



Under the Green Star

Lin Carter

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On Earth, life held for him only the fate of a recluse--confined to daydreams and the lore of ancient wonders but apparently destined never to share them--until he found the formula that let him cross space to the world of the Green Star. There, appearing in the body of a fabled hero, he is to experience all that his heroic fantasies had yearned for. A princess to be saved . . . an invader to be thwarted . . . and otherworldly monsters to be faced! A thrilling adventure in the grand tradition of Edgar Rice Burroughs, as only Lin Carter can tell it! This edition includes an afterword by Lin Carter.

Under the Green Star Details

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Author : Lin Carter

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From Reader Review Under the Green Star for online ebook

Mjhancock says

Our nameless protagonist is a recluse, independently wealthy, but crippled. Learning the Eastern art of soulcasting, he projects his soul from his body and sets off to search the cosmos. On one of his first stops, however, he is compelled to enter the comatose body of a warrior, and quickly becomes the foremost protector of a beautiful alien queen. The world is at a different scale than ours, and so much of the action involves fighting alien equivalents of giant spiders and other such monsters, in trees massively larger than anything we know. This was my first Lin Carter book, and it didn't really give me much a sense of his style, because it's not really his style at all. Even before I read the afterword, I got the sense that this book was an homage to the early Burroughs "John Carter of Mars" serials. Given that, it's hard to criticize the book; to paraphrase a programming maxim, for most things that I found offputting about it, it's not a bug, it's a feature. There's a tendency to overexclamation and purple prose. There's a heavy colonial overtones, as the narrator forms the perfect warrior by merging his human intellect with the natural brute strength of a native. There's weird gender issues, as our 30 year old shut-in protagonist falls in love with a teenage queen who relies on him to keep her throne and safety. And all of that, arguably, is in tribute to the original source material. Plus, the original was written in the 70s, which was a phase in sci-fi and fantasy hardly known for its writing restraint or being particularly sensitive to racial or gender concerns. But while I don't condemn the book for those things, I can't say I particularly like it either. (And if I'm being totally honest, I probably could have excused the last two, if the first one wasn't so eye-rolling.) It's a style not to my tastes, but I appreciate Carter's intentions, and the accuracy with which he draws out the sense of the original material. It has an ending that's a lot darker than I was expecting, and the afterword does a lot to impress the accomplishment here. It's a good model of the Burroughs style, but unless that's a draw in itself, there isn't really a lot else here.

Nawfal says

I feel three stars is too few. But that is really what I rate this novel. It was an excellent homage to the Burroughs et al. tradition. Like the practice of ancient Chinese painters - his reproduction of that style is flawless.

No kidding; if I didn't tell the reader who wrote what, and just gave them a chapter, they wouldn't be able to perceive that this is not Burroughs or Howard, et al.

I had a lot of fun with this zippy adventure. And I own book #2, so I can sneak back to see what happens next. However, and this is key, readers can happily and comfortably end their time here - the story is wrapped up sufficiently.

Tim says

I find that I've outgrown this type of fiction in my dotage.

MB Taylor says

One of Carter's better Edgar Rice Burroughs's Barsoom take offs. I probably read this not too long after it came out in the early seventies. At the time I was quite the Lin Carter fan. This series started out pretty well, but towards the end I was getting bored with it (and with the genre itself).

Carter was fairly prolific; I don't know how many books he wrote but I have over 60, not including the Conan pastiches he did with and without L. Sprague de Camp.

He had a lot of short lived series (most 6 books or less); Zarkon, The Green Star, and Callisto were probably my favorites.

Jack Dunne says

The first story of the Green Star Series is in my opinion, Lin Carter's best...
Books 2-5 are basically the second story broken up into 4 parts.

Lin Carter was the ultimate fanboy of both ERB's John Carter of Mars and REH's Conan the Barbarian. In 'Under the Green Star' he manages to make an amalgam of both iconic characters.

At the same time, the opening chapters provide a stellar explanation of soul-casting (astral journeying) in a way that somehow manages to improve upon ERB's John Carter series, since ERB never goes into detail about the phenomena. I even found the premise more intriguing than the film 'Avatar', a more recent homage to John Carter of Mars, which relies on an unexplained piece of tech as the vehicle.

