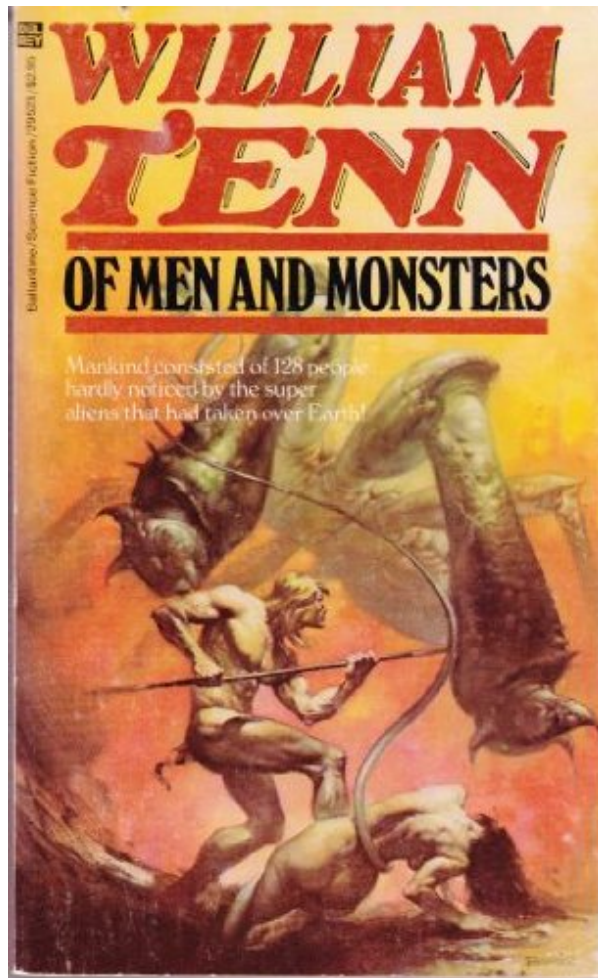
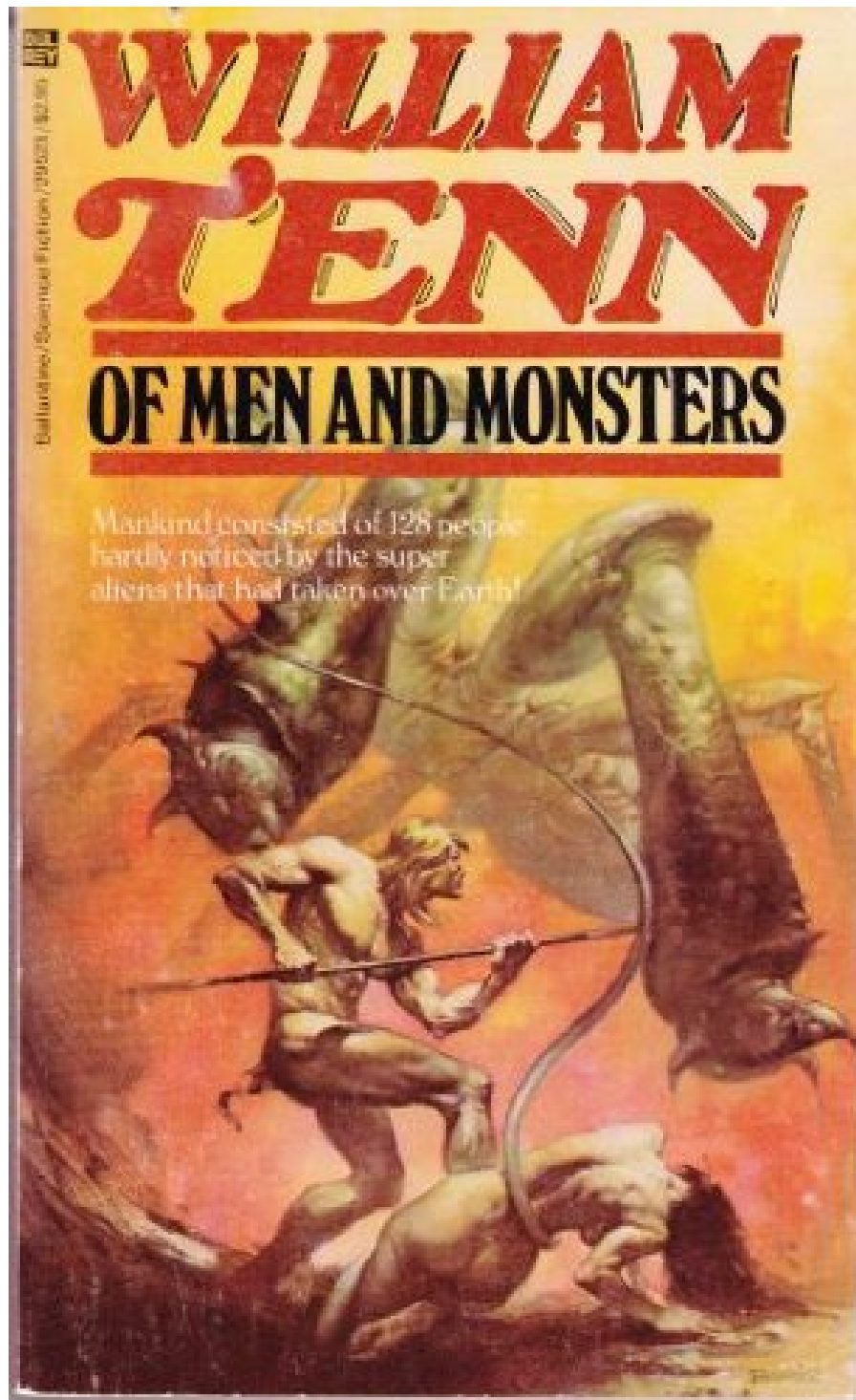


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William Tenn (1920-2010) was the pseudonym of Philip Klass. Although he was born in London, he spent most of his life in America, teaching writing and SF at Pennsylvania State College from 1966. He began writing after serving in the Second World War and published his first story, 'Alexander the Bait' in ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION in 1946. Stories like 'Down Among the Dead Men', 'The Liberation of Earth' and 'The Custodian' quickly established him as a fine, funny and thoughtful satirist. In 1999 William Tenn was selected the Science Fiction Writers of America's Author Emeritus.

