



## Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection

*Isaac Asimov , Orson Scott Card (Introduction)*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

# Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection

*Isaac Asimov , Orson Scott Card (Introduction)*

**Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection** Isaac Asimov , Orson Scott Card (Introduction)

*Gold* is the final and crowning achievement of the fifty-year career of science fiction's transcendent genius, the world-famous author who defined the field of science fiction for its practitioners, its millions of readers, and the world at large.

The first section contains stories that range from the humorous to the profound, at the heart of which is the title story, "Gold," a moving and revealing drama about a writer who gambles everything on a chance at immortality: a gamble Asimov himself made -- and won. The second section contains the grand master's ruminations on the SF genre itself. And the final section is comprised of Asimov's thoughts on the craft and writing of science fiction.

## Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection Details

Date : Published October 21st 2003 by Harper Voyager (first published 1995)

ISBN : 9780060556525

Author : Isaac Asimov , Orson Scott Card (Introduction)

Format : softcover 416 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Short Stories

 [Download Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection Isaac Asimov , Orson Scott Card (Introduction)**

---

# From Reader Review Gold: The Final Science Fiction Collection for online ebook

## Carina says

This is one impressive collection, filled with short stories and collections of writings on various aspects of... well, writing, I think that this has to be my favourite book of the year so far (barring the manga I've read because that's just in another category all by itself).

My father is a large Asimov fan and I recall him reading and re-reading the Foundation trilogy books - his copies are rather worn away and 'old' looking, they're clearly well read. In recent years my Mother and I had the rather smart idea (smart as it means I get to read the books too!) to buy first the remainder of the Foundation series, then the Robot series, the Galactic Empire trilogy and then this. I had veered away from the compilations of Asimov (with the exception being I, Robot) as I wasn't sure how well they would go down - but this book is just genius.

I was aware that the vast majority of Asimov books we had bought for my father were rather old (in terms of they were written before I was born and are therefore old by default) - I wasn't aware though that the first Foundation book was written during WW2, and given how many ... ideas he put forward that are now becoming or have become reality that is rather outstanding to me. Nor was I aware that Asimov was quite as prolific as he is. Asimov mentions how many things he has written a few times in this book, but I can't spot them as I skim through now - so, according to Wikipedia he wrote or edited 500 books... that's just incredible to me (although when I now look at the Wikipedia entry for prolific writers, although he is included there are others who have, apparently, written thousands!)

But, enough about the author and my families reading habits, and onto the book. This starts off with a number of previously uncollected short stories. The titular one - Gold - appears last in this section and was certainly interesting but I wouldn't call it gripping. I found Hallucination, Kid Brother, Fault Intolerant and Cal to be rather interesting, thought provoking stories, whilst Battle Hymn and Feghoot and the Courts first made me aware that Asimov was quite a droll character (something backed up in the latter parts of the book where he says that if one can't be a writer they could always take up a lesser profession such as surgery (amongst other equally difficult jobs)).

The commentaries that take up the latter two-thirds of the book are also really absorbing. Split into comments on Science Fiction in general, and then writing it, you get to see how much work Asimov puts into his craft, and how his through process seems to differ from what I have always heard being the "done thing".

As I was reading this book mostly on trains and at lunch I wasn't really able to make notes on the parts I wanted to comment so - so relied on sticking train tickets near interesting parts... the first of these is the commentary on "Science Fiction Series" where Asimov discusses the trend towards the ongoing story as opposed to the standalone novel. I am a fan of series, as I do think that it gives greater time to build the plot and character and often, therefore, has a greater pay-off but I do hate it when the first book clearly requires you to buy a second to know how things finish - some loose ends are acceptable but, for me, there is a fine line between tempting you to read on and forcing you. Reading why authors are apt to do this, from the perspective of an author, was therefore really interesting to me.

The second, and last, comment I marked with a train ticket (last only because I had two old tickets and didn't think to rip them in half or anything...) is a commentary on what makes Science Fiction, and what makes

Sci-Fi. In fact I will be (either after this review is out, or later today) be altering the name of my Sci-Fi shelf to Science Fiction as I don't think Asimov would appreciate being classed as Sci-Fi. To quote from the book directly "We can define "sci-fi" as trashy material sometimes confused, by ignorant people, with SF. Thus, Star Trek is SF whilst Godzilla meets Mothra is sci-fi". I \*think\* the books I shelve(d) as sci-fi all meet the SF requirement, so one bulk bookshelf change should be in order!

