

★ More Voices from the Radium Age

Joshua Glenn, Editor

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Featuring nine superb short stories, *More Voices from the Radium Age* is a diverse, captivating collection of science fiction. Focusing on works written between 1900 and 1935, it reissues overlooked stories that preceded the “golden age” of science fiction. These stories are sharp and relevant, addressing issues including climate change, women’s equality, advanced technologies, parallel universes, and dystopian societies.

In “The Last Days of Earth,” set millions of years in the future, a young couple are among the last people on Earth after the dying sun causes catastrophic climate change. They decide to take a risky trip to another galaxy after, essentially, channel-surfing on “Pictorial Telegraphs” to verify scenes of Earth’s devastation. In “The Republic of the Southern Cross,” workers at a luxurious company-controlled settlement descend into “psychical distemper” and anarchy.

Several stories concern parallel universes. The fascinating “Victim of Higher Space” considers a man who scantily occupies three-dimensional space and disappears into a space-time of infinite dimensions whenever he hears the music of Wagner. In “The Thing from—‘Outside’,” travelers in the Canadian wilderness are hunted by an alien Big Foot, possibly from “outside the universe.” As members of their party are randomly killed or vanish, they confront their insignificance and wonder whether “ants, by any waving of antenna, [can] stay the down-crushing foot of man.”

In the creepy thriller “The Third Drug,” a man subjected to a madman’s experiments briefly controls all wisdom, past and present, as “the air belongs to an eagle.” In the philosophical “The Finding of the Absolute,” a metaphysician obsessed with his partner’s infidelity is swept into an “unseen web” of space and time after conversing with Immanuel Kant in the afterlife.

Highlighting neglected voices in speculative and science fiction, *More Voices from the Radium Age* offers an entertaining, engrossing glimpse into the profound and innovative literature of the early twentieth century.

KRISTEN RABE (July / August 2023)

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