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# OF MEN AND MONSTERS BY WILLIAM TENN PDF

Giant, technologically superior aliens have conquered Earth, but humankind survives - even flourishes in a way. Men and women live, like mice, in burrows in the massive walls of the huge homes of the aliens, and scurry about under their feet, stealing from them. A complex social and religious order has evolved, with women preserving knowledge and working as healers, and men serving as warriors and thieves. For the aliens, men and women are just a nuisance, nothing more than vermin. Which, ironically, may just be humankind's strength and point the way forward.

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12 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Men Are Shifted In Place From Of Mice And Men

By Antinomian

You can already tell a bit from the author just from his name, William Tenn, it's a pseudonym (a take-off on William Tell maybe) and the title of the book, a take-off from Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, only men are now in the place of mice, and in the place of the men... the Monsters, who are now the dominant species on earth. Actually humankind are more like roaches to the aliens, with the same aversion to humans as humans have to roaches. And like roaches, humans 'infest' the house of the Monsters, and like humans, the Monsters have their own attempts at pest-control. The satire by Tenn that humans thrive as vermin, but never had the opportunity because they never before had such a 'wealthy host' still has me reeling in my head from laughter, bewilderment, and a bit of realization that this could be a little true. Don't need to think about some ethereal, omnipotent being like a god, the Monsters take that niche, are quantifiable, and humans can sleep in peace in that respect without agonizing theological mental deliberations.

Humans are beaten badly in an invasion from an alien race of huge beings, as tall as 100 men shoulder on shoulder (500 feet, 200 meters or so) and the story is set centuries after the invasion. There is precious little information remaining of humanity before the invasion, but a few technological advances. Humans ultimate

weapon is their ingenuity and their resilience. The ending is not quite what would be expected, but at the same time is perfect. The human mantra is To hit back at the Monsters and they get to do just that.

It's been written that William Tenn is a bit misogynist, a hater of woman. I don't think so. He is writing about how the human race had to revert somewhat back to savagery after a devastating defeat by aliens, so any Me Erik You Jane type of ritualistic mating patterns written are not that unrealistic. Also writing about what might be the female monsters being terrified of the roach or mice like humans is also not that unrealistic. One time when walking along the beach with my girlfriend at the time, who liked to show she could be tough in a masculine way, we came upon a stretch of sand where apparently thousands of baby crabs had recently hatched just beneath the sand and you could feel their little pincers nibbling at your feet. I just wanted to keep walking without squishing the things so they could live out their merry lives, but she just up and screeched and hip-hopped as fast as possible away from the shore. So I'm just guessing that more than a few human females might panic if an army of roaches or a group of mice took up attack formation around her and advanced towards her.

I read this book growing up and it had been my number one favorite for years. In rereading other favorites from my youth I've groaned in realizing how bad they were or were not as philosophical as I thought. So with my first time rereading *Of Men and Monsters* since then, I had a thought of a potential massive let-down of one of my favorites from its pedestal, but I can see why it had appealed to me then. It's a good book for a young adult as it deals with a rite of passage to adulthood (Initiation/Confirmation/etc) and is adventurous as it's set in the midst of an upheaval, or actual several upheavals. So there are travels and adventures, almost Tolkien-style, through Monster territory and more. And it has living zombies is a way too. And because of the Lilliputian style of the humans, it's something newly grown or growing children or young adults can identify with. As a creatively written book, also adults can enjoy it and appreciate the satire such as most of the tribe's children look just like the chief of the tribe, gee, I wonder why that is... and deals with power, the lust for power, jockeying for status, and so forth. So although I would give it 4 stars for adults, imho I can maintain a 5 star rating for young adults. I'm glad to see that the book is back in print although too bad it has the yellow book cover and not the drawing on my copy which shows a good rendition of the alien with its tentacles and praying mantis like head. The book version of *Of Men And Monsters* was released in 1968 using portions that were written as *The Men In The Walls* from 1963. Footfall by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle reference Tenn's *The Men In The Walls*, but in their novel they make sure that the alien invasion doesn't come to same kind of alien victory. Although the setting of the book can be considered dark, it takes an upbeat position and a viewing of are-things-really-as-bad-as-they-seem.

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Quite a lovely little novel.

By GeoX

I ask you: is there any genre other than science fiction in which the classic, seminal novels go out of print and stay that way forever? It's not bloody fair. Tenn's body of work is fairly small; it could easily be reprinted in a singal omnibus o' goodness. At any rate...*Of Men and Monsters* is, as noted, very nice indeed. I'll admit I would have liked to see a little bit more of some of the minor characters, and it is admittedly mildly misogynistic, in that old-fashioned, early-sixties way--really not likely to cause much offense. But I don't even know why I'm trying to dredge up bad things about it. A highly enjoyable and thought-provoking book. Find and read.

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

A nearly forgotten classic

By Amazon Customer

I read this book two decades ago, and I still remember it vividly. The images of human beings living in the walls of gigantic alien houses will stay with you for a long time. It would also make a great movie! Although

the book is not available in the US, it has just been re-released in the UK and is available from Amazon UK. So don't hesitate to get it. If you are looking for a remarkable science fiction classic, you will not be disappointed.

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