The setting on Green Star is a unique planet that is refreshingly intricate on a grand scale, though the book reads fast and ends way too soon. The story is penned in an A. Merritt inspired style of writing, which means a lot of descriptive scenery. Worth the price of admission just for the opening alone.
This is a fun read, especially if you are also a fanboy (or girl) of the original characters that inspired it.

Kat Hooper says

ORIGINALLY POSTED AT Fantasy Literature.

Under the Green Star is Lin Carter's homage to Edgar Rice Burroughs and it's a quick, fun, exciting adventure with some terrific scenery. Our hero (who's telling the story in first person) was crippled by polio when he was a child and, as an adult, he's confined to a wheelchair. He's wealthy, though, so he has managed to get hold of an ancient scroll that describes the lost Tibetan science of eckankar — soul travel. After years of studying, he manages to free his soul from his crippled body so that he can explore the Earth... and beyond!

It's not long before he finds himself on a green star which supports a beautiful land where people live in the trees and ride dragonflies. When he gets too close to the crystal-encased tomb of one of their ancient heroes, his soul is sucked into the hero's body which then comes back to life, fulfilling one of their prophecies. He is

now the protector of their beautiful princess and, in his new and vigorous body, he has adventures.

Under the Green Star will likely feel derivative to readers who've read a lot of Edgar Rice Burroughs. I haven't, but it did remind me of several other works I'm familiar with: Abraham Merritt's *The Moon Pool* (both the story and the writing style are very similar), John Norman's *Gor* stories (Earth man becomes a hero on another planet) and Stephen R. Donaldson's *Thomas Covenant* series (diseased Earth man become a hero in a beautiful land).

The best part of *Under the Green Star* is the setting: a spectacular shady world with trees that have branches as wide as highways (or maybe the trees are normal-sized and the people are tiny — our hero never learns which is true). The people live in cities high up in the trees because dangerous monsters live on the floor of the forest.

The story is fast-paced and exciting and easily read in a day. Although it was really fun, there are a couple of problems with *Under the Green Star*. Foremost is the severely exhausting infuriating redundant extreme overuse of adjectives and descriptors:

"Her face was fine-boned, heart-shaped, exquisite. Beneath delicately arched brows, her eyes were enormous wells of depthless amber flame wherein flakes of gold fire trembled. Thick jetty lashes enshadowed the dark flame of her eyes, but her hair, elaborately teased and twisted and coiffed, was startlingly white: a fantastic confection of frosted sugar, and exquisite construction of spun silver. Her mouth was a luscious rosebud, daintily pink, moistly seductive. A delicate flower of superb and breathtaking loveliness was Niamh the Fair, when first I looked upon her there on the gilt throne, bathed in shafts of somber and ruby light from the hollow dome above."

That makes me want to gag and effortlessly brings me to my next point: that's about all there is to the princess when our hero decides he's in love with her. She looks like cotton candy (and her personality's about as substantial as cotton candy, too). But, what did I expect? I've read enough old SFF to know not to expect much more from this type of story. It wasn't written for me, anyway.

The Kindle version of *Under the Green Star* is only \$2.69 (at this writing) and I was pleased with its quality. I gave the book only a 3 star rating, but because it's short, fun, and cheap, I recommend it to anyone who wants to further their education in old SFF.

Cormacjosh says

Yes, it is indeed a second-rate John Carter of Mars story, but Lin Carter freely admits of his inspiration, referring to it in the 1972 afterword as "... a love letter". The nice thing is, he was successful in it coming off as an homage, rather than a rip off, and therefore this is a very pleasant read, especially for vacation reading. I read this during the later part of *Pennsic War XLV*, completing nearly half of it before the conclusion of that event so it is a very quick read at only 118 pages.

If you've just finished John Carter or Tarzan and are searching for something in a similar vein, you can't go wrong with this.

Kristina says

Very much an homage to the style and stories of Edgar Rice Burroughs and if it hasn't started out taking place in the 1970s I would have thought it had been written by Burroughs. I have to admit that this very much felt like a reimagining of the John Carter of Mars books, which made it not feel "fresh" to me.

I loved the Barsoom series and read them all when I was a teen, so this felt like a visit to the old neighborhood that has undergone redevelopment.

