



Fat Men From Space

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While William is held captive in a spaceship, alien armies land and wipe out the earth's supply of junk foods. The boy escapes and humans learn to like what the departing scavengers have left: wholegrain bread, milk, greens, all the healthful foods. A wildly comic fantasy with a solid moral."-- "Publishers Weekly.

Fat Men From Space Details

Date : Published July 15th 1980 by Yearling (first published 1977)

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Author : Daniel Pinkwater

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From Reader Review Fat Men From Space for online ebook

John Ralston says

This is one of the funniest books ever, and all children should read it.

Nicole says

[take the earth's junk food, leaving healthy food left. (hide spoiler)]

N_maryellen Rosenblum says

I have to say that this was quite the silly book. The premise is that a young boy, William, probably a third-grader, gets a filling at the dentist. It turns out that William is able to pick up radio broadcasts from around the world, and around the universe through his new metal filling. After confirming that this is a rare occurrence with his dentist, William decides to use his dental phenomenon to its fullest. After driving his classroom teacher over the edge with the sounds of radio broadcasts, for which there is no source the teacher can locate and turn off, William and his entire class are suspended for the day.

William learns how to extend his fillings reception by placing different metal objects in his mouth. He begins to pick up strange transmissions from outer space and learns of an impending alien invasion of Earth. William is abducted by aliens who turn out to be obese men in plaid sportcoats, dacron pants, knitted neckties, and wide plastics belts, with cheeseburger shaped belt buckles.

The aliens explain to William that their main objective is to travel from planet to planet, stealing all the junkfood they can find and then enslaving the population and forcing them to continue manufacturing junkfood for them. William is troubled by these facts and begins to worry about his mother and father. He continues to receive broadcasts from earth as the aliens invade and begin to take hotdogs, cupcakes, and the Earth's supply of chocolate and sugar.

The broadcasts received from Earth are told in great detail and are hysterical. At once, the space aliens begin to float back up to the spaceship abandoning Earth. One of the aliens tells William that a giant potato pancake has been launched into space and that they are going after it. William pleads with his captors to allow him to return to Earth and they finally agree and give William a rather large sportcoat, which will allow him to float back down to his home.

The end of the story finds William, his parents and the rest of Earth's population being forced to live without sugar or junkfood for an extended period of time, until they are able to build up their stores of sugar again.

The illustrations are very sparse and are in black and white. The descriptive language the author uses and the cover illustrations however really do create a hysterical picture of what the aliens look like and the situation on Earth when they invade.

This book would be a great read-aloud for the primary grades and probably would be enjoyed by children from first to fifth grades.

Nathaniel Hardman says

When I was a little kid (second or third grade), I read a few books (I was forced to by parents or teachers), and I didn't like anything I read. In fact, I decided that I wasn't going to read anything any more. Then one of my siblings said that before I gave up on reading, I should read Fat Men from Space. I decided it would be my last book. It was not my last book. I loved Fat Men from Space, and I read several other books by Pinkwater. If you're giving up on reading (or know a little kid who is), try it out.

Kressel Housman says

Though this is a science fiction fantasy about an invasion of alien fat men in search of junk food, the funniest part is in the realistic section - the classroom scene. That deserves a 5; it's delicious. The rest is just cute.

Collette says

I found an old book report from what looks like 5th grade that stated "I liked this book a lot. William had a one-in-a-million radio tooth. He had a lot of adventures: fat men invade earth, and William gets stuck in their spacehamburger. How will he get out? To find out read 'Fat Men from Space.'"

I don't remember this, but I do know that my brother loved Daniel Pinkwater and reading this had to somehow have been influences by him.

Robin says

Pinkwater at his best! Surpassed only by Lizard Music. How I love this book.

The first time I read this was long ago. It's perfect -- From the science fiction of the tooth filling radio reception to the potato latke eating space aliens who look just like my dad did in 1972. this is my kind of book!

Sybil Lamb says

a Sly Knowing Homage satire of space invader tropes, made most frightening and preposterous by all aliens are a fat bald dude in tacky suit whos really hungry. Whats passes its self off as a morality play on junk food is actually a loving long list of junk food pinkwater was craving while writing.

Christopher Bunn says

There are some moments in life that define a person (such as Elvis Presley's invention of the banana peanut butter sandwich and surviving a botched kidnapping attempt in Bogota). There are some moments that define a generation (such as the Berlin Wall going up or Steve Jobs meeting Steve Wozniak). But then there are other moments that define history, such as Alexander the Great's campaigns or Julius Caesar's conquest of most of the known world, or the invention of cheese-in-a-tube.

Daniel Pinkwater's book, *Fat Men From Space*, is one of those moments, but it is not just a historically defining moment, it is a galactic moment.

