



The Deceivers

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The hero is Rogue Winter, King of Maori Commandos. His lover is the beautiful Demi Jeroux, who has been kidnapped by the villainous, demonic Manchu Duke of Death. Rogue must search through the entire solar system to find the missing Demi, from the Paradise of Carnal Pleasures to the bloody torture chambers of Triton. It is in Triton's subterranean chambers that the key to the whole adventure lies, for buried here is the sole source of the newly discovered Meta-crystals, which hold the secret to unlimited energy for all mankind.

The Deceivers Details

Date : Published September 1st 1999 by iBooks (first published October 1981)

ISBN : 9780671038892

Author : Alfred Bester

Format : Paperback 272 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Unfinished, Abandoned, Science Fiction Fantasy, Anthologies, Collections, Speculative Fiction

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From Reader Review *The Deceivers* for online ebook

Bruce says

a fun read, but kind of dated

Fantasymundo says

No intentéis comprender la sinopsis ni su sarta de términos indescifrables, ya que tendríais que leer el libro para entenderlos (y ni así), pues nos encontramos ante un libro... peculiar. "Los impostores" es una novela corta, satírica y absurda, muy en el estilo de Terry Pratchett si le sumamos la Seguir leyendo

Sam Fleming says

I'm adding a preface to my original review, because I re-read this book after seeing other reviews -- it had been many years since I read it when I first reviewed it. The price on the back was £2.95, which should tell you something.

I still love Bester, and I love his work, and I will be forever grateful to him for doing things with his prose that resonated so strongly with me as I tried to reconcile the things my synaesthetic senses told me about the world around me with the way other people described the world around them; worlds, that, by description alone, were not remotely the same.

But reading this book again, now, this far into the 21st century, it's painfully full of racist stereotypes, insensitivity, misappropriation and sexism. The jaunty lingo I remembered as being not dissimilar to that in the Charteris Saint books isn't quite so jocular and evocative. There are a lot of failings in this book, and it isn't Bester at his most innovative or creative. It reads more like it was written by someone who found himself stranded in a rapidly-evolving cultural and political landscape, and who was trying, unsuccessfully, to catch up.

I don't read the uncomfortable caricatures as malicious, or even an attempt to cling to the comfortable and familiar; more as an attempt to navigate a changed world with tools carried from the old one. It made me sad rather than angry, and I can understand why other people rate it so poorly.

This is my original review:

I think, if I were to be asked which book made me want to write, and I hadn't already been writing, this would be the one.

Bester's facility with using physical patterns of prose to convey sensory anomalies is an absolute delight in this, a book about a pattern matcher searching for his pregnant, shapeshifting alien partner across a galaxy of planets. I'm synaesthetic: the idea that one can depict atypical sensory impressions using the *words themselves* was a revelation to me. It turns up again in "The Stars My Destination", but is at its best and most creative in this book.

I love Bester's work, love the glorious mash-up of Sixties slang and genre-bending plots. This starts with the protagonist being led on a deliberate trail using the Twelve Days of Christmas and continues, preposterously, fabulously, from there. It's brilliant and, to my mind, sadly underrated.

Roland Flynn says

If you haven't read Bester don't start with this one. His previous books 'The Stars My Destination' and 'The Demolished Man' are two of my favourite books. This, although it had traces of Bester's wit and imagination felt like a poor imitation. The plot wasn't tight, and it just felt like a ramble. Do do do read his first two books. Avoid this. Read out of curiosity only.

Celeste says

I've been having a really hard time working out all the ways I was disappointed in this novel. I hate it when I read something by an author I've enjoyed, and even recommended to other people, and have my opinion of them change dramatically after a new reading, and not for the better. Maybe Bester just got stuck in the 1950s - that's the most harmless interpretation. The exceedingly racist stereotypes, the blatant sexism – I can read over that in a book written in 1955 (though I really don't remember there being any to speak of in *The Stars, My Destination*), but this was written in 1981. There's no excuse for the linguistic and political attitudes of this novel in 1981.