The main character has been crippled and has spent his life on Earth in a wheelchair or on crutches. He finds himself a man of leisure so spends his time researching metaphysical ideology of the Tibetan Yogis and such. One day he puts his studies into practice and astral projects himself out of his body and finds himself drawn to a distant star in the sky. This green star has a world orbiting it that draws him down, where he finds a population of people that are elfin like tree dwellers. As he explores the civilization in spirit form he suddenly finds himself pulled into the preserved body of a famous hero of legend, where his spirit takes up residence and he must become the great and mighty Chong.

The story was very typical of the "space and sword" genre. It was a quick read but I can't say that it left me wanting to track down the next book in the series.

Jack says

A fun, straightforward Sword & Planet book. Recommended for S&P and Edgar Rice Burroughs fans.

Neal says

You can read the full review, and comparisons to Avatar, [HERE](#).

Greg says

A quirky little sci-fi adventure, told in the manner of Edgar Rice Burroughs' John Carter of Mars books. Lin Carter makes it clear he's writing an homage to Burroughs' books, though anyone who has also read those books will recognize Burroughs' style and tropes immediately.

One crucial difference is that unlike the adventurous-on-Earth before he goes to Mars John Carter, Lin Carter's hero is not a man of action on Earth, and is in fact incapable of action, being confined to bed (but rich enough to be waited on hand and foot).

So it's a great release to the protagonist to find himself suddenly on the planet of the Green Star, in the body of a great (recently deceased) hero. He goes through all manner of adventures--battling giant insects, rescuing the beautiful (and creepily underage) princess, and saving the day. Only to be whisked back to Earth

(much like John Carter was).

The book is entertaining if mediocre, but is much illuminated in the afterword by the author, who makes it clear why he wrote it. Not just as a tribute to Burroughs, but also to address some unnamed sadness. It doesn't take a genius to figure out he felt emasculated in his own life, and thus imagining himself as a massive hero from another age had a great attraction (and maybe therapeutic benefit). The "bad guys" are generally everyone who isn't a hulking-out masculine paragon of virility. Lin Carter's disdain for the effeminate is clear. Very interesting.

The afterword really is quite illuminating, and much more honest than the book itself. The author says he hopes the reader enjoyed the book, because he wasn't very happy when he wrote it. It shows.

Timothy Boyd says

Nice easy read. it's a very John Carter style story, falling in the sub-genre of SiFi called Planetary Romance or Swords and Planets. Enjoyable and quick. Recommended

Jens Walter says

Bücher wie "Der grüne Stern" werden heutzutage nicht mehr veröffentlicht. Zum einen gibt es keine Taschenbücher mit unter 200 Seiten mehr und zum anderen werden heute auch inhaltlich andere Maßstäbe angesetzt.

Wenn ich das Buch Revue passieren lasse, dann muss ich sagen, dass es keine nennenswerte Geschichte erzählt. Es gibt keine Pointe, ja nicht einmal einen eigentlichen Erzählbogen. Das Ganze dreht sich nur um die Welt des grünen Sterns und seine Bewohner. Irgendwie ist das recht unterhaltsam, aber auch merklich unspektakulär.

Matt says

'Under the Green Star' is the first book of a five book series by Lin Carter written as a tribute to Edgar Rice Burroughs. The series is written in the style of the 'Barsoom' books, and in particular the five book series in many ways follows the general arc of the first three Barsoom books. Carter describes them in an afterword as 'love letters' to the man who inspired him to be a writer. Although Carter suggests that he strove not to imitate the 'Barsoom' books directly and simply tell an adventure in the same style, readers of that series will recognize innumerable similarities between the two works in plot points, style, and even particular turns of phrase.

The books are short, almost more novellas than full novels, and can be read easily in an evening or afternoon. This being the first book of the series, it is primarily concerned with introducing the lovely but brave Princess which shall thereafter be the object of all the quests and hardships that follow after.

Whereas 'Barsoom' is the Mars of early 20th century fantasy, in the 'Green Star' series Mars is the dead world of late 20th century science and the series is set on a world orbiting a fictional green star. (Real stars are never green, though some few stars in the sky - such as Algol - appear green because they are actually binary stars where one star is yellow and the other blue.) Whereas Barsoom is a dying desert world, the World of the Green Star is a faerie world of mountain sized trees and carnivorous flowers. In some fashions it reminds of Burroughs depiction of Venus. But other than the fact that they were a good deal more clothing, it might as well be Barsoom.

