



## Hunter of Worlds

*C.J. Cherryh*

Download now

Read Online →

# Hunter of Worlds

C.J. Cherryh

## Hunter of Worlds C.J. Cherryh

A million people were about to die! The entire population of the planet Priamos was marked for death if one person on the surface could not be found in time. The staggering order was emotionless and inhuman — exactly like the iduve, the strange aliens who had handed down the decree.

Perhaps the most advanced and least understood race in the known universe, the idvue lived in giant spaceships that roamed in random patterns around the galaxy. For nearly two hundred years one of these mammoth vessels, *The Ashanome*, had been stalking an offender ... one of their own kind who betrayed an ancient rite and fled into the sanctuary of "human" space.

Now, as *The Ashanome* went into orbit around his hiding place, it was time for *vaikka*, the ultimate vengeance and return of honor which the iduve cherished above all else. To accomplish their task, they commanded the aid of three very different individuals — Aiela Lyailleue, a young man of the peaceable kallia race who was forcibly inducted into the Starlord's service, possibly never to see his home or family again; Daniel, a savage human with nothing but fear and a blind hatred for his captors; and Isande, a beautiful woman who knew more about the iduve than the iduve themselves.

Together, through the process of *Asuthi*, all three had their minds melded into a single entity — learning not only each other's language, but each other's way of life, inner feelings and deepest secrets. For in a short time they would descend to the threatening surface of Priamos. Their mission: search out and kill the offender.

If they were to be successful, they would surely need the combined resources of all their wits and intuitive knowledge. Within a few short hours, the trio had to find the needle in the haystack — or they and all the planet's million other men, women and children would perish in a single, searing flash of white hot energy. The iduve knew no other way...

## Hunter of Worlds Details

Date : Published March 1990 by Mandarin Publishers LTD (first published March 1977)

ISBN : 9780749302122

Author : C.J. Cherryh

Format : Paperback 254 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Science Fiction Fantasy, Fantasy

 [Download Hunter of Worlds ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Hunter of Worlds ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Hunter of Worlds C.J. Cherryh**



# From Reader Review Hunter of Worlds for online ebook

## Luke says

I'm really not sure what to think. Cherryh is an amazing writer, the way she uses words to create her universe and create her story is simply stunning, but this was a tough book to get through. Because of the fairly large amount of alien vocabulary, I found myself constantly flipping back and forth to the glossary of terms in the back (yep, there's so many alien vocabulary that the book requires a glossary), and this really removed me from the story each and every time. The Iduve were a stunning and beautifully created race, and I absolutely loved the dark background for how human beings fit into this universe. But I found the actual story to be very lacking, and I found it hard to root for the main character when his captures essentially manipulate his every action. The ending was also a large disappointment. This book has many great aspects, but also a good amount of disappointments.

---

## William Leight says

Another early C.J. Cherryh novel with an interest in ideas of alienness that she would do better with later. "Hunter of Worlds" features three alien races, the Iduve, the kallia, and the amaut: all three are supposed to be utterly alien to humans and to each other, with clashing belief systems that the others struggle to understand. Unfortunately, Cherryh mostly fails to distinguish between culture and innate, biologically-driven impulses: a quick glimpse over the various societies of Earth today indicates that a wide variety of belief systems are compatible with basic human nature, and there's no a priori reason to believe that aliens would be any different. Hence the Kalliran desire for peace and order, and the Amaut longing for land, appear to be more a question of cultural than biology: these are easily conceived of as human, and hence not particularly alien. Only the Iduve, with, among other things, their barely-concealed predatory instincts, the physical violence that lies just below, and sometimes above, the surface of every possible encounter, their treatment of any disagreement as a direct challenge, and their total deference to pregnant females, manage to appear genuinely alien. The scene in which Chimele can only barely hold herself back from a physical attack on Aiela, not because she wants to attack him but because every instinct in her body is screaming that he is challenging her position and needs to be dealt with, is brilliantly executed, and shows the possibilities of this kind of science fiction. However, one genuinely alien race out of three is not a great percentage, and the Kalliran-human clash mostly boils down to the Kalliran characters being unwilling to challenge authority, to make a fuss, or to throw their lives away in a hopeless cause: this makes them different from Daniel, the main human character, but hardly renders them incomprehensible. And the story is also fairly confusing: Cherryh doesn't have quite as good a grasp on maneuvering and intrigue as she would achieve later, and so the plot is jumpy and difficult to follow at times. Also, it relies heavily on telepathy, in a way that didn't entirely make sense. The Iduve are interesting and Cherryh mostly does a good job with them, but mainly this is Cherryh working through ideas that would be put to better use later.

