

= To the Stars ( novel ) =

To the Stars is a science fiction novel by L. Ron Hubbard . The novel 's story is set in a dystopian future , and chronicles the experiences of protagonist Alan Corday aboard a starship called the Hound of Heaven as he copes with the travails of time dilation from traveling at near light speed . Corday is kidnapped by the ship 's captain and forced to become a member of their crew , and when he next returns to Earth his fiancée has aged and barely remembers him . He becomes accustomed to life aboard the ship , and when the captain dies Corday assumes command .

Hubbard 's story was first published by John W. Campbell in two parts in a serialized format in 1950 in Astounding Science Fiction . It was first published in book format in 1954 under the title Return to Tomorrow , and was published in hardcover in 1975 under the same title . In 1997 , film producers were in the process of developing the work as a movie for Touchstone Pictures . Jazz musician Chick Corea released a 2004 album of the same name with music inspired by the story , and Galaxy Press reissued a hardcover edition of Hubbard 's novel the same year as a form of cross marketing .

The book was generally positively received , and garnered a 2001 nomination for a " Retro " Hugo Award for Best Novella . Publishers Weekly gave the book a positive review , calling it one of Hubbard 's " finest works " , and Alan Cheuse highlighted the work on National Public Radio 's program All Things Considered as a top literature holiday pick .

= = Plot = =

Protagonist Alan Corday is a young engineer , and is kidnapped from a spaceport called " New Chicago " and taken aboard the interstellar trading starship Hound of Heaven . The ship is commanded by a charismatic leader named Captain Jocelyn , who tells Corday to use his skills to help the Hound of Heaven in its travels between Earth and space colonies in other star systems . On the first page of the book 's prologue Hubbard cites " the basic equation of mass and time .... AS MASS APPROACHES INFINITY , TIME APPROACHES ZERO " , meaning that interstellar travelers at near light speed experience time relative to their environment , and when they return to their home star will find that decades or centuries may have passed . Six weeks of time aboard the ship amounts to roughly nine years experienced by those on Earth . Corday resists mingling with the culture aboard the starship , but when he returns home after travels with the Hound of Heaven he finds that his fiancée has aged and has trouble with her memory . Corday realizes his only home has become that of the starship . Captain Jocelyn is killed in an ambush on a dystopian Earth , and Corday takes command of the ship .

= = Publication history = =

To the Stars was first published in two parts in February and March 1950 in a serialized format by John W. Campbell in Astounding Science Fiction . Hubbard had previously written the story Ole Doc Methuselah for Astounding Science Fiction in 1947 , later published as a book in 1992 . In 1954 the story was published in book format by Ace Books in a paperback first edition , under the title Return to Tomorrow . Garland Publishing released a hardcover edition of Return to Tomorrow in 1975 .

In 1997 Hollywood producers were working on developing a film version of To the Stars . Producers Barbara Boyle and Michael Taylor were preparing to bring the book to the film screen for Touchstone Pictures , a division of Walt Disney Motion Pictures Group . Boyle and Taylor had previously worked with actor John Travolta on the film Phenomenon , and the project was planned to be part of Travolta 's vision to make films out of L. Ron Hubbard 's science fiction novels . Hubbard 's novel Battlefield Earth was first on his list , and Travolta starred in and helped fund the film version of the book which was released in 2000 . A film version of To the Stars had not yet begun production as of 2008 .

The jazz musician Chick Corea released a CD of the same name with music inspired by the story in 2004 , and Galaxy Press reissued a hardcover edition of Hubbard 's novel the same year as a form

of cross marketing . According to Publishers Weekly , Corea 's soundtrack to the novel was issued by Galaxy Press to give the company 's " enormous marketing muscle " the ability to " tap into the vast Hubbard fan base " . Corea explains at his website how he was motivated to work on music inspired by the book . He comments that he was inspired by a scene from the book where Hubbard describes the Captain of the Hound of Heaven spaceship playing a melody on a piano .

= = Reception = =

To the Stars was nominated by the World Science Fiction Society for a " Retro " Hugo Award for Best Novella in 2001 , losing to The Man Who Sold the Moon by Robert A. Heinlein . The " To the Stars " science @-@ fiction magazine was published by Bridge Publications .

The book generally received positive reception from literature critics . Publishers Weekly described it as " golden SF from the Golden Age " , and The Harvard Crimson called it " one of the great classics " of the Golden Age of Science Fiction . A reviewer writing in Publishers Weekly commented : " Hubbard brilliantly evokes the vastness of space and the tragedy of those who would conquer it " , and called the book " one of his [ Hubbard 's ] finest works " . Alan Cheuse reviewed the book in the San Francisco Chronicle , writing : " As in a number of groundbreaking -- or time @-@ breaking , I suppose we ought to say -- works of science fiction , the science behind the story is more interesting than the fiction itself . Hubbard is a thinker who writes , rather than a writer who thinks , as most masters are . " Cheuse highlighted the book among his 2004 literature holiday picks in a piece for National Public Radio 's program All Things Considered : " Before he began founding new religions , Hubbard was one of the country 's most prolific pulp science fiction writers , and this book is one of his best . " Georges T. Dodds , columnist for WARP , newsletter / fanzine of the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy association writes " besides being among the earliest hard science fiction works to consider time @-@ dilation effects in long distance near @-@ light @-@ speed space travel , ( To The Stars ) is a pretty entertaining story . "

Barnes & Noble 's Explorations editor , Paul Goat Allen , put the book at number eight on his list of the top ten science fiction / fantasy novels for 2004 , writing : " After more than half a century , ' To the Stars ' is just as timely , just as awe @-@ inspiring , just as profoundly moving as it was in 1950 . " In a review of the book for the website SF Site , Georges T. Dodds writes : " To the Stars , besides being among the earliest hard science fiction works to consider time @-@ dilation effects in long @-@ distance near @-@ light @-@ speed space travel , is a pretty entertaining story . " Writing in the Marburg Journal of Religion , Marco Frenschkowski of the University of Mainz described the book as a " melancholy tale about interplanetary travel and the effects of time dilation " . University of California , Irvine physics professor and science fiction author Gregory Benford wrote positively of the book in an article for the science fiction website " Crows Nest " : " Writers had used Einstein 's special relativity theory before in stories , but Hubbard brought to his novel the compressed story telling and pulp skills that had stood him in over a decade of professional writing . "

Galaxy reviewer Groff Conklin described the 1954 edition as " a fast @-@ paced and grim adventure . . . just short of absurdity , but interesting nevertheless . " Anthony Boucher panned the novel , calling it " a surprisingly routine and plotless space opera . "

In addition to Chick Corea 's album , which is directly based on the novel , it was also referenced in the 1996 album Fantastic Planet by the band Failure , the cover art of which is based on the book cover of the first edition of Return to Tomorrow .