I wanted to come up with at least one thing that I like about this story. Nothing. The main character is a pale shadow of Gully Foyle, a complete egotist with no real motivation for any of his outlandish (yet boring) escapades. The plot line is some vague ethnic Mafia power struggle that I lost track of about half-way through. The science fiction ideas are few and far between, and nothing new or at all interesting. The best part of the book is probably the Afterword by Julius Schwartz and Elliot Maggin about Bester's early career in the magazines.

Skip it. Read *The Stars, My Destination* instead and just forget this novel exists.

Jules says

Lewis, Joyce and Vaughan are having a brainstorm. Bester is taking notes. Grandma Moses is drinking a cup of GABA. I can guess the OCA2 and HERC2 of your eyes, they're tyrosining. The cat leaps over the table into the hourglass and the four whoresmen of apocalypse are playing poker. If I had some
CCGATTTTTCATTTTTTGATGTTAGAATGATTGATAGGTTTGAGTTTGAAAGATTGGAATATAAG
TATTTATCTGCTTTTATGCCTTAT to show you'd know that

Ski-bi dibby dib yo da dub dub

Yo da dub dub

Ski-bi dibby dib yo da dub dub

Yo da dub dub

Herschel is oddly interested in Uranus, bikinis and dentists. "you're always thinking' 'it's my only vice".

Sometimes I sniff the dust between two moments, it gives me the jinkies. Bester is fighting a victorian judge over a circumcised dildo gavel, and I am fairly satisfied with this book.

L.E. I need to re-read this.

Bill says

what a comedown after reading *the stars my destination*. that was such a great book, and this is so ordinary, less than ordinary even.full of cliches, insipid characters, bits of undecipherable science, and boring so-called action. i'll have to read his other classic *the demolished man* to recover my respect for bester.

Mike says

To read *The Demolished Man* and this book back-to-back is to witness a more-than-compelling argument against literary alcoholism.

Diego José says

Los impostores es una novelita corta de ciencia ficción, sin pretensiones, bastante rara y que nos situa en el futuro, donde todos los planetas estan poblados, y nos muestra un unuverso donde reina la picardía. Los chanchullos están a la orden del día. Probablemente sea una novela demasiado poco ambiciosa, y la trama es bastante simple y ya vista. Lo interesante son los diálogos y el mundo que crea Bester. Con ese mundo, y estos personajes se podría haber hecho algo más grande que una novelita de 170 páginas.

Gracias a Editorial Gigamesh por el ejemplar

Claudia says

I don't know what I just read. Really. Not for sure, anyway. I don't know if it's just gibberish or truly genius. But I do know that I liked it a lot, even though I know for certain it has more meanings than I got, because I'm not familiar with all those references to modern history/people from so many countries. This is the kind of story that you read with an encyclopedia in one hand and a slang dictionary in the other, which I didn't, thus the partial lack of understanding some remarks...

I read in some articles that this story is so bad that it was not reviewed by critics out of respect for Alfred Bester (!?) Others were offended by the slang used (Chink, Blackamoor, etc – my guess is exactly the opposite; Bester did not want at all to offend people but to stress out the hypocrisy of the society). Others said that the partially invented slang/language was very hard to follow and unreadable (riiiight, I guess *Finnegans Wake* was just child's play for them or *A Clockwork Orange*). Others said that this was the most pathetic and improbable love story ever and the list continues...

What I saw in it is the most acid satire and the harshest attack on society I read so far, disguised as a sci-fi freak show, a total babble, a blend of the most improbable actions and characters that could have been imagined but also the most lyrical and poetical one:

"Now pigs are wonderful people"

Versus

"Let us roll all our strength and all our sweetness up into one ball, and tear our pleasure with rough strife through the iron gates of life. Thus, though we cannot make our Sun stand still, yet we will make him run"

Above all, what I liked the most was the humor which leaks from every aspect of the book: the mocking, the weird characters, their stupid actions not to mention the dialogues and the patterns which are the "specialty" of our main character.

