



Counting Up, Counting Down

Harry Turtledove

Download now

Read Online →

Counting Up, Counting Down

Harry Turtledove

Counting Up, Counting Down Harry Turtledove

From Harry Turtledove, bestselling author and critically acclaimed master of the short story, comes a classic collection of science fiction tales and what-if scenarios. In narratives ranging from fantastic to oddly familiar to eerily prescient, this compelling volume illustrates Turtledove's literary skill and unbridled imagination.

FORTY, COUNTING DOWN: With the help of his time travel software, computer genius Justin Kloster returns to the past to stop himself from making a terrible mistake—but all actions have their consequences.

THE MALTESE ELEPHANT: A legendary detective finds himself in grave danger when a noir masterpiece takes a stunning new twist.

GODDESS FOR A DAY: Taking a page from history, a young girl dares to challenge the gods—and is richly rewarded for her efforts.

DECONSTRUCTION GANG: Mired in unemployment and despair, an academic finds happiness and intellectual fulfillment in a most unexpected place.

TWENTY-ONE, COUNTING UP: Justin Kloster's college life and romantic dreams are rudely interrupted—and irreversibly disrupted—when forty-year-old Justin arrives from the future to save him from himself.

Plus twelve more thrilling, unforgettable tales of wonder!

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Counting Up, Counting Down Details

Date : Published March 1st 2005 by Del Rey (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780345477989

Author : Harry Turtledove

Format : Paperback 432 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Alternate History, Time Travel, Short Stories, Fantasy

 [Download Counting Up, Counting Down ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Counting Up, Counting Down ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Counting Up, Counting Down Harry Turtledove

From Reader Review Counting Up, Counting Down for online ebook

Nick says

Nice short story collection. I gotta say, this 4 star rating might be a bit high since I blatantly skipped over some stories. For instance, "The Maltese Elephant" was a take on "The Maltese Falcon" which I'm unfamiliar with, so I didn't reap any enjoyment from the first few pages of the story. The "Myth Manners' Guide to Greek Missology #1: Andromeda and Perseus" was too gimmicky for me to enjoy, and the characters didn't seem "real" to me. Also, the title stories at the beginning and end were mediocre. Interesting concept, but way too long. "The Green Buffalo" and "Honeymouth" also didn't interest me, so I skipped them.

Now that the negatives are out of the way, I really enjoyed this thing. "Must and Shall" was about an alternate reconstruction era. The radical republicans assassinate Lincoln, have a coup, and catalyze a military occupation of the south which fosters continued resentment and separatism. This persists into the WW1 era when the story takes place. It follows around some sort of Federal secret agent on the lookout for subversive activity.

"Ready for the Fatherland" was cool too, and prescient considering it was written before the breakup of Yugoslavia. Its an alternate history in which the Nazis won pretty thoroughly. However, in 1979 the Balkans start breaking up, and the British get involved through back channels. Quite a situation, and the ending of this one surprised me.

"The Phantom Tolbukhin" was a sad tale about (spoilers) Ukrainian-Soviet partisans fighting the Nazis. This one is cool because at the start of the story you sort of presume that they are partisans in our version of history where they eventually win. But as the story progresses you realize how thin their numbers really are, and by the end you realize that they are really completely occupied and that their rebellion is probably futile. (end spoilers)

"Deconstruction Gang" is about out of work philosophy professors who get a job on a public road construction (or rather, deconstruction) crew. Pretty damn funny, although it might require a basic familiarity with modern bullshit philosophy (postmodernist existentialism). Also kind of scary since its about over-educated people working lamentable jobs, aka my future.

"Vermin" was my FAVORITE story in this collection. Holy crap this story was the king. Its about a future-variant Christian religious cult living on a hot, swampy jungle planet. The cult is of the self-flagellating, chastity, misogynist, and luddite bent, so they are pretty messed up people. They also live alongside some native aliens called "Haldols". The Haldols, as well as pretty much everything on this planet are completely disgusting. They are vaguely humanoid, except they have huge eyes, pointed snouts, and buggish appearances. They are constantly naked, really slimy, have gross public sex all the time, and are covered with giant mosquito-like bugs which often crawl into their orifices after sex. This is a real gross out story, but its so classily done and effective I LOVE it. No spoilers, but the plot is good too. This is the closest to pure scifi in this book methinks.

"Ils ne passeront pas" I read, but dont remember enough of to write a review of it. What does that say?

"In This Season" was a mediocre story about jews using their magic jew-powers to create more oil, erm I mean gasoline and escape the Nazis.

"Goddess for a Day" was a mediocre story about a woman pretending to be Athena for the political purposes of her handlers. I guess I'll just mention here that Turtledove's treatment of female characters is characteristic of most spec-fic authors (he mostly sucks at it).

"After the Last Elf is Dead" is a take on what happens in the last days of a fantasy universe when the good guys lose. This rarely happens in fantasy, so it was interesting to read how this actually plays out. The last bastion of not-evil-species getting stormed and whatnot. Other than that though I didn't really get the point of it. Too straightforward.