After I had read the book, an interesting light was thrown on it by an article by Judith Tarr at Tor.com, in which she points out that many female science fiction writers of this general time period — Cherryh was one of the ones she mentioned — seemed to prefer to make their female characters aliens, presumably on the grounds that editors, publishers, and readers (and perhaps also the authors themselves) would be more accepting of female characters who violated traditional human gender norms if they were not human. Certainly, in most of Cherryh's '70s novels — this one, the Morgaine books, the Faded Sun books — the prominent and interesting female characters are aliens, while human women are relegated to minor roles

(Margaret in "Hunter of Worlds" is depressingly Victorian, present only to suffer and be motherly) or absent entirely. (The exception that proves the rule here is "Brothers of Earth": Djan is, nominally, human, but comes from a culture so different from that of Kurt, who represents the human viewpoint, that she might as well be an alien.) It seems not implausible that, at least at the beginning of her career, Cherryh felt (for whatever reasons) that it was easier to write female characters who were, when necessary, violent, hard, and ruthless, while rarely being caring or affectionate, as aliens. The flip side (which Tarr doesn't mention in her article) is the question of how this affects the readers' perception of these characters: if it was easier for authors to write characters who violate gender norms as alien, was (and is) it also easier for readers to read such characters as alien? Does the fact that Chimele is a female struggling to repress her violent instincts make her appear more alien to me in her scene with Aiela than would be the case if the character were male instead? I'd like to think not, of course, not least because I think that Cherryh has just written a really good scene that doesn't depend on the gender of its participants, but it's hard to know for sure. It's an important reminder, though, that the question of what it means for behavior to be alien is a trickier one than this book sometimes seems to think.

---

### **Bron says**

I had to dig out my old paperback copy, to my great disappointment, this is not available in Kindle format and I had a real urge to read it again. I always feel it's one if a pair with Brothers of Earth though I'm not sure why as there's a lack of clues to suggest they are even in the same universe. Cherryh has created more wonderful aliens, and a few humans who manage to get tangled up in an exercise of pride and honour by powers far beyond their comprehension.

---

### **Stevelvis says**

I actually loved this book and would give it 5 stars for characters, cultures and concepts. However, the huge number of alien words made reading more difficult than necessary and robbed much of the pleasure of the read. There are 3 main alien species who each have their distinctive biological and personality types as well as their own languages. There's a 10-page glossary of foreign terms at the end of the book which helps a lot. Recommended for the more advanced SF reader.

---

### **Terence says**

Solid, old-school Cherryh. It doesn't have the power or polish of Cherryh at her best (e.g., Downbelow Station or Gate of Ivrel) but it moves along well and it displays the author's usual skill at creating truly nonhuman species.

It's greatest weakness - as pointed out in another review - is the passivity of the main characters (the *kallia* Isande and Aiela, and the human Daniel). Daniel offers some resistance to his *iduve* kidnappers but their overwhelming superiority (both technical and physical) make it pointless in the end. Tension and conflict arise from seeing how these largely helpless protagonists carve out some measure of autonomy within the context of their situation. (It reminds me of Mick Farren's Protectorate, where humanity must learn how to survive on the sufferance of two alien superpowers.)

Recommended for Cherryh fans, primarily.

---

### **Bogi Takács says**

Just a few unsorted thoughts -

I read this right after the Clarion writing advice book and this novel basically breaks every single rule. I think it'd be completely unpublishable today, but I enjoyed it! It has many of the same themes as Cherryh's *Foreigner*, but I liked this one better. I think the different alien species and their thought processes are handled better and with less exoticization; characters are genuinely struggling to bridge the gaps and even make some headway. (Note that I only read the first volume of *Foreigner*.)

Some of the invented words could've been more distinct, when there is a single-letter difference, that's IMO confusing. I was amused that one of them had a quite close Hungarian parallel.

One thing that annoys me about these "aliens force people to do things" stories is that frankly, for every weird thing I read in them, I'm sure \*volunteers\* could be found. Same here, I'm sure many people would voluntarily and happily serve the scary starlords. Maybe that would please the author less?

An interesting thing I seldom see in SF is that this book has both technological and biological telepathy as distinct processes, with their own limitations and advantages.

---

### **Yblees says**

A personal favourite. I read this some 20 years ago and lost my original copy.

Tracked down and purchased a secondhand, hardback copy a couple of years ago, and have re-read it three times since.

Now my current, 1977 edition copy is giving way due to age. I'll be taking it down to the bindery tomorrow to see if they can rescue it. If they can't, I'm going to be on my third copy of this book fairly soon!

---

### **S.A. Hunter says**

This early read of mine so shaped my personal definition of what I considered great sci/fi reading. I was fascinated with the *Iduve* and the unusual perspective of "being human".

I've read this book many times. When we moved, I thought I was ready to let it go. Now I'm checking out our local used book store for another copy.

---

## **Tim says**

Hunter of Worlds has some really alien aliens. They aren't just humans in a rubber suit; they really do have different worldviews from humans, and their own vocabulary (lots of it). Very few SF stories have convincingly alien species, so hats off to C.J. Cherryh for achieving it.