The comments on both Plagiarism and Originality also stand out to me as worth commenting on - the latter especially given the vast amount of books now available to us. They provide another perspective on the topics - something I found interesting given I think the first Wheel of Time book is a poor mans version of Lord of the Rings.

Would I read this book again - certainly. Would I read other Asimov books? - of course. This is the year where I want to re-read the entire Foundation, Robot and Galactic Empire series in order so, reading more Asimov is a given. But thanks to this I do want to try and search out some of his other books, and see if I can get any of the compilations that he helped to curate.

---

### **Peter says**

Great, but not quite what I was expecting...: This is the first book by Isaac Asimov that I have ever read. I suppose it was a bit stupid to start with the last one. I think it's really good, although the writing is 'simpler' than I expected it to be. I thought it would be more complicated, but I think the fact that it is written in a simple way is good, as it does not detract from the actual stories, and makes it lighter reading. I will definitely be looking out for other books. I had heard his name so many times, but didn't actually realise he was a writer, or what he had written. The one about Cal is interesting, in that if you think about it enough, it starts to get confusing. Where did his intelligence come from? This is a good book and I would recommend it to anyone. I am not very far through it, but I feel like I have already read a whole book, although there is loads more to read, and I can't possibly think how much more he could write. When I found a list of his books....it must be at least 100!

---

### **Eirin says**

It feels odd sitting down to review this book, because on page 309, in the Essay titled "Book reviews", Asimov states:

"I have never made any secret of the fact that I dislike the concept of reviews and the profession of reviewing."

Ha! Well. Rarely do I disagree so heartily with Asimov - one of my favourite authors - but I do here (quite good-naturedly). He is of course poking fun at both the reviewers and himself, as he is wont to do. I still think reviewing is something that does have a purpose. I love both reading and writing them. (I'm not going to write an essay on the subject though, I'll leave it at this.)

*Gold* is a collection of Asimov's previously uncollected stories and essays. Editorials he wrote for his magazine, short stories that have only occurred in anthologies and magazines, but never in an actual Asimov collection. As such, it is an eclectic bunch of stories, with both robot stories and more of the SF-"idea"

stories he loved so much. There isn't an ongoing theme, but it is all very, very Asimov.

I'm super biased when it comes to Asimov, and I have yet to read a single story or novel of his that I didn't like. As such, *Gold* was read with the same giddy delight I always read his books.

My favourites of the stories:

"Cal"

This one is about a robot who wants to become a writer. I love robot stories, so I was immediately pleased! It also turned out to be an interesting comment on the writing profession in itself, as Cal the robot had to be taught how to write - and thus what it entails teaching someone to write. What constitutes good writing, and is a robot capable of doing it?

"Hallucination"

About a boy who comes to a strange planet for an education he doesn't much want to get. I'm not going to say anything else, because that would spoil the story, but it was a well-written, interesting story. One of the idea-stories, where you can practically see the "what if..?" question that spawned it.

"Alexander the God"

Detestable main character and a very loveable super-computer. What's not to like! Excellent ending.

"Fault-Intolerant"

Another story about writing, and computers, and what modern computing could possibly one day entail for the writing profession (SF as a genre does What if-stories so incredibly well). Saw the ending coming a mile away; loved it all the same.

I cannot really choose between the essays, I liked them all. Asimov has a peculiarly familiar way of writing. It feels like he's sitting there, chatting with me about this and that, and just by chance happen to share some of his opinions on writing, SF, readers - and everything in between. There's not much in the way of groundbreaking revelations in these essays, but then they were never meant to be such either. It's interesting to learn that Asimov would revise no more than once or twice, that he doesn't outline, that he writes so much just because he loves it. His advice on writing are sound, but not novel in any way.

The collection did have another interesting effect though: I started writing because of it. Asimov, with his insane output of 5-600+ books, is a marvel in prolificness. And the way he writes about stories, and about science fiction and about ideas, plots, characters, makes it quite clear that writing is something he loved more than pretty much anything else (he's quoted as saying such many times).

