



The Swarm

John Whitman

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Uncle Hoole wants to study the S'krrr--a race of creatures that look like giant bugs. While Hoole works, Zak and Tash visit the S'krrr's huge garden--it's the most beautiful place they have ever seen. It's also full of very strange creatures. When a batlike shreev swoops down at Zak, he panics and accidentally kills it. Suddenly, the garden is overrun by big beetles. When Zak wakes up in the middle of the night covered with creepy crawly bugs, he's terrified. Did Zak upset the garden's delicate ecological balance by killing the shreev? Or is something far more sinister at work?

The Swarm Details

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Author : John Whitman

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From Reader Review The Swarm for online ebook

Thomas says

It looks like the last six books of Galaxy of Fear will just be standalone adventures. I think this is Whitman's best approach, since the first six, while connected, were standalone, and he seemed to be forcing that connection among the individual books. The Swarm is a weaker entry to the series, because its theme feels so heavy-handed.

The story has Zak and Tash visiting the S'krrr, an insectoid race of creatures who live in an environmentally balanced park. Of course, once they land, they cause problems for the S'krrr, so much of the story is about showing how actions have consequences. I guess this is a good lesson for anyone to learn (and this is, after all, a kids' book), but it seems so obvious, and wouldn't kids have learned that lesson by now? It just seemed like a basic point to make for the story.

Also, Thrawn makes an appearance, which struck me as strange. I don't remember him being a captain at this point in the timeline, but granted I've only seen him in Outbound Flight and the Thrawn trilogy, which are the bookends of his career with the Empire, so I guess it could be. It just seemed more like fan service than actually using a character to its best effect.

Despite my concerns, it's still a solid read, with good characters and a compelling plot. I just wish Whitman would reach a bit deeper into his stories to make them feel more significant.

Eric Evans says

Thrawn was a little out of character but great for a kids tale.

Jeff Cothorn says

Product Description

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From the Inside Flap

Uncle Hoole wants to study the S'krrr--a race of creatures that look like giant bugs. While Hoole works, Zak and Tash visit the S'krrr's huge garden--it's the most beautiful place they have ever seen. It's also full of very strange creatures. When a batlike shreev swoops down at Zak, he panics and accidentally kills it. Suddenly, the garden is overrun by big beetles. When Zak wakes up in the middle of the night covered with creepy crawly bugs, he's terrified. Did Zak upset the garden's delicate ecological balance by killing the shreev? Or is

something far more sinister at work?

Bradley says

Okay. Okay. Kiddie Star Wars book. Not too bad for all that though. Definitely something to avoid if you hate bugs. =)

Craig says

Somehow, I never read the Galaxy of Fear books in my (I thought) comprehensive) tour of the Star Wars EU. My daughter saw this one at the library and thought I should read it to her. After I checked it out, she had already picked out another chapter book for me to read to her, so I just decided to read it for myself.

After that long intro, my review is well, it's ok. It was a quick read that was fairly fun. I would check out the others if I needed some light reading, but there are many better books out there...

Matevž says

Unfortunately the series continues to decline, again the same formula - arrival, weird factors and half-truths, final revelations and a small thrilling ending.

The guest appearance is also a relatively obscure character (that i happen to like) who does not live to his full potential.

Jaime K says

I waver between a 2 and 3, but at a solid 2.5 I'm okay with giving this a 3.

My biggest peeve was that Thrawn was 1) there, even though most people outside of the Empire didn't know he existed and 2) written OOC. He even said "By the Emperor!"

I think his being in the book bothered me less than Chewie + the Big Three. At least Thrawn DOES enjoy art and culture and WOULD be in the same area as an anthropologist.

Before the Killiks were the Sk'rrr, sentients descended from insects. Tash, Zak, and Hoole land in the Sikadian Garden, a fully natural habitat. Zak accidentally kills a shreev, a winged animal that eats beetles. While the beetles help the flora, too many can wreak havoc on the ecosystem - and on any sentients.

Overall the book was good. One of the best things was the guilt that ate at Zak before he told anyone of the shreev he killed. It was a great example of lying by omission and the hurt that sin creates.

Rachel says

this is legit the scariest out of all the ones i read, which is to say it wasn't scary at all but there is something very visceral about describing in DETAIL crunching beetles under your bare feet

multiple times

beetles end up in zak's food

beetles end up in people's mouths

it's disgusting

thrawn dramatically stuffs couch cushions into the wall vents because he's the only person tall enough to reach

it also ties in to the next five star book so :')
