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David Lindsay

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Lindsay David 2016-05-22 Original language: English 9.00 x .61 x 6.00l, .80 #File Name: 1533381216270 pages A Voyage to Arcturus | File size: 30.Mb

David Lindsay : A Voyage to Arcturus before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Voyage to Arcturus:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Difficult, uncompromising and unsentimental. By Matthew Leo This is a seminal science fiction/fantasy novel that sold a mere 600 copies from its original print run, yet somehow those copies made their way into the hands of influential writers and critics. J.R.R. Tolkien was an admirer, and C.S. Lewis was evidently deeply influenced by this book. Later editions inspired horror writer Clive Barker and literary theorist Harold Bloom. Lindsay is not nearly so entertaining a writer as any of his more famous admirers. He is is dour, serious, and stubbornly unconcerned with the reader's need for things to make sense. Maskull the protagonist is on a quest with no particular goal. He goes from place to place and in each place his character changes radically for no apparent reason. Lindsay has a reason, but he's not letting the reader in on it, not even to extent of hinting that the reason exists. It's all extremely off-putting and at first it seems like a long slog through bad writing. And in truth Lindsay does have his limitations as a writer, especially in rendering the exotic landscape of the alien planet. But after a while the book begins to exert a peculiar fascination. It's not *bad* writing; that's frustrating you, it's a bad attitude; an author who is totally uncompromising and unsentimental. He relentlessly frustrates the protagonist's attempts to make sense of the alien world Tormance while he relentlessly frustrates your attempts to make sense of the protagonist. Then when he's done with us, Lindsay sweeps it all off the table. The journey he's subjected us to has ultimately had only one point: to demonstrate that while some human ideals may be beautiful and others repulsive, they're all equally futile. What we really long for is actually beyond human experience. It's not exactly a cheerful point of view, but it's delivered with integrity. This is a book that few will ever try to read and fewer will finish. But I think there will always be some who attempt the journey and preserve to the end. It's one of the few reading experiences that I'd call "unique".

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Not a journey for everyone. By JfromJersey Lindsay offers an imaginative diatribe against a world hopelessly blind to its true spiritual nature in A VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS. The "hero" is Maskull, but he represents Everyman, and the world he visits is Tormance, which is Earth in disguise, stripped of its nuances and complexities. Tormance is a world of physical and psychological extremes circling the larger of the twin suns comprising the star Arcturus. Maskull is on a quest for the truth, but it's more a result of compulsion than volition. He and his companion Nightspore are summoned by the mysterious Krag to make the journey because Surtur has returned to Tormance and compels them to follow him. Who Surtur is will be discovered much later, as will the identities of Krag and Nightspore. Maskull arrives on the south of Tormance alone and somehow knows he must head north. His ultimate goal will be to find the realm of Muspel, under the mysterious blue Alppain sun, where Surtur's true nature will be revealed. Until he gets there, he must deal with a world ruled by

Crystalman whom many confuse with Surtur. This world is dominated by the blazing white sun called Branchspell. On his journey, he will interact with various strange inhabitants of Tormance who will in some instances strengthen and help guide him, but in others, frustrate him and expose his human weaknesses. It is all a necessary preparation for his ultimate test. Lindsay tries to offer us some strong medicine for the spirit and he couches it in beautifully descriptive prose. This is really not a book for Science Fiction or Fantasy buffs, although it could be categorized as belonging to those genres. It uses some wildly original ideas to philosophize about the nature of humanity, like Dante did in *The Divine Comedy* or Swift did in *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*, but on a considerably less ambitious scale. The characters are purely symbolic so you can't truly identify with them, and Lindsay's basic view on Man's nature is pessimistic. You have to buy into his philosophy to truly appreciate this book.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Minor Masterpiece; A Flawed Edition By M. Golding I first read this philosophical fantasy back in the 1960s or early '70s. I was overwhelmed by it then, but a year or two later when I went to reread it, the book had disappeared. (Doubtless an unreturned loan to a friend.) When I learned the book was back in print, and in several editions, I wasted little time in buying it. I now realize that I was right the first time. The novel is (at least!) a minor masterpiece. I will not get into details of the plot which centers on a journey of a man from earth across Tormance, a fictional planet circling the fictional two suns that make up the star we know as Arcturus. There, he searches for truth and has a series of fantastic adventures--some of them murderous--that entail the growth of extra limbs and organs while his beliefs change as violently as his body. It was only the edition I have (Wilder Publications) that made me hesitate before giving this book the five stars it richly deserves. The many misprints include misspelled words, sentences with words missing, poor punctuation, etc. etc. One major typographical stumbling block was having hyphens the same length as dashes. The most curious flaw, however, was placing the name, Frank R. Stockton at the top of left hand pages facing the book's title which was correctly placed at the top of the right-handed pages. A little research told me that Stockton wrote fantasies for children--which probably explains the suggestion at the front of this edition that parents discuss with their children how views on race have changed since the book was written. An otherwise strange caution since "A Voyage To Arcturus" is not a children's book nor is there any mention of race in it. In summing up, I would say do get this magnificent novel, but try to avoid the Wilder Publications edition. There are many other editions listed in and they can't all be as flawed as this one.

David Lindsay (3 March 1876 ndash; 16 July 1945) was a Scottish author now best remembered for the philosophical science fiction novel *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1920).

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