His joy of the craft is contagious. During the week I read *Gold* I had to stop four times to jot down ideas, and twice those ideas turned into actual short stories.

I should think he would approve very much indeed.

---

## Tahmidul says

The stories were definitely good. But, I think the 2nd and 3rd part are the best. A friend of mine said that it was Asimov thinking on paper, and that's great. I learnt a lot from the two parts and I'm sure it will help

anyone who reads SF and wants to write. Not only wannabe SF writers, I think any writer can learn a thing or two from Asimov.

The first story, Cal, was kinda shocking. It makes me sad that such a great writer as ... (Bangladeshi) copied from Asimov. I'm soothing my mind by trying to believe that he did it unconsciously. From what I've read in Part 3 of this book, it's not uncommon. Even Asimov himself found himself plagiarising sometimes. The story that gives the book its title, Gold, was a great story. It's one of those stories you read which makes you use your imagination. The written words directly translate into images in your head. Made me see Hamlet like never before, a thrilling experience. There's even a moral to the story.

So, Gold was a great book. But, I can't vouch for it 'cuz I'm biased. I just love everything Asimov writes, so far.

---

### **Neven says**

Asimov is a treasure, god bless him, but his fiction is often little more than a competently written one-liner. I attempted re-reading this whole collection and I got about half way through before remembering that it's so slight, there's a reason I only remember a bit of it now.

---

### **Peter says**

Re-reading to see if I want to keep my copy. Conclusion: Nope.

So far the fiction was not that good, and the non-fiction essays are either introductions to other anthologies which talk a lot about those anthologies or editorials from Asimov's magazine. Lot's of platitudes and references to stuff in the books/magazines they were published in.

Not really worthy of collecting and publishing again.

It felt like a collection to cash in on some left over pieces.

---

### **Rachel Lapidow says**

Because this book contains short stories of Asimov that hadn't been published before, I was eager to read this book. It also contains a lot of essays and letters to the editor that Asimov wrote for the magazine Asimov's Science Fiction. This is a kind of inside baseball book and not for someone who hasn't read Asimov before. The stories are good but feel as though they haven't been fully fleshed out. His essays, especially those targeted to writers, are well worth reading if you are writer.

---

### **izawoodsman says**

In one of the essays contained in this book, 'The Robot Chronicles' written in 1990, Asimov writes "Were the stories of your golden age really golden? Have you reread them lately? I have reread the stories of my own golden age and found the results spotty indeed. Some of the stories I slavered over as a teenager turned out to be impenetrable and embarrassing when I tackled them again."

I am finding this to be true for myself. In my search for good science fiction, I am often disappointed. After being disappointed many times, I will return to my favorite books of the past and then often find them not as striking as when I first read them as well. The faults loom large. The writing, at times, very poor. Characters that I only care about because of my history with them.

This book is interesting from the view of someone who loves the Author's Notes as much as the novel in most cases. I like to peek into the head of the creator. This book will not make you love Asimov. If you have read nothing else of his, I highly recommend you do NOT read this first. A good thing for me is that Asimov explains, quite well, why his books no longer give me the thrill they did from my 10th through my 20th birthdays.

---

### **Ryan Rossi says**

Gold is my gateway into the universe of Asimov, and what a mistake that was! Gold, as it turns out, is not just a collection of short stories from the later end of Isaac Asimov's huge career but a collection of reflective essays on his works and methods of writing - something ideally read after I've not only read plenty of Asimov, but dived deeper into the world of science fiction.

The short stories which make up just under half of Gold ranged from interesting to simple and sometimes a little silly. Standing out were 'Hallucination' and 'Kid Brother', as they were a little longer in length and stronger in complexity (and perhaps a little darker). The namesake of the collection, the story Gold was interesting but great lengths of it didn't really make sense in the context of someone reading it in 2017. Perhaps two didn't resonate with me at all, one of them literally ending with "this was the moral of the story". It was interesting seeing small glimpses at Asimov's legendary sight in to the future, even if it didn't quite hit the mark (could you imagine paying for a computer that they couldn't tell you the specifications for?). There was even a short story that I would swear was the inspiration for the *The Expanse* series.

