



## The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You!

*Harry Harrison*

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## **The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You!** Harry Harrison

After saving the world, diGriz is called on to save the universe. Liberating his two, now teenage, twin' sons from a military boarding school and penitentiary, diGriz sets out to free his wife, who has been arrested by the tax men. But the family is soon fighting an enemy of a different sort, when the humans-only galaxy of the League is invaded by all manner of hideous aliens. The Rat, disguised in the most hideous combination of alien physical features, is sent into the centre of the aliens' stronghold, where he finds himself the object of desire among the aliens. His task is to stop the aliens, who plan to wipe out every human in the universe.

## **The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You! Details**

Date : Published June 1st 1988 by Spectra (first published September 4th 1978)

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Author : Harry Harrison

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# From Reader Review The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You! for online ebook

## Wanda says

I started this book this week because I had the post-Xmas-vacation blues really badly and needed something to make me smile. There was more than enough silliness in this book to achieve my aim.

Just like in War of the Worlds, Earth is being menaced by cephalopods of all shapes, sizes and degrees of sliminess. James Bolivar DiGriz (Slippery Jim, the Stainless Steel Rat) is called upon by the Special Corps once again to save the universe! First he has to break his sons out of jail, rescue his wife from the taxman and build himself his own slimy disguise to become "Sleepy Jeem."

There are LOTS of bad jokes, like aliens named Sess-pul. The aliens, it turns out, speak many different languages, but have settled on Esperanto to communicate amongst themselves and Jim of course knows Esperanto. Things get complicated when the Moralty Corps shows up and put the kibosh on several of Jim's slippery plans. Some very irreverent antics ensue!

I probably read this too soon after The Stainless Steel Rat Saves the World, and I think Harrison was running out of good ideas at this point, so I didn't find it quite as much fun as previous books. But it still helped me lift a very grumpy mood,

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## Timothy Boyd says

Another in the stainless steel rat books. They are all quick reads with alot of humor in them. The stories remain fresh and new. Very recommended, especially to teen readers or someone new to SiFi

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## Rick Brindle says

So, in this chunk of Stainless Steel Rattery, Slippery Jim must battle hordes of aliens bent on eradicating mankind. Leaving to one side whether or not mankind actually deserves it, this is a very humorous romp through space in much the same way as Jim's earlier adventures. This hit my funny bone a lot more when I read it as a teenager, but it's still highly enjoyable. HH tells his story in a light hearted, irreverent way, supported by his wife, Angelina, and now adult sons.

Now re-reading the entire series start to finish, this one is the best of the older novels, and much better than the newer prequels.

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## Quinn says

by Quinn

The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You, is one of those books where you never really stop reading it even if you aren't literally reading it at the time. The rating I would give it is eight and five sixths, it didn't make it to nine because it wasn't entirely interesting the whole time, but I suppose all books are like that so I guess I'll never be entirely happy. The main character is very relatable, he's a witty ex-criminal named Slippery Jim De'griz who still resents the government even though he works for it. An interesting aspect of this book is that the villains aren't evil instead they believe, "The humans don't have tentacles, the humans don't excrete slime, the humans aren't squishy, the humans don't have eyes on stalks" etc... and because of that they have united in group called The Uglys to destroy the "disturbing" humans once and for all. A nice thing about this book is that isn't a blood bath. They solve their problems the civilized way, by negotiating even if it involves an extremely complicated plot to brainwash your enemies.....

Harry Potter, Percy Jackson, The Hunger Games and Eragon all have a few things in common, they're all world famous, and they're all amazing. On the other hand, The Stainless Steel Rat is not world famous, but definitely amazing. To me it's just as good as them, but there is something very different about it though, it was published in 1978. The Stainless Steel Rat is directed more towards boys than girls, but like all things it depends on the person. Another thing that depends on the person is age, I would recommend it to eight and up but if you are younger than eight and are ready to try, then I encourage you to.

