



## All the Traps of Earth

*Clifford D. Simak*

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A collection of sci-fi stories. Contents:

*All the Traps of Earth* (1960) novelette by Simak  
*Good Night, Mr James* (1951) novelette by Simak  
*Drop Dead* (1956) novelette by Simak  
*No Life of Their Own* (1959) novella by Simak  
*The Sitters* (1958) novelette by Simak  
*Crying Jag* (1960) novelette by Simak  
*Installment Plan* (1959) novelette by Simak  
*Condition of Employment* (1960) story by Simak  
*Project Mastodon* (1955) novelette by Simak

## All the Traps of Earth Details

Date : Published August 1st 1979 by Avon Books (first published June 1963)

ISBN : 9780380455003

Author : Clifford D. Simak

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Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction

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## From Reader Review All the Traps of Earth for online ebook

### Deedee says

Clifford D. Simak is an uneven writer. The best of his stories belong in any collection of "the best of science fiction", while the majority are read once and forget, and he has a few clunkers as well. The best story of this collection is the title story "All the Traps of Earth", a story that includes robots, space travel, and self-determination. ("No Life of Their Own" is a close second -- space aliens in smalltown America!) "Drop Dead" and "Crying Jag" are good stories also. "Installment Plan" is tedious and very dated. Recommended because most of the stories are good to great.

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### Joanna says

Clifford Simak is one of my favorite science fiction writers and one of the first really good writers in the field. Still, as others have pointed out, these are not his best stories. They must also be early stories because they are less gentle, perhaps, than the later ones. There is more competition between men, for example. As in his other stories, women are absent. Wonder why? Many of the stories turn around one key idea. "Good night, Mr. James" is about a clone created to carry one act to save the world, but wants to live and ends up killing its creator. This is the weakest story in the set. "Drop Dead" is based on a really neat idea. There is only one intelligent life form on a planet, it looks a bit like a cow but includes all kinds of different life forms within it. As it turns out it absorbs other forms into it, this is its defense strategy. And finally, it absorbs the humans who arrive too. "No life of their own" is based on the idea of "Halflings," who live in between this dimension and others. Brought to Earth, they bring the person they care about luck but take away luck of others. The story is told through the eyes of a young boy. Other characters include Nature Boy and Fancy Pants, an alien. "The Sitters" is based on a typical Simak idea: A Millville resident who was persecuted because he was a juvenile delinquent goes to space and after many years brings 3 aliens who become babysitters for all children in town. The children suddenly become serious, well adjusted, and studious but lose their spirit of fun and pranks. As it turns out they can also bring peace to older people. "Crying Jag" is another such story. Here the idea is about aliens, criminals on their own planet, who get drunk on humans' sad stories; in the process, humans feel much better. A janitor at a sanitarium figures out how to make a lot of money on this but then aliens from the whole planet arrive and a deal is struck leading to all such renegades coming to Earth. Turns out there millions. "Installment plan" - this is perhaps the closest to a traditional syfi story. A team consisting of a human and robots (who can become experts on various things when a transmog is plugged into them) come to a planet to finish up a trade for tuberous plants which turn out to be excellent tranquilizers for humans who have needed tranquilizers for millennia! The team represents a kind of Hudson's Bay Company but another renegade enterprise almost manages to beat them but not quite. "Condition of Employment" The idea here seems to be that the only way people will put up with the horrors of space travel, esp. working on space ships, is if they become convinced that they are going home. Finally, "Project Mastodon" seems to be a try out for the novel Mastadonia.

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### Jack says

This collection is a good introduction to Simak's work. He put out some fine work.

*Glamor, he thought-it was the glamor that sucked in the kids when they were young and starry-eyed. The*

*glamor of the far place, of the wilderness of space, of the white eyes of the stars watching in that wilderness - the glamor of the engine-song and of the chill white metal knifing through the blackness and the loneliness of the emptiness, and the few cubic feet of courage and defiance that thumbed its nose at that emptiness.*

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### **Stephen Goss says**

An excellent anthology of stories from a master SF writer - I found it impossible to not read each short story in one go! I can imagine some readers will find some of his ideas quaint (my copy is a second printing, so 50 years old) but I found it refreshing in it's lack of techno-babble.

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### **Simon says**

Pretty weak stuff. A couple of good ideas but mostly repetitive and poorly written. And a couple of stories are riddled with basic grammar errors and clumsy syntax; where was the editor?

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### **Scott Golden says**

Good stories by one of the old masters.

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### **Ralph McEwen says**

I enjoyed the stories. Please see "Cheryl in CC NV"'s review since we read it together.

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### **Alex says**

False

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### **Sarah Newton says**

I enjoyed this, the first Simak I've read; I got a recommendation at EasterCon 2013, and jumped in. It's very much golden age / silver age sci-fi: atomic age themes, rocket ships, male heroes. But it also has a good bit of thought behind it, and the ideas have aged well. Stories about the weirdness of alien life and the multiple copy paradox stick in my mind particularly. Recommended for a good scifi yarn: I'll be picking up more Simak.

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### **John Vaz says**

I must say Good Night Mr. James is a great story. I can't see you getting more out of 15 pages. If you read Simak, you will enjoy it even more.

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### **Lawrence says**

<http://gnomeship.blogspot.com/2017/11...>

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### **????? ???? says**

I enjoyed this collection very much. Simak is one of my favourite writers, and his stories are awesome!

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### **Jim Mcclanahan says**

Great collection of Simak tales, including one of my old favorites, "Drop Dead" and a charming story of boyhood adventures in "No Life Of Their Own". All well worth a read, including the title story.

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### **Michael Tildsley says**

This was, overall, an average collection of sci-fi short stories. On par for what you can expect from the genre, but not collectively strong enough to warrant a second read.

The two stand-outs for me were "All the Traps of Earth," and "Drop Dead." I really like the suspense created in "Drop Dead." I don't think enough has been done in recent sci-fi on alien plant life and symbiosis.

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### **Stationary Traveller says**

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