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"A real scientist writing science-fiction with real science – what more could one ask? John Gribbin is a visionary, and one heck of a good storyteller." – **Robert J. Sawyer**, Hugo Award-winning author of QUANTUM NIGHT

John Gribbin, widely regarded as one of the best science writers of the 20th century, has also, unsurprisingly, been writing science fiction for many years. While his novels are well-known, his short stories are perhaps less so. He has also written under pseudonyms. Here, for the first time, is the definitive collection of John's short stories. Many were originally published in *Analog* and other magazines. Some were the seeds of subsequent novels. As well as 23 Science Fiction short stories, three of which John wrote with his son Ben, this collection includes two Science fact essays on subjects beloved of science fiction authors and readers. In one essay, John provides scientifically accurate DIY instructions for creating a time machine; and in the other, he argues that the Moon is, in fact, a Babel Fish!

The stories, many written at a time when issues such as climate change were taken less seriously, now seem very relevant again in an age of dubious politicians. What underpins all of them, of course, is a grounding in solid science. But they are also laced with a dry and subtle wit, which will not come as a surprise to anyone who has ever met John at a science fiction convention or elsewhere. He is, however, not averse to a good pun, as evidenced by a song he co-wrote for the Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band: *The Holey Cheeses of Nazareth*.

Despite the exhortation of this collection's title, this *is* a perfect opportunity to look back at John's short stories. If you've never read any of his fiction before, now you have the chance to acquaint yourself with a body of work that, while being very much of its time, is certainly not in any way out of date.

John Gribbin was born in 1946 in Maidstone, Kent. He studied physics at the University of Sussex and went on to complete an MSc in astronomy at the same University before moving to the Institute of Astronomy in Cambridge, to work for his PhD.

After working for the journal *Nature* and *New Scientist*, and three years with the Science Policy Research Unit at Sussex University, he has concentrated chiefly on writing books. These include *In Search of Schrödinger's Cat*, *In Search of the Big Bang*, and *In Search of the Multiverse*.

He has also written and presented several series of critically acclaimed radio programmes on scientific topics for the BBC (including QUANTUM, for Radio Four), and has acted as consultant on several TV documentaries, as well as contributing to TV programmes for the Open University and the Discovery channel.

But he really wanted to be a successful science fiction writer, and has achieved at least the second part of that ambition with books such as *Timeswitch* and *The Alice Encounter*, and stories in publications such as *Interzone* and *Analog*. But as John Lennon's Aunt Mimi so nearly said "Sf is all very well, John, but it won't pay the rent". Another thing that doesn't pay the rent is his songwriting, mostly for various spinoffs of the Bonzo Dog Band.

He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, as well as being a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical and Royal Meteorological Societies.

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