



Retread Shop

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Retread Shop--an alien-controlled galactic bazaar of unimaginable wealth, rigid caste systems, and ancient cutthroat rivalries. Young Billy McGuire, its only human, was unwanted, scorned, and forced to steal for his living. But now he has a patron, a mysterious alien trader and a new ambition--to become the Shop's first human merchant no matter what the odds!

Retread Shop Details

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Author : T. Jackson King

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From Reader Review Retread Shop for online ebook

Kelsey says

A truly original story...a rare thing indeed.

Foxtower says

I didn't write it (see below).. I enjoyed it! Great premise!

Richard says

In full disclosure I won this book in a Goodreads giveaway.

It should be noted that this book is only suitable for adults due to some swearing and scenes of a sexual nature (including a squirrel-like alien that has to almost constantly copulate)

The story itself was pretty good, as were the characters. It was great seeing Billy start in the lowest of positions and working his way up through the ranks through various experiences. At times the progression seemed a little quick, but not overly so. The cast of alien characters is fantastic with a great many different personalities.

The author done a fantastic job in describing the appearance of the aliens, they have unusual looks but I was still able to visualise them from the descriptions. I enjoyed the fact that they would act in an alien way but there was enough humanity in them to keep them relatable.

The language the aliens used had an authentic feel, they communicate with the human character with the use of automatic translating devices, and the way it was written it did sound like speaking to someone whose English wasn't their first language or had translated what they said using a program. While this was an interesting and authentic idea, it did get annoying after a while hearing all the characters speak in this way.

My biggest problem with the book was its use of world building, particularly how it would describe the technology. A lot of times the characters would talk about something but we are not told very much about what it was or how it works, at times this would make the story harder to follow since it was hard to understand what something was. Other times we are given a large chuck of information about a few technologies all at once; this again made it hard to follow as it was a lot of information to take in at once.

I loved the idea of using crystals to access memories, these parts of the book were well written and interesting, and I just wish they were used more often.

I like the idea that there was no faster than light technology; meaning ships would take years to travel between stars. As a result crew would use sleeping chambers for the long journeys. This is an idea rarely used in science-fiction and brave of the author to use it.

I like the tests that Billy had to do before being promoted, they were well written and give good insights to the character. Some of the training sections were less interesting, mostly due to the large chunks of information that filled them. I did enjoy the visit to the planet as this was an interesting and exciting part of the story.

Overall this was a good story with well written alien characters. The balance of technological description was off, either not enough information was giving or too much at once. There were many good ideas in here such as memory crystals, no FTL drives and how Billy would be tested.

*** 1/2

Gedvondur says

Three stars, good book. One of the books that assumes life is all-encompassing and some of it tries to live with the presence of others without being all touchy-feely. Very 80s style sci-fi. Fun little romp, not too taxing on the brain.

Kalpit says

No one could think of such a Hard Core Sci-Fi story (not at least me) other than Tom King. I proudly admit, after reading this Novel, Tom King is my favorite Hard Core Sci-Fi author. I'm very much impressed and thrilled by the idiolect Tom King possess.

I'm a huge Sci-Fi fan but never have I come across such a fantastic novel. It's full of crazy imaginations, a world full of aliens and not a single human being except a lanky and gangling boy Billy.

Story:- The story itself was fascinating and very unique from the rest of the sci-fi novels out there. Retread shop is an alien controlled galactic bazaar, very well narrated and described by Tom, that appears very bizarre and profound. There's a very thin and scrawny line between poor description and over description, but Tom King has incisively managed to sail on the edge of his writing skills that the whole plot and characterization appears very serene and soothe. **PERFECT!**

With the fantastic and authentic description of aliens, readers are left with no complain but just to admire the idiolect of Tom King.

It's very exciting to see the only Human, Billy, in the world controlled by aliens, surviving, stinting and thriving for food by surrendering to a patron, a mysterious alien trader.

Billy starts off with the lowest ranks, by stealing for the food and gradually climbs up the ladder as his patron hands him the Retread Shop and he is forced to be a merchant.

It was extremely exciting to watch billy progressing his way up, and the experience he faced.