Now that the stainless steel rat has finally settled down (note the five other books) and is fighting (and doing) minor crime, a Navy satellite disappears and he is charged with finding it..... The Stainless Steel Rat is back in action! The trail of the satellite leads him and his x-criminal family through time, space, and colossal intestines to find their goal, a heavily armed alien planet inhabited by the Uglys. But the Uglys are not the only ones he must deal with. There also are the Gray People a subspecies of Earth, with heightened mental abilities and a strict code for acting, who are also taking their own measures against the alien threat. I don't want to give away the ending, but in the end the humans and the Gray People must work together if they wish to survive

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### **Ian Banks says**

Great fun adventure with the rat and his family as they try to stop an alien invasion. Some standard rat shenanigans with the added loop being that he's now working with his family and has to look out for which adds some wrinkles to his escapades, although he circumvents this for a large chunk of the book by going off and having solo adventures. Some great parodic elements of Golden Age SF with some more modern elements thrown in.

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### **Al "Tank" says**

The diGriz Family Turned Loose -- God Save the Galaxy!

"Slippery" Jim Bolivar diGriz, his lethal wife Angelina, and his twin sons James and Bolivar (following in their parent's less-than-legal footsteps) are off to save the universe (and enrich their own coffers when possible). It's the usual tongue-in-cheek fun that starts with Angelina being kidnapped and ends on a very cold planet where every hand is turned against our intrepid hero.

But a stainless steel rat can never be counted out until he's dead (and then don't count him out then).

I enjoyed the story as much as the other Stainless Steel Rat stories. I wish they'd republish the series or publish them in eBook format so more people can enjoy these timeless tales today. Mine sit in my library so I can take them out periodically and enjoy them over and over.

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### **Phillip Hall says**

I absolutely fell in love with the Stainless Steel Rat series. They are goofy, fast paced, and humorous sci-fi books. It was my first introduction to Harry Harrison and also my first time ever reading a comedic sci-fi book. I loved both of them immediately.

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### **Redsteve says**

Meh. I felt like Harrison was really phoning it in on this one. Basic SSR storyline - humorous science fiction with the usual plug for Esperanto. Also, the additional layers of secret organizations seemed played only as a plot device/comic relief.

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### **Linda Isakson says**

Slippery Jim DiGriz is off on another interstellar adventure. This time, the Special Corps needs him to save the human galaxy from invading aliens. With the help of his now adult twin sons and his beautiful, and cunning, wife Angelina, Slippery Jim is able to infiltrate the alien ranks and undermine their masterminds. Unfortunately, success is not quite in reach when the Morality Corps, a super secret group that, apparently, has more authority than the Special Corps, continuously disapproves of all Jim's schemes to rid the galaxy of these pestilential aliens. In the end, a compromise is sought (in the do-first-and-ask-for-forgiveness-later spirit). As always, hilarious, witty, and downright fun. If you've already read the book, you must listen to the audio version. The narrator, Phil Gigante, brings Jim and gang to life like no one else can.

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### **Sarah says**

Vintage and fun! But a little uncomfortable for Japanophiles.

There is a planet called Kekkonshiki, which means marriage in Japanese. On this planet live people called the gray men, who can use machines to manipulate people's memories by creating new memories or deleting present ones. Their culture is very Nazi-like, with schools being used to teach propaganda that Kekkonshiki-ans are the master race and they will use their survival skills to conquer the universe (they were abandoned on an icy inhospitable planet and survived by suppressing their emotions and becoming 100% rational). The women are totally subservient and quiet, cooking the men food and not arguing when given orders.

I don't know too much about Japanese WWII history, but reading the "Japanese Propaganda during World War II" page on Wikipedia gave me some ideas, mostly that some of the portrayals found in The Stainless

Steel Rat Wants You! might not be entirely off-base. The Japanese were part of the Axis powers with Germany, and they did use propaganda about the 'Yamato spirit' and how Japanese were morally superior to their enemies and would win no matter the odds because they were chosen by deities. A lot of propaganda also focused on the importance of being frugal for the war effort, avoiding the luxury that they said made the US and Britain weak.

When Slippery Jim arrives at the Kekkonshiki school, he finds his way to the headmaster, who is sympathetic to changing the 'curriculum', i.e. away from war and towards peace. Awkwardly, the headmaster suggests suicide before being found by the Kekkonshiki police multiple times, forcing Jim to keep trying to convince him they'll pull through. The Kekkonshiki's "Moral Philosophy" is also much different than bushido. While bushido teaches that death is secondary to duty (I think), moral philosophy is all about survival on a harsh planet.