"The Decoy Duck" was about a Byzantine (or Greek? I had difficulty figuring out the era of this one) missionary to Germany. However, it takes place in a fantasy alternate universe, so they are preaching a fantasy religion. Also, magic and sorcery and the power of the Gods is real, which has major plot ramifications. This was a pretty good story, and although the main character was a bit complex I still found this too straightforward of a story overall.

"The Seventh Chapter" takes place in the same universe as "The Decoy Duck" only its in medieval England. Its about an inquisitor of this weird fantasy religion investigating some sort of heresy or misconduct at a local branch. Fairly good, mildly humorous story.

Also apparently here is the entire book: <http://www.univeros.com/usenet/cache/...> GO READ "VERMIN" NOW!!!!!!

Adam says

I love time travel fiction and these two stories were not only a lot of fun, but a great character study of the protagonist - Justin Kloster - as a forty year old man as well as twenty one. Well done and thoroughly enjoyable.

grundoon says

This was my first Turtledove - and stands a fair chance of being my last. I'm generally a big fan of time travel and alternate history, and do admire his confident style, yet this confidence seems rooted in a territory of writing whatever he finds entertaining with little regard to what might, well... entertain. There are a few rather enjoyable pieces here, but many of the stories involve a structure of eventual "mystery" with a closing reveal, or simply an idea for a final twist, padded out with context, frequently involving wartime conflict. If that's your type of thing, great; apparently I prefer something with a bit more storytelling throughout.

Dave says

"Counting Up, Counting Down" offers a collection of short stories by Harry Turtledove, ranging from alternate history tales to more "conventional" science fiction stories. Turtledove is renowned (some would say infamous) for his multi-volume epics of alternate timelines, so reading him in short-story form is a bit of a novelty. In truth I prefer his novel-length stories; the tales collected here (all previously published elsewhere) are a hit-or-miss bunch. However, I do recommend this book for the two stories that make up the

title -- "40, Counting Down" and "21, Counting Up." Both stories are centered on the same character -- a 40-year-old man who goes back in time to stop his 21-year-old self from ruining his relationship with his college girlfriend. It's the same story, told from the point of view of the man as a bitter 40 year old, and again as his age 21 counterpart. Turtledove does a great job of changing the perspective of each story to reflect the character's age, all the while maintaining a single narrative in both stories. An excellent pair of stories that bookend an otherwise uneven collection.

Stephen says

4.0 to 4.5 stars. This review is for the two Novellas, "Forty, Counting Down" and its companion sequel, "Twenty-One Counting Up."

"Forty, Counting Down" is set in the near future and concerns a 40 year old computer expert named Justin Kloster. Justin invents a time-machine, based on a combination of virtual reality and complex string theory, and uses it to travel back in time to visit himself at age 21 in the hopes of "changing" his future by counseling his younger self to avoid the "mistakes" that the older Justin made. The results, as you can guess, are not what Justin expected. This is an excellent story with a well developed main character that treats the subject of time-travel with respect and has a great ending. 4.5 stars.

"Twenty-One, Counting Up" is the same story as told in "Forty, Counting Down" but told from the perspective of the 21 year old Justin. 4.0 stars.

Nominee: Hugo Award for Best Novella (40 Counting Down)

Nominee: Nebula Award for Best Novella (21 Counting Up)

Nominee: Locus Award for Best Novella (40 Counting Down)

Ronn says

This book is a collection of short stories, and a cross-section of the variety of genres in which Turtledove frequently writes. While I've never read anything by him that I really disliked, I am not a fan of sword & sorcery or elves & unicorns fantasy, and a third to a half of the stories in this book fall into that category, which is why I gave it only three stars.

All that being said, the first and last stories [the same story told from two different points of view, even though technically both those of the same character] is pulled off magnificently.

Neil Fein says

What if you could go back in time, and speak to your younger self? and maybe, just maybe, arrange things so things would work out with your girl -- the one you've been carrying a torch for all these nineteen years?

Well known for alternate history, and in particular for the amazing *The Guns of the South*, this volume is Mr. Turtledove's latest collection of alternate history, science-fiction, fantasy, and mixes of the genres. As in his other books, Mr. Turtledove is the Tom Petty of alternate history -- the man is incapable of writing badly. Even so, too many stories feel like filler, and I was wondering when the story would end.

Forty, Counting Down and Twenty-One, Counting Up bookend this latest collection of Mr. Turtledove's short stories. Perhaps the time-travel idea is not the most original, but it's well-executed, and the character(s) of Justin live on their respective pages. But stretching it throughout two stories is a little much.

There are gems here. An academic goes to work for a road crew of sorts in Deconstruction Gang, a story that struck a chord at a time when my wife is searching for work. Must and Shall, a civil war alternate history where the North won the war, but Reconstruction did not take place. The South that endures is a conquered possession, a true nightmare to live in. And there is an excellent parable, The Decoy Dock, a tale Mr. Turtledove's "Videssos" universe, that shows the collision of two religions, an analogy of Christian missionaries.

If you can read the few stories I've recommended elsewhere (and most are available as e-books from the author's website), I'd suggest that as the best choice.

