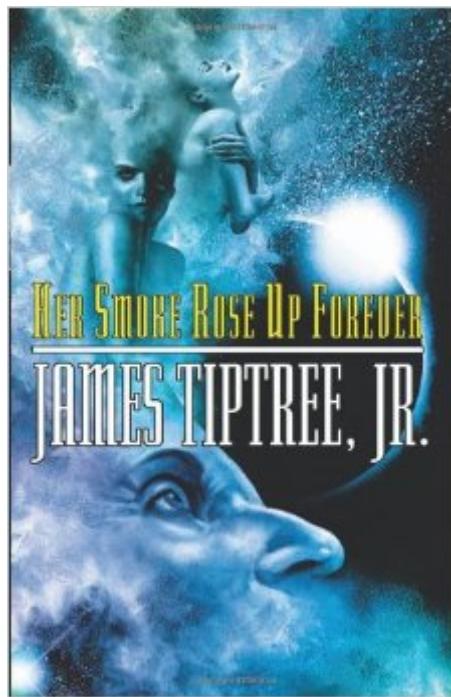


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Her Smoke Rose Up Forever



Synopsis

Her Smoke Rose Up Forever collects eighteen brilliant short stories from a luminary of the science-fiction genre, James Tiptree, Jr. This updated edition is the quintessential Tiptree collection and contains revisions from the author's original notes. Tiptree's fiction reflects the darkly complex world its author inhabited: exploring the alien among us; the unreliability of perception; love, sex, and death; and humanity's place in a vast, cold universe.

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Customer Reviews

Do you have a favorite book in the world? This book, quite simply, is mine. This is a posthumously-published collection of eighteen stories by James Tiptree, Jr. (pseudonym for Alice Sheldon). It contains most of her best short fiction. It also contains a compelling introduction by John Clute. Mark Richard Siegel, who wrote the Starmont Reader's Guide on James Tiptree, Jr., wrote the sentence that I think best captures the essence of what is distinctive and special about Tiptree's work. He wrote: "Her stories showed that, for the individual, the most significant thing is passionate experience, the intensity of certain moments, good and bad, when she is most truly alive." Do you crave passionate experiences? Tiptree will put you through them. But be warned that Tiptree often put her characters through mercilessly gut-wrenching passionate experiences, wrenching THIS reader's gut right along the way. Tiptree is not for readers who like their fiction safe and cozy, knowing everything will turn out all right in the end. Here are a few words on my five favorite stories in the book. My own personal favorite Tiptree story is "The Screwfly Solution." In this story a sort of

psychological plague has broken out in various parts of the world where men are murdering women wholesale. Tiptree introduces us to (and makes us care about) one particular family. In 21 pulse-pounding pages Tiptree gives us the stunning macro-story of the fate of humanity in the face of this terrifying "plague," along with the heart-wrenching micro-story of its effect on one family. It is a masterpiece of economical storytelling, and no SF story has an ending which packs a bigger wallop.

In 508 pages we get 18 short stories by James Tiptree, Jr. Original publication dates range from 1969 to 1981. Time has overtaken many of the tales in a strange way, that makes one wish Tiptree were still around to appreciate developments. For instance, in "The Girl Who Was Plugged In," the world breathlessly watches the real-time antics of young, beautiful wealthy girls... who are actually brainless synthetic creations animated by what amount to brains in jars in an underground lab. What would Tiptree make of the Parises, Nicoles, Lindsays and Brittanies of our own day, who appear to have no brains located anywhere? Tiptree really got rolling in 1973, when she published her three best-known stories, "The Girl...," along with "Love is the plan the plan is death," and "The Women Men Don't See." Along with 1976's "Houston, Houston, do you read?" these are the quintessential Tiptree tales. "Love is the plan..." is my favorite science fiction short story, and one of the best short stories of any kind ever written. It has not a single human character, and depicts the unbearably touching efforts of a gigantic, heavily-armored, multi-limbed alien to tackle and solve three deadly problems faced by his species, two internal--- stemming from instinctively programmed behavior--- and one external, a global climate change. That he will fail, and why he will fail, is evident early on from many clues fairly planted within the narrative. But he does his level best, which is indeed far better than you and I could hope to do, and like most Tiptree aliens, he is totally charming and lovable throughout his hopeless task. Our own species is currently failing completely to deal with a global climate change, and we are neither charming nor lovable in our miserably conflicted efforts.

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