The names are also a little off -- while some of them make sense, they're not actually Japanese names. The headmaster is called Hanasu (to speak), the school is called Yurusareta school (to be permitted), there's a guy named Ahiru (duck), and a girl named Kaeru (to return). I'm really confused about his choice of names - did he just pick random words from a dictionary or does he have experience in Japan (he was in the air force in WWII). It could be the light-hearted nature of the story, but it's at least a little bit racist.

At the end, the Kekkonshiki join forces with the humans against the gooey alien race to forge peace in the galaxy. This is very much like the end of fighting between Japan and the US during WWII, as the Kekkonshiki realize that to keep fighting would be suicide and Hanasu convinces them to reapply Moral Philosophy to the situation to save their lives instead of becoming an empire.

Speaking of empires, though, Jim is pretty empiricist up until the end. He tells the kitchen girl Kaeru, "This culture won't have to be busted. It will just fall apart. The historians will keep a record of it and then it will vanish and a touch of civilization will enter your lives." eeuugghh why.

Note: This might be useful for someone writing a paper on popular depictions of Japanese in the 1970s.

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All the political stuff I don't agree with aside, I liked most everything else about the book. The plot is quick, there were some good funny parts, and especially I liked the Stainless Steel Rat's perseverance and wit in the face of danger (it's actually kind of inspiring since the pickles he gets in are pretty bad, even for a spy novel). The writing is bold and has a bombastic science-fiction feeling. For all the sins Jim commits he admits them freely, almost gleefully, which is refreshing in this age of angsty and guilt-ridden protagonists. His wife Angela is quite capable of taking care of herself, but doesn't get many lines of characterization, which is a bummer. Oh well. Jim admits to being a chauvinist and the book was written more than forty years ago, so I can forgive Harrison some things.

Would I recommend it? I have no idea. I feel very conflicted about this one.

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## **Thom says**

The fourth book originally published in the Stainless Steel Rat series, this one has plenty of humor and a plot that bounces around a bit.

Angela is kidnapped by the galactic IRS, then rescued by the Rat and their sons, James and Bolivar. Then Slippery Jim is waylaid into finding out why a satellite full of admirals disappeared, and uses time travel (again) to help. This takes our heroes across the galaxy and eventually to the home world of the evil Gray Men, Kekkonshiki. Whew!

In this tale we consider Moral Philosophy, male chauvinism, parallel dimensions and three overarching control groups (the IRS, the Morality Police and the Time Cops). Most characters are fairly flat, and while the story isn't predictable, it is pretty quick. The time travel gimmick is now officially overused, and I hope that the sole responsible scientist manages to escape for a long vacation. I prefer my capers to stay local and current.

Did Harrison have an agenda with the Japanese connections in this book? If so, it wasn't obvious to me.

Worth reading, but not quite as good as the previous book. 3½ stars.

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## **deilann says**

Originally posted on SpecFic Junkie.

If you've read any of my other Stainless Steel Rat reviews, you'll know the drill: this is larger-than-life, over-the-top pure skiffy goodness that's a self-aware parody of Golden Age Science Fiction. Needless to say, though, they have their problems. This one is one of the more problematic books in the series due to the way it's handled, however, it didn't ruin the enjoyment... at least for me.

When I say it's over-the-top, I'm talking dialogue that's way too witty and always sets up the next line. I'm talking how no one gets in a jam unless they've got some amazing way to get themselves out of it. The protagonist isn't pure, but he's a gentleman who's really just a criminal because he's bored and it's good for the economy.

But Harry Harrison seems perfectly aware of what he's doing. It's more of a parody of the books written like this that take themselves oh so seriously. No, he doesn't attempt to justify anything with impressive sciency sounding technobabble. Everything's named something completely ridiculous and has no explanation whatsoever.

I mean, they all speak Esperanto, for god's sake.

The problematic issues of Golden Age SciFi come up too, but for the most part, Harry Harrison seems to recognize this. Frex, with sexism, which comes up the most, he at least attempts to subvert it or cross the line twice. He's trying to show how ridiculous these tropes are. Now he doesn't always succeed, but it at least feels like he tried.

However, he really, really misses the mark in this one. And to explain, I'll need to spoil a bit, so if you want to read this without spoilers, just know that there's some weird racism in it. Otherwise, read on:

The premise of *The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You!* is that terribly ugly, gross, disgusting aliens have discovered humans... and they think we're just as nausea inducing, without dry skin and lack of eye-stalks. And the natural response here is, of course, to try and destroy us.