The reference parts in the second half was interesting, but with no reference of his other works it was hard to know how to absorb it. Unlike Stephen King's 'On Writing', where I have read enough King to know what he is talking about what which parts I want to absorb, I don't know anything about Asimov. At least I know what his own favourites are, and can go from there.

A name that lives on my "will get around to reading one day" lists, Gold makes me excited to read more of what this titan of his genre puts out, and maybe then I'll give this book another go.

---

### **Nathan says**

This collection really impressed me. I didn't know really what to expect from this book. I haven't read a lot of Asimov, but I count him among my favorite authors because whenever I read his work I'm always impressed; so I was excited for this. And it delivered.

The collection starts off with a group of Asimov's short stories. No surprises here; they all were worth reading. My favorite story has to be "Cal", the first story in the collection. It's about a robot named Cal who works for a writer. He discovers inside himself an urge to write, but when he uses his master's writer all he can turn out is gibberish! So his master decides to put a larger vocabulary in Cal and the knowledge of how

to use the writer. Now Cal can write stories and the story follows him as he develops further skills (by having them programmed into him) and what the resulting stories that Cal writes are. This whole story was really cool to me and it got me thinking. I love robots and robot stories and there's no doubt that Asimov was the master at this.

"Kid Brother" is the next story that I especially liked. It was another one of those thinking stories, and it also had a robot in it.

If I had to pick a least favorite story it would be "Gold", the title story. It was good, but it just didn't live up to the rest, in my opinion. I didn't really get it. But I did enjoy reading it.

Next there's a bunch of essays by Asimov. Some of them are from the beginnings of anthologies he edited. These were amazing. I loved reading his views on different subgenres of science fiction, for example there is an essay on space travel, on alien invasion, on dystopias and utopias, and of course on robots. The essay "Robot Chronicles" was my favorite of this section. It was fantastic. Asimov outlined which of his robot stories he viewed as contributing the most to the idea of robots. I loved this list and it gave me an idea of what Asimov viewed as his best robot stories. Another favorite essay from this section was "Nowhere!" which was the one about dystopias and utopias.

The last part is a group of essays about the art of writing science fiction, so there's one about dialogue and one about plot, etc. These were nothing special but I did appreciate the look inside Asimov's work and ideas. I don't have a favorite of this section, I liked all of them.

I definitely recommend this collection to a fan of Asimov. Even if you've only read a few books by him, if you enjoyed those reads you'll like this one!

---

## **Geoff says**

Not the best collection of short stories from Asimov but I will commend him on a truly, clever pun in the story "Battle-Hymn".

About 2/3s of this collection is an assortment of essays about science fiction and writing. I didn't read many of them but they are entertaining in their own right.

Favourite:

Battle-Hymn

---

## **Andres says**

Neli täрни Asimovi-skaalal. Kuna tegu on ühe mu kõige lemmikuma autoriga, on ka ootused alati üsna kõrged.

Raamat koosneb kolmest osast - esiteks valik lühijutte, teiseks esseed ulmest ning kolmandaks esseed kirjutamisest.

Lühijuttude osa mulle üldiselt meeldis. Oli tõelisi pärle ent ka nõrgemaid lugusid. Ent valik oli hea ning lood



eriilmelised; igati nauditav ülevaade. Kui peaks midagi eriti esile tõstma, siis näiteks Battle-Hymn oma püandi tõttu.

Esseed olid ka huvitavad. Eks targa mehe mõtteid ole ju alati põnev lugeda. Mis mind aga häiris, oli see, et esseede juures ei olnud välja toodud, millal või misjaoks nad kirjutatud olid. Tõepoolest, raamatu lõpus oli see nimekiri olemas, ent oleksin tahtnud iga esse alguses aega ning paarilauselist tagapõhja - miks, kuhu jne. Enamus neist on sissejuatused (või peatoimetaja veerg) ajakirja või mõnda kogumikku. Nii et eraldiseisvana jäävad nad natuke tühjaks.

---

## Sable says

Read for the Genre Non-Fiction and the Collections! Reading Challenges.

This collection represents the last batch of stuff that Isaac Asimov gave to us. Half of it is stories, and the other half is a collection of essays about science fiction and writing in general that he produced, mostly as editor of some of the most legendary sci-fi magazines ever. As a result, it qualified for both a short story collections reading challenge and a genre-related non-fic challenge that I was doing, and I counted it for both.