Can one even call it a book? It is to other books like the Sumatran pineapple is to small, sour grapes that have progressed beyond mold and rot into some kind of foul, chemical calcification and that have been hiding out in your deceased Aunt Ethyl's vegetable crisper for the past decade. *Fat Men From Space*, to put it succinctly, is a heartbreaking work of titanic genius, somewhat like Michelangelo's David, but much, much better, and without the artfully concealed nudity and the large amounts of marble.

It is difficult to know where to begin when analyzing a work like *Fat Men From Space*. One circles around, so to speak, trying to determine where on this towering edifice of beauty and profundity is the best place to approach. One looks for a literary toehold with which to begin the Everestian climb, despite the dead and crumpled bodies of critics scattered about that have tried, without success, of course, to master Pinkwater's work and have subsequently fallen to their justly deserved deaths.

Perhaps one angle to begin with is the social aspect of the book. Replete with commentary on the ennui of life, layered with both culinary despair and joy, *Fat Men From Space* could arguably be ranked among the top ten of literary history's great books of social discourse. The Russians, Solzenitzyn, Tolstoy and Pushkin tried their best (and did fairly admirably), but Pinkwater outdoes them with his deft approach. After all, the motifs of boy, radio tooth, and plaid jackets, taken in contrast with the sly allusions of frozen tacos, chocolate-covered marshmallows and hamburgers, turn modern expectations of feminist critique theory on its closely cropped head.

Of course, one might argue, as Professor Argus Shellington of Yale did in his famous 1997 lecture, "Pinkwater, God and Bagels in the Post Modern West," that the book's inclusion of the teenage girls forced to deep-fry countless oysters is a veiled disparagement of the Sexual Revolution, "a celebration" (in Professor Shellington's words) of gender inclusivity and forced homogenization. However, this is a short-sighted critique, for it does not take into account the ancient archetype of the oyster as metaphor for both the universe and the beholder of the universe (oys, in the original Sumerian), restating the idea that, as we watch the universe, the universe watches us.

At any rate, critique theories aside, *Fat Men From Space* can be read on many other levels: Man as Devourer, Man as Integrated in Nature, or Man as Hot Dog. But, in addition to such approaches, the book can and should be read for its immense beauty, its poetic turn of phrase, and for its haunting elegance. Bewitching, bedazzling and beyond anything ever written (or will be written, I am confident to prophecy), *Fat Men From Space* should be on every bookshelf, on every required reading list, and enshrined in the Library of Congress (alongside the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence).

Long after we have gone from this earth, long after paltry and puffball jumbles of tawdry words (such as *Twilight*, all of Danielle Steele's mistakes, and pretty much anything else ever written) have faded away, even when the cockroaches are the only things left alive on our radioactive planet, Daniel Pinkwater's *Fat Men From Space* will live on, a monolith of existence, looming in the cold, lonely light of space like an enormous star, waiting for the return of sentient life in order to once again carry about the task of inspiration and enlightenment.

Charlotte says

This book appeared in our house. Since it was by the Big Orange Splot guy, I decided it was worth reading. The kids and I all enjoyed it. It appealed to their goofy, imaginative natures. It's pretty short and simple, written in an old-fashioned style. But it's cute and quirky with unbelievable yet fun ideas. It is a hit for ages 7-9.

Jessica says

Short and hilarious. Too short, really. After the fun of Harold playing with his new filling, which allows him to pick up radio signals, he misses most of the invasion of fat men seeking snacks. Would loved to have had this expanded into a longer book!

Rachel Solomin says

Another re-read from my childhood. This was my absolute favorite in elementary school. As an adult, it is still absurd, mischievous fun, but the end is anti-climactic, and it is almost too fast a read. I wish Pinkwater had milked the idea a little more thoroughly. As an adult who is more aware of Daniel Manus Pinkwater and his hilarious ouvre, I also am tickled by his obvious salutes to Ashkenazic Jewish culture (really, they are searching for latkes!) and the realization that the fat men from space are caricatures of Pinkwater himself.

Karlie Nyte says

Let me put this simply. This is the best kid's book evar! I read it over and over and over as a child. It probably influenced me more than I can imagine. It's a must read for everyone. And truthfully, I still read it.

Medeia Sharif says

William gets a filling in his tooth and is able to play radio stations from his mouth. This is a rare occurrence and he has fun with it, using his tooth to carry out the biggest prank in class. On the downside, William's filling enables him to hear space aliens plotting a culinary invasion on Earth. This is a fun and fast read.

HV says

I read this book in one night! 57 pages of pure hilaraiious stuff.The events like the time when the commander fat man wasn't worried about the earthling's weapons because he knew the fat men could eat them made me laugh out loud so hard my parents thought I was up to something.I liked it so much that I'm reading it to my sister.
