



## The Green Hills of Earth / The Menace from Earth

*Robert A. Heinlein*

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## **The Green Hills of Earth / The Menace from Earth** Robert A. Heinlein

Two of the Grand Master's finest: The saga of the opening of the space frontier as courageous men and women risked their lives to build the first space station and colonize the Moon and Venus, while praying for one last landing on the globe that gave them birth, to return to The Green Hills of Earth.

From a mysterious region on Earth, where a more advanced lifeform may be studying the interesting creatures called "humans," to the first moon colony, where a young girl's relationship with her boyfriend is endangered by the beautiful Menace from Earth.

Classic Heinlein, in a new Omni-trade format package.

## **The Green Hills of Earth / The Menace from Earth Details**

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Author : Robert A. Heinlein

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## **From Reader Review The Green Hills of Earth / The Menace from Earth for online ebook**

### **Jack says**

Two excellent juveniles from the Dean of Science Fiction. I especially liked The Menace From Earth because I was reading it to one of my neighbors kids when their mom needed a break. She thought it was "neat" that there was a girl lead in a science fiction book

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### **Howard Brazee says**

All SF written back then shows the times it was written. We find mistaken guesses about the future, racist and sexist attitudes of the past projected to the future, and such things as spacemen smoking on their rocket ships.

Heinlein though has stories that still resonate. Part of that was his great skill at writing (in a folksy accessible manner), but part of it was because he went beyond the surface of how people behave and showed their souls.

I'm starting to get e-books of books I have had decades, and re-read. I've had mixed feelings about the great writers of the past. But I was very happy with this one.

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### **Rod says**

Ahhh...Heinlein....what can you say; always good.

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### **Ivana says**

Terrific collection of short stories, most of whom fall into the category of SF. Covering a particularly vast array of topics( self-sacrifice, gender relationships, space- exploration, love ,apocalypse etc), Heinlein as usual is not afraid of thinking outside the box and giving you something to think about in the process. Few of the stories aimed at a younger audience for example "The Black Pits of Luna" and "Menace from Earth" I found to be less interesting but still not boring---Highly recommended especially for those who enjoy a good vintage sf!

What else to say? It's fascinating how well the writer had that -future history thing- worked out even in short story format.

Here is how I would grade the stories individually:

"Deliah and the Space- Rigger" 4

"Space Jockey" 4

"The Long Watch" 5  
"Gentleman, Be Seated" 5  
"The Black Pits of Luna" 3  
"It's Great to be Back" 5  
"We Also Walk Dogs" 4  
"Ordeal in Space" 5  
" The Green Hills of Earth" 5  
"Logic of Empire" 5  
" The Year of the Jackpot" 4  
" By His Bootstraps" 5  
" Columbus was a Dope" 4  
" The Menace from Earth" 4  
" Sky Lift" 5  
" Goldfish Bowl" 5  
" Project Nightmare" 4  
"Water is for Washing" 4

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### **Michael Camilleri says**

#### **Clunky but has its Moments**

It's not a great work of literature but there are enough number of moments in this anthology where Heinlein nails it with a perfect combination of the fantastic and the mundane. The latter in particular is the kind of thing frequently omitted in the stories of other science fiction writers but is essential to creating a truly believable world.

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### **Mike McDevitt says**

Awesome vintage short story collection from my beloved Robert Heinlein. Tragedy, humor, self-sacrifice, romance and heroism. I'm not sure it gets better than this in speculative fiction.

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### **Elizabeth Hammersmith says**

#### **Timeless**

An illustrated set of human principles of thought that are true now and will be for as long as humans survive in this universe.

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## **Mayer Grashin says**

Solid collection of short stories.

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## **Austin Wright says**

This review is for the final story of the collection: Logic of Empire.

Well, this book was downright confusing. It originally appeared in Astounding Science Fiction (March 1941), and was collected in The Green Hills of Earth (and subsequently The Past Through Tomorrow).

It just seems like Heinlein wanted to write a fish-out-of-water story about a uppity White man sold into slavery....and how everything was unnatural because he was simply a white Lawyer stuck on Venus.

It is awesome though, that the same setting of Venus is used here, as he used in "Space Cadet". But, this story was here, there, everywhere. Even the ending was odd and rushed.

I do know that, between this story and another, Heinlein intended to write four other stories explaining the world. But, he never did. And this section is just out of place.

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## **Michael says**

Since *The Green Hills of Earth* and *The Menace from Earth* were originally two separate short story collections, I am going to rate them individually.