Although, no, that's not really what's happening. The Grey Men that we've run into before are really the masterminds behind this operation. This time, we get to learn a lot more about them.

Now, I really didn't pick up on the weird racism involved with the Grey Men as a kid, probably because well, it's subtle. But it's not addressed at all. We find out that their race have, as a survival method on a bleak and barren planet, eliminated emotion for the most part. They have a code of "moral philosophy" that teaches them that this makes them superior. Hence, they are trying to destroy all other human civilizations because they are weak and unfit.

Basically, they're Daleks.

But what makes this problematic? All of them have Japanese names. Because, you know, the Japanese are cold, authority-driven, and have a huge superiority complex.

Now, I think Harry Harrison might have attempted to subvert this a little because the grey men end up being the key to the human race's salvation (but of course they are the ones who set up said destruction) but it ends up being a white savior plot. They themselves are too unimaginative to see what they could do to fix it. The Stainless Steel Rat (actually, his wife) has to point it out.

And it just felt icky because it was sitting there without Harry Harrison poking fun at it.

At least there's a lot of fun with shadowy groups that are even higher up the food chain than the Special Corps who show up and do some really silly, lovely things that made me laugh aloud.

So, even though the book was honestly enjoyable on the surface and it was a hella fun ride, it's really only three stars instead of four. And if I'm going to be entirely honest with myself, it's probably the nostalgia glasses bumping it up from two.

However, next is The Stainless Steel Rat for President, which is already waiting for me at the library...

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## **Kat Hooper says**

ORIGINALLY POSTED AT Fantasy Literature.

I've been enjoying Harry Harrison's Stainless Steel Rat series, especially the superb audio versions produced by Brilliance Audio. Slippery Jim DiGriz is a con artist who's been forced to work undercover for the Special Corps, an intergalactic investigating agency. Each of these short novels starts with him (and now his family, too) hiding out from the Special Corps and living it up on other taxpayers' money. Each time, the Special Corps traps him and sends him off on a fast-paced, dangerous mission that usually involves saving the galaxy in some way.

This time aliens are invading, so Slippery Jim, with the help of his beautiful and deadly wife and their delinquent teenage twins, infiltrates their lair by disguising himself as an alien who wants to join their army. How could he possibly know that his alien costume is so sexy that he'll have to fight off male suitors while he's trying to save the galaxy?

The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You is another entertaining offering from Harry Harrison and narrator Phil



Gigante. It was fun to see Jim and Angelina's twins grown up and following the family traditions. Unfortunately, this story relies on some of the same plot elements that we've seen before — it seems fairly simple to save the world when your enemies are all brainwashed by outdated moral philosophies, you've got a time machine on hand, and the laws of physics bend at your will.

Still, if you're willing to overlook all that, then these stories are definitely entertaining, especially with Phil Gigante reading them.

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## **Carl V. says**

James Bolivar diGriz, alias "Slippery Jim" is no longer a stainless steel rat in the wainscoting of society...well, at least he is no longer solely a stainless steel rat. Though his thieving ways are not yet behind him, Jim diGriz is firmly entrenched as the top agent in the Special Corps, that feared branch of the law headed by the most notorious criminal of all time, Harold P. Inskipp.

When his wife is kidnapped by the revenue service out of their current home on the planet Blodgett, Slippery Jim leaps into action, gathering up his two teenage sons from their military boarding school (and penitentiary) to spring mom and wreak havoc on the tax bureau at the same time. As is often the case with his adventures, personal conflict often leads to bigger problems, and Jim diGriz soon finds himself commandeered to save humanity from galaxy-wide destruction.

Sounds simple, eh? It is for the Stainless Steel Rat...at least until his most feared enemy comes on the scene—the infamous gray men.

For my thoughts on this book, please visit me here:

<http://www.stainlesssteeldroppings.co...>

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## **Andreas says**

SciFi humor. I quite enjoyed the first five books or so, but in the end the laughter starts wearing thin. I gave up after "The Stainless Steel Rat Goes to Hell". Those I have read are:

The Stainless Steel Rat  
The Stainless Steel Rat's Revenge  
The Stainless Steel Rat Saves the World  
The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You  
The Stainless Steel Rat for President  
A Stainless Steel Rat is Born  
The Stainless Steel Rat Gets Drafted  
The Stainless Steel Rat Goes to Hell

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