tale, good, but not as good as the movie, which was a bit of psychotic ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“BÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• movie madness.******In ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe TwonkyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by Lewis Padgett (Kuttner & C. L. Moore: 1911-87) Kerry and Martha Westerfeld are an upwardly mobile couple and theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve decided to purchase a new entertainment counsel only to find theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve gotten more than theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve bargained for. Somehow, a technician from the future has ended up in the past, itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s never explained how, where heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s built a Twonky. The Twonky is a disguised sentient AI that runs a mind scan on people, and then takes on the responsibility to control their behavior. In this case, it is determined to be in control of the young couple, to their detriment. Kuttner and his wife/co-author C. L. Moore have written a solid primal scream against the overdependence of technology. Best read as a companion piece to KornbluthÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœLittle Black BagÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ and BradburyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThe VeldtÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢. When Kuttner died in 1958, so did MooreÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s writing career.******Up last is a true classic. Unless youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve been living under a rock for the last fifty years you know the plot of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœWho Goes There?ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ by John W. Campbell, Jr. (1910-71). An Antarctic research station uncovers a spaceship and an alien, the spaceship is destroyed, but the frozen alien is thawed, and mayhem eschews. The smallest bit of the alien will take over and absorb its prey, while keeping the memories of what itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s killed. The paranoia and suspense escalates as the scientists realize that there are not only monsters amongst them, stalking them, but that these monsters may be both unkillable and undetectable. A true pulp scientific horror tale that is filled with two-fisted characters, witness the description of MacReady, in which MacReady comes across as a near twin of Doc Savage as you can get. Perhaps the ultimate story of us against them in this pre-WWII exercise in paranoia. John Campbell started off as a writer, but who would become perhaps the most influential editor in science fiction.******This anthology also contains a full-length novel by Curt Siodmak (1902-2000) ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœFP 1 Does Not ReplyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ that is translated from the German, which I havenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t read, as this was a borrowed book and it had to be returned. However a good review of this novel can be found someplace on this site. Siodmak became a professional screenwriter and created Lawrence Talbot as the wolfman. As a straight up sf anthology you can

certainly find better ones, as anthology of sf stories to compare to various sf movies of variable quality, you could also do better, but this book DOES have some choice stuff, including the rare Siodmak and Long stories. Get it cheap though if you can.

I ordered this book, hoping it included EIGHT O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING by Ray Nelson (basis for THEY LIVE). It does! The surprise is the other selections included, among which are the stories that inspired such films as, THIS ISLAND EARTH, THE THING , DEATH RACE 2000, THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL, and INVASION OF THE SAUCER MEN. I especially recommend "The Alien Machine", "The Cosmic Frame", "Who Goes There?", and "The Racer". While none of these tales could be called a masterpiece of the genre, collectively they are a great read. Get this book!

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