That70sheidi says

An excellent take on the paradox of time travel to fix your "what if" moments. And due to it's abbreviated nature, perfect to capture a snapshot of the where and when and juxtapose that nostalgia with a creeping sense of "Well everyone knows this won't turn out well.... right? But we'll stay and watch the train wreck anyway."

Stefan says

I am not really a big fan of short story collections, but found this one on sale, and since I liked Turtledove, decided to read it. Some of the stories in this book are interesting, witty, and brilliant. Other stories, I thought were poorly written, and occasionally, downright confusing. Three stories truly shine in this collection: Forty, Counting Down, Must and Shall, and Twenty-one, Counting Up. The first and last stories were quite interesting, and Turtledove displayed his talent in displaying two very different people who are also the same (Turtledove did a excellent job at creating a lack of depth in the younger Justin and some hard-earned wisdom in the older Justin). Must and Shall was also very interesting, and I liked how the story echoed the Iraq war (perhaps it was unintentional). I could not help but be impressed by the versatile flexibility Turtledove displayed wide variety of genres and styles in this unique collection of tales. Definitely worth a re-read.

Laurel says

This review relates to "Forty, Counting Down".

Justin Kloster, the main character, has boyish looks despite being 40 years old. Then we learn that he is something of a genius when it comes to computers, and has figured out that he might be able to use superstrings and VR to time travel. He is also a divorcee who is really messed up about losing his wife. So he decides to travel back in time to patch things up.

At first one's impression of Justin Kloster is that he's a pretty pathetic specimen of a human being. His

divorce took all the wind out of his sails and he can't even do an evening out with his friends. Granted, he's pretty obsessed about getting the time travel to work. I'm not sure that picture improves when he actually does go back in time.

This short story is well written, and vivid in its depiction of Kloster's life and whereabouts. The ending was surprising, but I suppose satisfying and positive, given the general tenor of the rest of the story.

This portion of the review relates to "Twenty-One, Counting Up".

In this partner story to "Forty, Counting Down", one sees the events as they happen in the first story (with a few added elements) from the younger Justin Kloster's point of view. Since it was a while since I'd read the first story, the finer details of the story were somewhat hazy. This meant that it wasn't entirely boring "re-reading" the story, even if from a different perspective. In fact, one of the anomalies from the first story is in fact explained in this second story, rounding things off quite nicely in that regard.

What was fascinating to watch was how Justin, a happy-go-lucky young man meandering through life at a fast pace including a girlfriend, raving and generally living the good life, begins to realise that he can make something of himself if he's a bit more responsible.

George says

Time travel novella...40 year old travels back in time to change his life and meets his 21 year old self. Things don't work out as planned and life changes. Fun read...where can I find more by this author?

Chris Weakley says

A collection of Turtledove short stories. Most have appeared in magazines and at least one in another collection that I know of, but still all in all a good short story collection worth reading. Turtledove shows a diverse interest in his stories, but I think it is when he recasts or does historical stuff he is at his best. His characters have more flesh on them than his standards.

Paulo "paper books always" Carvalho says

Well... This was an odd book. Having heard that he his a master of alternate history I had to read something by him. I have some novels of the World War Series but after reading this book I will have them stand-by for another time...

This book is the collection of 17 stories.

I can't say I enjoyed it. I did not. Most of stories are dull and without purpose. There are some who I liked like After the Last Elf is Dead a story depicting a what if of (anti-)Tolkien's LOTR. In most books of fantasy out there ends nicely with the forces of good wining. So Turtledove came up with an idea of what's like an evil wining? It's a straight story about a high captain and his conquest for it's lord. This high captain admires it's opponents for fighting for a lost cause and the ending was nicely done. I would like to read novel with

evil characters and such...

Most of the other short stories are bad. Some of them I couldn't finish for being so uninteresting like Deconstruction Gang or the Green Buffalo.

Forty, Counting Down and Twenty-One Counting Up are two good stories and good additions for this book depicting what alternate history should be. (Well and time travel). Must and Shall is a different story of what if in the all North Vs South in the American Civil War. Usually (and Harry has several books with it) the alternate history depicts the South winning the war. But on this one the North did win the war but treat the Southerners as almost as slaves. It was a detective story and a nice one.

The Phantom of Tolbukhin and Ready for the Fatherland are two forgettable stories adding nothing interesting.

Other nice stories were Il's ne passeront pas or In this Season. The other stories were interesting, some with plot holes and un-appealing that I didn't finish...

Having failed to read anything by him with the sole exception of In the Presence of Mine Enemies a long time ago (which I didn't finish) I am afraid of picking up another book by Harry. He writes several books a year. Each book with 400 or 500 pages. How can he do it? Maybe the great output of books make them weaker. I hope I am wrong because I already have several more books by him and I hate to have just because of the covers...

Brentman99 says

I loved Turtledove's collection of short stories. The science fiction and what-ifs that he presents are lots of fun and very enjoyable to read.

Michelle says

"I'm a sucker for anything that focuses on alternate realities and endings. Turtledove is one of the masters of doing this. His stories are real in character, yet somewhat fantastical in plot and that led me to finishing this one in one sitting."