No human race is left aside; we are all part of Bester's universe, as we are, or disguised as Tritonians, Titanians or other-ans...

"A: Oh, the Titanians. What do they look like? Italian, English, French, Chinese, Black, Brown, your wife, your husband, three lovers, two dentists, and a partridge in a pear tree"

I also loved Bester' small tribute to Asimov (if you'll ever read the story, you'll know what I mean).

I think it's the kind of book that requires a certain mood to read. Lucky me, I was in the right one :)
Therefore, I don't recommend it; read it on your own risk :P

You know, de gustibus....

Denis says

A strange novel written by a strange writer. It is flawed in so many ways (the sporadic random 'lingo' is so dated and such) yet it is a fun SF romp written the way only Bester can.

By this time in Bester's career, he had just recently returned to writing SF after a twenty year hiatus. I just can't help but find that this one suffered the same issues as did his novel of five years before "The Computer Connection" (originally titled "Indian Giver" for god sakes). It is as if he was, perhaps, trying too hard to be clever, witty and hip. I would have thought he would have learned from that last one. I say this as it was his own opinion - based on his interview with Charles Platt - "That confounded book. There is something vitally wrong with that book, and I knew it when I finished it, and couldn't patch it then, and to this day (Sept. 1979) I think about it, because there's no point in making a mistake unless you understand the mistake so that you don't make it again. I don't understand it, so I can't profit by it. It's infuriating."

In this one, I found the odd "politically incorrect" references toward other cultures and attitude towards homosexuals in "The Deceivers" hard to take. I forced myself to look past this, understanding that these were different times (though even in 1981, I am quite certain that this would not have flown smoothly) but on can but sing with the voice he has.

Nonetheless, those brilliant moments and original plot and text devises which Bester is known for are all present in this novel. A story which features a Synergist One who can make unusual connections between various seemingly unrelated elements - sort of like PKD did - was interesting enough for me.

Alfred Bester was a deserving recipient of the Grand Master award and has earned his respect. He wrote some of the best SF stories of all time. I really did enjoy reading this novel (even though I had to cringe at times). It was fun creative and caution to the wind writing and worth checking out - though only after having read his famed "The Demolished Man" and "The Stars are my Destination" first.

Jo Koc says

I bought this book as part of a bundle: science written from scientist. well I should've known what I was getting into, but still I expected more. the main reason why I'm there staring this book is the excessive explaining of the world. mostly because it was harming the action at hand, and when the explanation was done it took a while to figure where the story stopped. so there staring because of bad pacing.

S. Barker says

No sé cómo se transcribe una pedorreta, así que hacedme el favor e imaginaos que comienzo esta reseña con una pedorreta.

Señor, qué duro es obligarte a leer un libro porque te lo han regalado y te sientes culpable de estar odiándolo profundamente desde la primera página... No suelo hacerlo y me reafirmo en que seguir leyendo un libro que tienes muy claro que no te gusta es un error.

Pues eso, que no me ha gustado nada, los personajes un rollo, la trama podría haber sido interesante si no me la sudaran tanto los personajes, la pseudociencia infumable sumado a todo esto...

En fin. Que un rollo. No lo leáis.

Palimp says

Hace poco leía **El ladrón cuántico** y comentaba que era una novela de aventuras con terminología de ciencia ficción. Esta novela es *madre* de aquella. En los 80 se experimentó con nuevos formatos, más libres en temas e intenciones y este libro es un ejemplo.

Acción trepidante y mucho buen humor que conforman una novela entretenida y refrescante pero que no va más allá.

Meitnerio says

Muy inferior a otros libros de la misma temática, puede servir como divertimento ligero, pero para ello prefiero a Adams o Pratchett (o Moore o Mendoza), que son más divertidos. La explosión de ideas tiene calidad y se lee en nada, pero la poca gracia de los chistes y la propia inconsistencia de la historia lo convierten en un libro bastante evitable.

