



The Desert

Colin Wilson

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Mankind once ruled planet Earth, smugly ignoring the tiny creatures crawling underfoot. Then came the cosmic catastrophe which put man at the mercy of the giant spiders, icily intelligent conquerors armed with awesome mind powers. Now, the struggle for survival begins...

The Death Lord spiders rule the Earth, herding humans like cattle. A few tribes of free men and women dwell in the desert, hiding underground, living by their wits. Now, a young warrior named Niall begins an epic search for the secrets of the spiders - secrets which might give humanity a fighting chance against the overlords...

Edition note: while this is the first volume of the Spider World series, it was also originally (and later) part of most editions of "The Tower". The 1988 edition of "The Tower" split the formerly unified book into three, respectively "The Desert", "The Tower" and "The Fortress", leading to considerable confusion.

The Desert Details

Date : Published September 1st 1988 by Ace Books

ISBN : 9780441778102

Author : Colin Wilson

Format : Paperback 163 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fantasy, Fiction, Horror

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From Reader Review The Desert for online ebook

Rayne Leaf says

INCREDIBLE

Ray says

Although well-written and carefully imagined, Wilson's story about a world in which humans eke out a primitive life in desert regions while insects rule the earth is strangely uncompelling. The coldly objective (and detailed) narration distances the reader from the characters, making it difficult to care about what they do or what happens to them. Many of Wilson's signature concerns (will, telepathy, avoiding complacency) are thoughtfully presented in terms the intended young adult audience can readily understand, but much of the excitement and urgency of Wilson's earlier novels (The Mind Parasites, The Philosopher's Stone, The Space Vampires/Lifeforce) is missing.

John Leitzke says

Definitely not your sword and fantasy or a typical space opera. At times, it reads more like a naturalists description of the life around him. Even the action sequences seem blandly objective from a scientific journal. Might want to read Colin Wilson's writings on his philosophy and mind expansion. Then try to figure out how in the world could humans encounter beings like this. The series is Wilson's take on it.

David Moore says

I thoroughly enjoyed this novel; and I wasn't expecting to. Although I am a huge Wilson reader, having read and enjoyed most of his huge oeuvre, the premise of this novel did not at all sound promising: giant spiders versus a repressed mankind sounded a bit like a crass metaphor, a low-end B-Movie fantasy/horror. However, it beyond my first impression, my pre-judgement, and is written with a vivifying sense of time and place, and moreover it lives up to Wilson's own notion of 'Faculty X' (the sense of other times and other places).

There is indeed a poetry here, and Wilson's usual philosophising is gently infused in this enjoyable fantasy series. It is perhaps one of Wilson's most well written novels since The Mind Parasites.

I am surprised it is not better known, for it is wonderful entertainment with a bounty of food for thought.

Sandrus says

This must have been quite original for its time. Humans no longer are the dominating species on the planet -

spiders somehow got to be the rulers... But not all is lost, there are some courageous and innovative humans around :)

Sashko Liutyj says

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mark monday says

Spider World, yahoo! this is so much better than the series' title sounds. in the transparency of its prose and the richness of its ideas, i was reminded of a darker, not-quite-post-apocalyptic version of Le Guin's Earthsea. there are certainly equivalent amounts of those intangible things "depth" and "resonance". the series is action-packed yet moodily contemplative and at times uncompromisingly stark. the protagonist moves through eerie adventure, frightening bondage, and strange journeys of discovery... all leading to surprisingly thoughtful meditations on the human condition. as the series unfolds, the mysteries of humankind are solved and yet made all the more mysterious. where will man go and where has he been? what is our life for and what does it all mean? and of course the classic Colin Wilson conundrum: *What Is Human Consciousness?* 4 stars for the entire series!

also, a special award for

Best Realization of How Giant Futuristic Spiders Actually Think

(view spoiler)

Mindaugas says

Hobby comeback, one more Tick in goals: SciFi and Fantasy reading. Numerous books within Spider World series, recommended for easy reads. First three awesome, sadly value dropping with every next.
