

Chapter 1 : Isaac Asimov's Space of Her Own by Shawna McCarthy

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Chapter 2 : Asimov SF April 83 Willis Aldiss Morressy Tiptree

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And, it must be said, many of the choices for this anthology are somewhat, well, bizarre! Connie Willis is indeed a popular genre writer, but she is the only writer to appear twice in this collection, while Le Guin might arguably be said to be more popular and surely they could have found a better story by Le Guin than the one they chose? In all other respects, this is a Wild West story, and incorporates all the unlikeable sensibilities of such a story. At the brothel is a blind girl, whose blindness was caused by a miner on another such dead star. And the Wild West brothel is a trope long past its sell-by date, even in I would not have expected Willis to have written this story. A woman who has a history losing things has just lost a pair of expensive diamond earrings given to her by her husband. She was intending to wear them for their anniversary dinner. In a Mexican city, a woman who can trace her ancestry back to the Aztecs lies in a hospital bed in labour. There is also an old man, prepared to enact an old ritual which will rekindle a new sun and it requires human sacrifice. But the theft means Kele has to be awake during the trip. There is a gentle twist in the tale. Isaac Asimov used to write a lot of these, and they were never any good. Neither is this one. But a raven visits her and takes her out on a dream outing to a young and handsome prince, who falls in love with her. Like Cinderella, she makes her escape before dawn, and the prince spends the rest of his life pining for his vanished love! until many decades later he meets a young woman who resembles her in every way. But the people in the countryside blame the cities for the collapse of the country and civilisation, and kill any city-dwellers they meet. But the cities are not the hives of violence and depravity they believe them to be. Nonetheless, in a small village where the narrator stops en route, in disguise of course, the villagers catch a city-person, and violence ensues. This is one of those stories where you wonder why it was written as sf. This story at least makes sense. Now they live in fear of being raided by other survivors. The story keeps its premise off-stage, and handles its centre-stage family dynamics well. So the engineer is persuaded to allow his young daughter, who is dying of cancer, to upload her own personality as a template. This story was an odd mix of nerdishly technical computer-speak and a hand-wavey premise. Vinge is better known as a science fiction writer, but this story is fantasy. A director of a Shakespearean summer theatre company and his leading lady also his wife happen a man reciting from Hamlet who appears somewhat despondent and at a loose end. So they offer him a job. It transpires he is a ghost himself, and dates from Elizabethan times. The premise for this is nicely wrapped around the domestic life of the Gordons, a dimension more sf should consider. There is nothing in this story which would indicate it was published in the s. So she plans to upload herself into a robot body, the same as her companion. But he argues against it, pointing out that her new body does not possess the senses of her human body, and that she will be trading touch, taste and smell for immortality. This is apparently only one of two short stories Smith wrote, which is a shame. Ming resists, is subsequently fined, and so bankrupted. But all is not lost as there is an organisation happy to employ someone with his experience and nature! Yes, it really is that corny. A Secret History An Intendant of the Dominion visits an inner city on Orthe to determine whether or not the ideas it generates deserve Interdiction. The premise is not exactly subtle, or handled with any degree of subtlety, but the protagonist certainly is. She is very, very good at evoking alien societies, which is what she does here. Because the Pachni actually have psionic powers which the Washrar have been breeding out of them, but are still very much scared of. Any awards shortlist would likely have demonstrated that. There are some good stories in this anthology, but there are also a number whose presence, quite frankly, is mystifying.

Chapter 3 : Science Fiction Stories / Science Fiction Erzählungen by Ulrike Becker

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The FictionMags Index. Contents Lists. Previous " Issue/Checklist Index " Table-of-Contents.

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