Although they have some novel features, I don't really feel that Lin Carter's semi-derivative works quite stand up to those of Burroughs, either in imagination, the charisma of the characters, or thier ability to compel thought and excitement. They are perhaps more professionally written with fewer overt flaws, but somehow the flaws are missed. I read them once and enjoyed them well enough to make it through all five books, but have never really felt the need to revisit them.

Michael Jandrok says

My fascination with pulp science-fiction and fantasy novels continues, as I take up Lin Carter's "Green Star" series for some nice pre-summertime reading. This is a five-volume set that I read when I was much younger, and it's been fun to reacquire the series. I went ahead and collected all of the original DAW paperback printings because I have such a fondness for the care that Donald Wollheim put into his pressings. All of these books have great cover art along with some full-page line art that captures the action in the story perfectly. DAW put out a LOT of Lin Carter's work in the 1970s, and I'm glad that they kept his writing available to a small but devoted following, of which I am proud to be a part of.

Lin Carter's Wikipedia page has a decently accurate description of his life and works. You can follow this link if you'd like more information on him.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lin_Carter

My fascination with Carter revolves around his abilities as a writer of pastiches. He never really developed an original writing style (with a couple of notable exceptions), preferring instead to write pieces that were imitative of various other authors of fantasy and speculative fiction. Carter was fond of Robert Howard and H. P. Lovecraft, for example, and could riff on their writing techniques with gusto. The "Green Star" series is slightly different, in that Carter used Edgar Rice Burroughs as an inspiration rather than as a model. As a result, the series comes across as much more of an homage than an outright imitation. It's obvious that Carter used Burrough's "Mars" titles as a starting point, but he takes careful pains to avoid ripping them off wholesale. The end result is an action-adventure series on a far-flung world that seems at once familiar yet different enough that it could reasonably be called original.

The first book in the series is titled "Under the Green Star," and it provides a lot of the necessary background information that sets the stage for the rest of the sequels. The main protagonist is never named in the book, you only know him by the names of his alter-egos on the world of the Green Star. On Earth he is crippled by polio, his body broken. At the age of thirty, he is rich enough to live in comfort, yet restless for adventure. He obtains a book of Eastern mysticism, purported to contain the instructions for astral travel, and he studies the art until one night he is able to project his consciousness outward to the stars. He makes a stop on Mars, and in an obvious poke at Burroughs finds the remains of a long-dead civilization. His attention is drawn to a

mysterious green star high in the Martian sky, and he lets his consciousness drift towards that distant sun. He finds himself near a huge, cloud-shrouded planet orbiting the green star. Allowing himself to probe the depths of the cloud cover, he finds himself witnessing a strange caravan of people moving through immense trees the size of mountains. A royal reception of some sort is about to happen.

It is obvious to our hero that something important is going on, though he cannot interact or communicate with any of the denizens of the strange new world in his astral form. As the events in the heights of the gigantic tree begin to get more strained, the floating consciousness of our protagonist is compelled to find himself entering the preserved body of some long-dead hero of past ages, a human relic of the tree-dwelling civilization. He finds himself come to sudden physical life, an alien imposter housed in the flesh of some mighty swordsman of yore. From there the story takes off, and you will get no spoilers from me. Suffice to say that there is plenty of action, mystery, a romantic triangle, and enough swordplay and suspense and treachery to keep any fan of pulp fantasy happy and content. It's a short novel that moves along at breakneck speed. You can knock this thing out in a couple of hours and still catch that rerun of "John Carter" that you had been planning to watch.

This is not high literary fiction, it's not meant to be anything but what it is.....a full-on pulp adventure for folks like me who have aged well, but never bothered to grow up. I can never seem to get enough of these types of paperback gems from the recesses of the racks. The pages may be yellowing a bit, but the stories are still crisp and timeless. Thank you, Linwood Carter, for providing me with a couple of hours of fantastic fun in the high tradition of Barsoom and Tarzan. You would have made Edgar Rice Burroughs proud with this reverent tribute to his oeuvre.