### *The Green Hills of Earth*

Complete Collection Rating: 7/10 (Good)

This short story collection gathers together many stories from the middle portion of Heinlein's Future Histories series. These stories really run the gamut quality wise. Two stories in particular soured the bunch for me, *Delilah and the Space Rigger* and *The Black Pits of Luna*. The other stories in the collection are significantly better.

Story Ratings:

*Delilah and the Space Rigger* - 3/10 (Really Bad)

A female engineer is hired to work on a space station and all sorts of ridiculousness ensues. I realize that this story was written in 1949 and I appreciate that Heinlein was going up against sexism in an era that thought of woman mainly as housewives and mothers. So while this issue is one that I applaud Heinlein for tackling, I felt his execution was very poor. The story was boring and uninteresting. The characters were paper thin and the dialogue was corny. It's an instantly forgettable story.

*Space Jockey* - 7/10 (Good)

This story is about an eventful flight to the Moon. While I enjoyed this story as a whole, the scene that sets off the major conflict bothered me somewhat. In this scene a young boy and his father are being shown the cockpit of a spaceship while in flight from the Earth to the Moon. The kid hits some buttons in the cockpit and throws the ship off course and creates numerous problems. First off, it is highly unlikely that anyone other than crew would be allowed in the cockpit during flight. I know that on airplanes, cockpit tours are sometimes given to children pre-flight, but obviously never during flight. Secondly, the fact that this kid wasn't reprimanded in any way for his actions seems a bit unbelievable to me. Other than my gripes with this scene, the rest of the story is pretty good.

The Long Watch - 9/10 (Awesome)

This is an awesome story about a coup on the Moon. It's one of the best that I've read from Heinlein. Heinlein seems to be at his best when he writes stories that place his main characters in mortal danger. Even though this story is short, a good deal of character development happens with the protagonist. He feels believable, his actions make sense and his thoughts and dialogue seem appropriate for the situation he's in. The stories conclusion is fitting and I felt satisfied and even a bit choked up emotionally as I finished reading.

Gentlemen, Be Seated - 7/10 (Good)

A tale about an underground construction project on the moon. Another good story, though not exceptional. I just didn't feel like there was quite enough character development in this one for me to truly care about the plight of the characters. Of the Heinlein stories that I've read, this one ranks somewhere in the middle as far as character development goes. It's not the best, but it is far, far from the worse. As I said, the story itself is quite good with some nice tension to boot. The only thing missing is a bit more depth from the characters.

The Black Pits of Luna - 3/10 (Really Bad)

The core of this story is about a bratty kid that throws temper tantrums to always get his own way. His behavior is terrible and he simply does whatever he wants. Thus, he manages to get himself lost on the surface of the moon. His parents are completely incompetent idiots and their kid is a product of their ineptitude. I hate stupid characters that lack even a shred of common sense and this story is chocked full of that type of character. Thankfully the oldest of the two children actually has a brain in his head. He manages to save his little brother; unfortunately he can't save this awful story as well.

"It's Great to Be Back" - 7/10 (Good)

This is a neat little "grass is always greener" story about a couple longing to move back to Earth after living on the Moon for 3 years. Once they get to Earth however, they begin to realize how much they miss the life and culture they left behind. It's a well written, charming little story.

"-We Also Walk Dogs" - 7/10 (Good)

This story is about a company that specializes in providing its' customers with every conceivable legal service. When the government contracts them to coordinate a inter-planetary, inter-species assembly to be held on earth, they are off the races to find a scientist who can create a device for aliens from low-gravity worlds which will enable these aliens to attend the assembly. A good story that unfortunately mires itself in techno-babble and almost completely refrains from character development.

### Ordeal in Space - 5/10 (Mediocre)

While I liked the sections of the story that detail the protagonist's misadventure in space and his subsequent difficulty dealing with a severe case of vertigo and fear of heights, the story falters mightily about two thirds of the way through. Once the main character decides to step out a window onto a 6 inch ledge 35 stories off the ground to rescue a cat, this story goes from science fiction to Saturday morning cartoon in the blink of an eye.

### The Green Hills of Earth - 7/10 (Good)

A very short story about a space exploring singer/songwriter who loses his sight in an accident. It's short and to the point, yet interesting and engaging with a tight and perfectly fitting conclusion.