This is going to be a short review because, in a nutshell, you can see why Asimov remains a legend. He was a master of his craft, and this writing spanned the breadth of his illustrious, long career.

I enjoyed his non-fiction writing immensely. He was a thoughtful, intelligent man with a self-deprecating, dry wit that I think tickles my Canadian sense of humour especially well. He was also capable of doing a great thing that I admire in intellectuals; he was capable of thinking harder about an issue and then *changing his mind!* Asimov is somewhat infamous for having directly contributed, for example, to the stereotype against women writing sci-fi. In one of these essays he apologizes and confesses that this view was mostly the result of having been told this by people he admired when he was still a young writer, and he clearly begins to change his approach, including his use of pronouns in the course of these ongoing essays. I learned an amazing amount about the genre and its evolution through his eyes.

The short stories were like reading liquid light. I had forgotten, since it's been a while since I'd read Asimov, what an amazing storyteller he could be. As a reader, I felt his prose flowed like magic. His stories were all page-turners that left me feeling satisfied, whether it was a light snack (there's a couple of three-page stories) to a full meal deal (Gold, the title story).

And as a writer, I know enough about the craft to recognize the technical minutiae of his style and the way he told his stories, and I think I learned some things by watching this master at work that might help *me* to write better short stories.

Why did it take me so long to read it? I started with the non-fiction, and I tend to read non-fiction in snippets, and also the book was misplaced for a while. When I got into the fiction, I couldn't put it down. Don't think the long reading time is in any way a comment on its quality!

A must for anyone who considers themselves a sci-fi fan, and recommended for anyone else also.

---

## Stanley George says

Part 1 is a set of 15 short stories. The introduction says they've never been published in a book format before. I believe this means that they were published in a science-fiction magazine before. This is an eclectic collection of short-stories. They range from letters to earth from mars, politics, bionic humans and, of course, robots.

Reading "Cal" made me understand what satire was. His short-story "Feghoot And The Courts" is one page. Around 500 words. But it shows so much wit and humor. Same with "Left to Right" which is two pages long. "Gold" is the longest of the stories. It presents challenges to a futuristic movie/play production company. The story goes into creative challenges for the director and a casting director. I say casting director since I do not know what to call the profession of the character Cathcart.

Part 2 seems like his preface to anthologies that he presented. The anthologies are collection of stories by other authors. He publishes these anthologies as presented by him. This helps the books sell and hence help the authors. This is a very noble effort. The author claims that this is to get rid of the guilt. The guilt of being among the Big Three science-fiction writers. In his mind, this perception somewhat thwarts works by newer authors. I don't buy it. He was a good person. He did it since he empathized with the newcomers and lesser known veterans.

Don't be fooled thinking of this as mere prefaces or skip this part. Asimov gives his thoughts on alien invasion in the context of human history. He does this with flying saucers, travelling at the speed of light etc. They all make for excellent reads.

Part 3 is his advice to science-fiction writers. This is an amazing collection of his thoughts on suspense, irony, satire and how to use them in stories. Reading this will make you want to write something. It may as well be a good introductory course on science-fiction writing for. Were he alive today, Isaac Asimov could lead a massive open online course on this subject. He uses his own work as examples to explain these concepts. Part three gives you a better appreciation of science-fiction writing. Even if you don't write anything.

---

## Jeffy Joseph says

This book is divided into three parts - short stories, essays on SF and finally essays on writing in general. It was the non fiction part that attracted me to this collection. And it didn't disappoint me at all. Although I loved all the essays, I will list a few of them that I found to be absolutely significant.

1. **Writing for young people** There are people who argue that YA writers are inferior to the so called literary ones. This essay could be considered as an answer to that argument.
2. **Prediction** Often we stumble upon articles that list the predictions made by the different SF writers like 'X predicted wi-fi in 67'. Asimov expresses his genuine bafflement by his so-called predictions. He admits that he never intended to do so.
3. Essays on plotting, revisions and originality.

Among the short stories, the one that I loved was '**Alexander the God**'. In this era of big data and data analytics, this short story is super-relevant.

