



Black Heart Enterprises

# THE ELDER

The Elder sculpture by Joe Simon; Elder buildup by Joe Dunaway; profile layout by Steven Parke

# THE ELDER PROFILE

The earliest written tale of an alien visiting Earth may be *The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter*, a Japanese story from the 10th century about a moon princess who, because of war there, is sent to Earth. But most sci-fi media depict alien visitations to Earth as something more sinister than seeking refuge.

The majority of films in this cinematic sub-genre present an alien invasion of Earth, an attack to take possession of our natural resources as in *War of the Worlds* (1953, 2005), *Earth vs. The Flying Saucers* (1956), *Independence Day* (1996); or invasion by surreptitious infiltration to take possession of human minds and bodies as in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956, 1978, 1997 and 2007), *They Live* (1988), Robert Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters* (1994), *The Faculty* (1998), *Dream Catcher* (2003); or an invasion by individualized alien threat that would destroy mankind as in *The Blob* (1958 and 1988), John Carpenter's *The Thing* (1982), *The Andromeda Strain* (1971) and *Species* (1995).

But not all such films in this sub-genre are about an alien invasion. One of the most acclaimed films featuring alien visitation is *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951) in which an alien comes to warn Earthlings about our dangerous technological advances. James Cameron's *The Abyss* (1989) might be seen as sort of an underwater tribute to that film.

In *It Came From Outer Space* (1953), in *Alien Nation* (1988), and in *District 9* (2009), instead of "invaders" with malicious intent, we saw benign aliens stranded on Earth because of faulty spaceship components.

In *Devil Girl From Mars* (1954) and *I Married A Monster from Outer Space* (1958), the aliens were motivated by more "domestic" intentions; they came to mate with Earthlings. And, in *Village of the Damned* (1960 and re-made by John Carpenter in 1995), aliens came to Earth and, inexplicably, impregnated human women.

In *The Hidden* (1987), a unique and very under-appreciated film in this genre, we saw an alien killer pursued by a vengeful extra-terrestrial cop whose family he killed. The alien inhabits various human bodies and discards them when they become too damaged during his unpredictable and violent crime spree. This alien loves sex, loud music, fast cars and killing.

But one of the most novel and most popular cinematic premises for alien visits to Earth is presented in *Predator* (1987), *Predator 2* (1990), and the two *Aliens vs. Predator* films (2004 and 2007). These extra-terrestrials didn't come here to mate, to take over our minds or bodies or for our natural resources; these predators have come to Earth for recreation...for sport...to hunt men and collect trophies. Predators possess the physical capabilities and the intellect to meet the challenges of the hunt and the weaponry that makes them as lethal as any creature man has encountered.



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