It's a double-edged sword, though. All the main protagonists and antagonists are aliens (of different species), they are hard to empathize with: their perceptions and reactions aren't mine, and I found it difficult to follow their motivations and responses. All the glossary-hopping didn't help, either. The one human character is mostly offscreen and barely sketched out as a character, so didn't provide any kind of reference to view the aliens from.

This is a decent SF story which does a good job of portraying interstellar tension in an alien universe, and I enjoyed that it's different from anything else I've read for a while. But I found it pretty hard work to get through and I never really engaged emotionally with the alien characters.

---

## **Samuel says**

Solid and gripping. A story of a few powerless slaves caught up as bit players in a vengeance mission and politics of a powerful alien race. The alien antagonists are pitiless and ruthless but by the end, even though they haven't changed a whit, you've been seduced into giving them a grudging respect. This hits you all the more when you realise the protagonist has gone through the same. Respect from a deeper understanding or Stockholm's syndrome?

Ultimately a compelling novel.

---

## **Marie says**

Ah, CJ... I will never quit you.

Let's see... we have different alien races with different psychologies and ideas of honor... check... we have a super-powerful queen figure of dubious morals... also check... vulnerable protagonist man in her thrall - actually make that TWO vulnerable-yet-strong-and-willful protagonist men in her thrall. DOUBLE CHECK. And a ticking clock plot that races toward the conclusion until everyone is in peril and you can't believe how thin the stack of pages under your right thumb is and there's NO WAY they are getting out of this... until they do.

I'm not saying you repeat themes, CJ... I'm just saying I like them. :D

I see from Goodreads this is like number two in a series. As usual I will fail to use that knowledge in any way as I just pick up CJ Cherryh books whenever I see one without regard to series or publication date, just so long as there are spaceships or stars or something about space on the cover. :D

---

## **Hoyt says**

I found this to be a very frustrating book to read. The overall concept is fine, but the author used way too many invented words that were too close to each other which detracted from the storytelling. Sure there was an included glossary, but I don't expect to have to study vocabulary before reading a novel!

I did appreciate the alien-ness of the non-human psychologies portrayed here, and I can see how the author thought that this required some new language, but not quite this much :)

Still, it is an early work, so I'll continue reading...

---

## **Lupercal says**

This early CJC novel started strongly. In particular its 'multicultural' area of space, with trading stations and an older race which had introduced spacefaring to the locals was a premonition of the CHANUR saga. So was much else: the emphasis on inter-species politics, and the lone human as the outsider. Overall it was an impressive and promising novel, but I feel it fell down in a couple of obvious areas.

First, the 'cultural relativism' isn't resolved. The Iduve may be inscutable, but are we supposed to forgive their abhorrent treatment of other sentient species purely on this basis? In the Hani saga, The Kif are at least rendered comprehensible. Which leads to the main complaint:

at the end of this paperback comes a ten page glossary, consisting mostly of alien abstract nouns. It may have been more use at the START, but not by much. So many paragraphs include half a dozen alien abstract concepts in italics; you really just have to parse most of them as gibberish unless you want to interrupt the narrative by constantly referring to the glossary which you don't yet know exists...

And the end was pretty lame.

But the portents are here. A writer gathering her strengths; yet to do away with her weaknesses - but in hindsight this novel was a sandbox in which ideas were tried out. Five years later CJ would be the gold standard in SF. It had to start somewhere.

Loop

---

## **Tomislav says**

I appreciate intellectually what Cherryh was attempting to do here - plot a story in a complex created culture based on telepathic relationships among three alien species and a minor sprinkling of humans. Its weakness is the extensive use of made-up vocabulary of those three alien races. I frequently referred to the three short dictionaries at the end of the book, but still had a lot of trouble following what was actually going on. However, the strength is in the hidden stories of the human characters implied in the background. While alien motivations and feelings are extensively explained, the human feelings are never actually more than hinted at, and mostly shown through carefully hidden actions. This is a very ambitious soft/social SF novel, but barely readable.



---

## Rebecca Stevenson says

A solid (if rather dated) book, Hunter shares a lot of themes with the Chanur novels, though those seem much more polished: isolation, loyalty, identity, and the strangely prominent spectre of interspecies sex. Cherryh as usual has excellent aliens, though her liberal use of alien \_terminology\_ is a double-edged sword; it makes plain the differences among their patterns of thought and culture, but the reader has to pick up most of them from context (there is a glossary at the back, though), and their density can be sort of overwhelming.

I found the plot of this one a bit difficult. The central conflict has to do with events among the ruling aliens (iduve). There's a big chunk of explanatory backstory at point, but the causes are all in the past and hence rather abstract. The protagonists are only involved because the rulers want some tools; two of the three have no personal stake in the matter, except for being enslaved, and other than hoping for their survival, there's really no one to root for.

These problems in defining the conflict carried through a resolution I found unsatisfying. The characters don't get much of a development arc beyond acceptance of their situation. I get the feeling that we are supposed to feel sympathetic for the iduve at the end, but... these are people willing to destroy a planet to get one guy over an obscure-to-humans matter of saving face. I think I'd rather drink with a kif.

---