



Voodoo Planet / Star Hunter

Andre Norton

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Great Sci Fi novel! Andrew North was a pen name of Andre Alice Norton (born Alice Mary Norton). She received the Gandalf Grand Master Award from the World Science Fiction Society, and the Damon Knight Memorial Grand Master Award from the SFWA.

Voodoo Planet / Star Hunter Details

Date : Published June 1st 1979 by Gregg Press (first published 1959)

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Author : Andre Norton

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Sibylle says

I used to really like andre Norton - when I was in 6th grade. My first science fiction book ever was "Galactic Derelict", by Norton, and I've been hooked ever since.

However, my reading tastes have changed over the decades, and this book is quite dated. I read the first story, 'Star Hunter', and found it so poor that I did not read the second, Voodoo Planet.

Maybe her more recent books are better?

Valerie says

I'm not reading Star Hunter. I don't think I ever have, but I'm not doing so now, anyway. Voodoo Planet, on the other hand, is the third story in the Solar Queen Series, sandwiched between Plague Ship and Postmarked The Stars. It's not particularly characteristic of the series, but more like Android at Arms and Dread Companion.

Sandy says

This book collects two of Andre Norton's novellas in one package. Both have to do with planets where safaris are conducted for the pleasure of wealthy offworlders, and both leave the reader wanting more in terms of either explanation or detail.

The first, "Star Hunter" (1961), is the better of the two. In this one, the safari leader on the planet Jumala has cooked up a scheme whereby he can exact revenge on the space syndicate that has done him dirty. His scheme involves planting a young man on the planet with a set of conditioned memories, and passing the young man off as a lost heir. The scheme goes awry when unsuspected native life on the planet rises up and starts setting traps for the safari men. The story certainly moves quickly, and there is no dearth of action and monsters and color. But in the end, there is also no explanation for any of the mysteries we have witnessed--only a vague hinting at best--and this reader was left extremely disappointed. Rather than being left with that "wonder of space" and the mystery-of-the-cosmos feeling that Norton might have been trying to convey, all that most readers will be left with, I feel, is a sense of being gypped.

"Voodoo Planet" (1959), at 62 pages, might not even be considered a novella; more like a long short story. This tale constitutes the third installment of the Dane Thorson/Solar Queen series, and is a rather weak entry in this otherwise terrific bunch of books. Here, Dane, Captain Jellico, and Medic Tau are stranded on Khatka, a planet that had been settled many years ago by Africans after the Second Atomic War. Our boys fight off many alien creatures in the wilds of Khatka--the fight with the rock apes is a highlight of the story--and help conquer the evil witch doctor who is trying to overthrow the legitimate government. Magic is thrown about left and right with only a superficial, mumbo-jumbo explanation of how things are done; something about ancestral memories. When all is said and done, the reader has enjoyed the sequences with the alien monsters but is left shaking his/her head at the implausibility of the magical elements. What might have worked in a tale of the "Witch World" somehow doesn't fly in this tale of hard sci-fi survival.

And let's not even go into how Norton makes up words such as "discordinate," constantly uses the word "turgid" instead of "turbid" (as in "the water was turgid"), and constantly uses expressions such as [the other figure was] "still very still." Her early works certainly did lack polish, but even here, in some of her lesser early work, the Norton flair for telling an exciting tale with color and drive comes through.

Doris says

This one I have read multiple times.

Two entertaining novellas.

The first, *Voodoo Planet* stars a young man named Dane Thorson, who is trying to escape into space, and has to settle for a berth on a Free Trader ship, the "Solar Queen." They are heading for a rim planet, hoping to make money and not limp home a failure. They get entangled in a native's bid for power, and the greed of some nearly undo all.

The second, *Star Hunter*, tells of two men who are working together in search of knowledge about a strange alien device. The two are not friends, nor even friendly, but have to work together to survive the challenges of the alien worlds.

Neither are particularly engrossing, but mild entertainment.

Jim Mcclanahan says

Skipped **Star Hunter** as I wanted to read **Voodoo Planet**. As a sequel to **Sargasso of Space** and **Plague Ship** I thought it might be fun. But it was mildly disappointing. Characters were woefully two dimensional and, even for the 1950s, there was more ethnocentrism than I could enjoy. Oh, well At least it was short.

Sandra Munger says

2 stories. *Voodoo Planet* involves the Traders series. While waiting for another ship to show up, 3 members of the crew are invited to a planet that makes a living by running hunting tours. There is a problem with a medicine man who is causing an uproar. The crews helps defeat him. *Star Hunter* involves a man who can no longer pilot a spaceship because of an injury. He works as a guide for the Hunters guild. He comes up with a plan to trap a criminal. The unwitting person he chooses does not react as expected for instead of a memory replacement, he has his own memory. The planet turns out to be very dangerous and they must win out over the planet and defeat the criminal. Enjoyed both.

Jeff Dickison says

Two Norton science fiction books in one package should really get a 3.5 star rating; 4 for Star Hunter & 3 for Voodoo Planet. In Star Hunter young man is mind-melded to help a gangster run a scam, but of course things don't work out right. Voodoo Planet could have been written by Edgar Rice Burroughs for a space travelin' Tarzan. Really voodoo planet is rather juvenile. But if you like science fiction and Andre Norton I would pick this one up.

Charles says

Two novellas published together.

Amanda says

Recently I'm buying and reading all the Andre Norton space books written from the 50s to the 70s that I have not read before. They are all written up to her high standards but man, are they stereotypical of their time. All the men are men, the women are non-existent(except as weak side-kicks), and the aliens are nervous. Just kidding. Only not really. I grew up on Andre Norton's Witch World novels and these Solar Queen novels and Voodoo Planet (where the voodoo is never satisfactorily explained) are so different!

In these space westerns (they aren't really westerns but have that flavor) stereotypes abound. The good guys, Terran and X-Tee, are all smart and strong and heroic. I picture them with flinty eyes, strong jaws and squared shoulders. The villainous Veeps are usually either weaselly or grossly fat (think Peter Lorre and Sidney Greenstreet). Sometimes the baddies are TOO goodlooking and charming. I am trying to decide if that is 50s code for "gay."

I am still enjoying them because Andre Norton really did know how to spin a good yarn.