### Logic of Empire - 8/10 (Really Good)

A story about slavery on Venus. The whole process of becoming an indentured servant is well thought out and sharply detailed. The story builds up a continuous sense of dread as the protagonist slowly comes to grips with the magnitude of the situation he is in. The palpable and well crafted atmosphere gives the already solid storytelling an additional boost of quality.

### *The Menace from Earth*

Complete Collection Rating: 7/10 (Good)

Only the short story *The Menace from Earth* from this collection is part of Heinlein's Future Histories Timeline. The rest of the stories range from time travel yarns to disaster stories. It's a solid collection that nicely shows off Heinlein's versatility.

### The Year of the Jackpot - 7/10 (Good)

A statistician who tracks world events and strange occurrences figures out that the planet is headed for disaster. The two main characters are fairly well developed and the story moves along at a nice clip. Heinlein does an excellent job of transitioning from a faux science fact story at the beginning to a post-apocalyptic one in the end. The transition is seamless and natural and lends a sense of believability to the story.

### By His Bootstraps - 7/10 (Good)

Aside from the fact that the main character is a bit dense and slow to catch onto things completely obvious to the reader, I still feel like this is a pretty solid time travel yarn. However, it is not on the same level as *All You Zombies* another time travel short story written by Robert Heinlein. When comparing the two, *By His Bootstraps* is a much more straightforward tale that lacks the mind bending twists and turns of *All You Zombies*.

### Columbus was a Dope - 6/10 (OK)

This very short story is a debate about exploration and the adventurer's spirit. One party is in favor of building a generation ship and the other is against human progression and exploration. However, the story is fraught with irony since the debate takes place in a bar on the Moon.

### The Menace from Earth - 9/10 (Awesome)

This is a love story of sorts. It's also one of my favorite stories by Robert Heinlein. The characters and dialogue are solid, but the real standout here is the setting and the execution of the narrative. The level of detail put into the flying sequences is fantastic. I was captivated by the whole idea of being able to fly using specialized wings and the benefit of lower gravity on the Moon. The Bats' Cave, a two mile wide and 1,000+ foot high underground volcanic bubble is used as a giant recreational flying facility. For anyone who ever dreamed of flying as a kid, this story will reignite your imagination.

**Sky Lift** - 7/10 (Good)

An alien disease is ravaging a research facility on Pluto and the Earth Military is tasked with sending emergency aid. However, if aid is to arrive on time, the ship must fly at near lethal acceleration. Heinlein does a nice job here describing the toll placed on the pilot's bodies at 3.5 G's. It's a well written, yet straightforward tale involving the trope "the sacrifice of a few for the good of many".

**Goldfish Bowl** - 6/10 (OK)

The appearance of twin pillars of water that stretch from the ocean to the clouds, sparks a research mission that quickly goes south. While I liked the stories' concept, setting and build up, the second half slows down to a snail's pace. The majority of the second half is spent theorizing the possible origin of the entity that created the pillars. Aside from the loads of speculation and conjecture, we never really learn anything regarding the mysterious entity. So in the end we are left with a cryptic warning message about evolution and very little plot resolution.

**Project Nightmare** - 7/10 (Good)

This story is about an imminent Russian attack on US soil. Russian A-Bombs are hidden in 38 US cities and unless America converts to Communism, Russia will detonate the bombs. In a desperate attempt to find and diffuse the bombs, the US Government enlists the help of a group of people with ESP (Extra-Sensory Perception), telepathy, telekinesis and the like. This story has a good mix of character development, exposition, action and tension. In addition, the pacing is tight and the narrative well-balanced.

**Water is for Washing** - 7/10 (Good)

When an earthquake drops part of the California coast below sea level, a group of people attempt to outrun the tidal wave and ensuing flood. Another solid story that nicely caps off the collection. Of all the Heinlein stories I've read, this one might be the least science fiction among them. This natural disaster story feels like a very realistic possibility.

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**Brad Partridge says**

Great collection of short stories. Interesting concepts that make you think.

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**Brian White says**

I grew up reading Heinlein and while I would say his writing is not elegant it was important in shaping science fiction in the middle 20th century. I still enjoy these stories - like sitting with old friends.

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### **Jonathan S. Harbour says**

Good collection of Heinlein shorts. Some are too dated to really be appreciated today, but a Heinlein fan will enjoy the familiar plotting and characters.

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### **Michael Funck says**

These are classic stories from the golden age of science fiction. Their science has been overtaken by our current understanding of the solar system, but most of the characters and their stories still resonate with us today.

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