The way aliens acted, appeared very relatable to human behavior that doesn't takes the toil of the reader. (Claps and Appreciation)

The interaction between aliens and Billy were just as much captivating and page turner that I never realized

how fast I swept through pages and reached to the very end of novel.
It just kept me wanting more and more of this stuff.

Crystals were used exceptionally well to access memories, brilliantly written and I loved this exhilarating idea which kept me hooked up to the book full night.

Tom Certainly gave great insights to the characters, Specially few aliens and the lanky boy, Billy. I just loved how neatly the characters were designed and described. It really felt like the author has a deep and vast imagination (unlike many), which clearly reflects through out the novel.

How can I forget about the bizarre technology, the advance society of aliens and the chuck of unimaginable technological ideas?

When we talk about sci-fi, offcourse, that's the first thing which strikes the mind.

Tom even excelled with shear perfection if describing the advance technology of aliens in the galactic bazaar.

The alien species varies so immensely, that it never did appear to be repetitive or boring.

The overall read was just fantastic, unique, bizarre, exhilarating, captivating and thrilling.

Such a complex imagination by the author kept me glued to my study table whole night (I hope I didn't wake up with dark circles under my eyes).

I see this is the first Sci-Fi novel from Tom King published in 1988.

That makes me wonder, how much more this author has to offer after some experience of writing. And I'm sure the new novels will be lot better than Retread Shop (which I loved)...

I'm so much happy and excited to see there are tons of more Hard Sci-Fi novels by the author which I'll surely read in this same year (2013). Yes! I'm that impressed by his writing skills and complex imagination. But the most striking thing to me was his beautiful language.

It's one of the BEST novels out there if Language is to be considered and admired.

I surely rate Retread Shop Five out of Five and I'm certainly checking out his other novels as soon as possible.

KC says

some fantastic ideas and wonderful world building, and all of it worthless for lack of a coherent plot. the characters "develop" in the same sense that video game avatars do; the bards get bigger and the treasure gets shinier, but the how and why of that progression is handwaved or only half-assedly explained. i'm all for wallowing in genre schlock, but i do expect basic narrative competence from my schlock suppliers.

Jake says

Only okay. It had a good premise but was awkwardly written and went off the rails at the end.

Jennifer says

Although I thought the technology in the book bogged down the story in places, and it feels a little dated, overall I enjoyed it. It seemed to me to be a first book in a series, because the end sets up what could be an entirely new adventure. I liked this book well enough that I would have read that next book had it been written. I liked Billy and I would like to continue with Billy on his journey. Unfortunately I see no evidence of such a publication. Tom, if you ever wrote it, please e-pub it.

T. says

This is my first hard science fiction action adventure novel that features a young orphan on an alien-run space station that is centered on Trade and how to get rich. Will appeal to readers of books by Alan Dean Foster, David Brin, and James White.

Chas. says

This book has all the elements I usually like but it just didn't come together for me. It's like he had descriptions leading up to an event and then no pay off. The author just described what happened then moved on without any depth to justify the events leading up to each payout. The final revenge battle was holy uninspired.

Nathan Lowell says

I just finished this book and while I was reading it I thought, "This reads like something from the 80s"

Turns out, it was. 1988

His roots as a professional archaeologist show up in this spot on cultural commentary. I enjoyed it greatly.

Jim Kratzok says

A rollicking fun ride! Billy McGuire, Human, Predator, Omnivore, was orphaned when his parents' ship blew up. Fortunately for him, he was not onboard when it happened. Instead he lived to grow up surrounded by aliens in the ultra competitive trading environment of the Retread Shop.

Through hard work, high intelligence, and a good ability to understand the things that make each alien species unique, Billy begins to rise through the ranks on his way to becoming a trader

Cory Gugler says

I made it about halfway through before realizing there was no plot to be found. Some really interesting ideas are explored, but I grew bored waiting for something to happen.

Fayley says

Mostly boring with scattered average bits. The author tried to create long lived aliens but their cultures didn't reflect their longevity . Nothing really fit right and there was no genuine depth. A hodgepodge of ideas strung together badly. Mocking faith at the beginning then introducing worshipped figures and god like characters at the end just didn't have any logical consistency - as if he wrote it over such a long period that he forgot what he had said in chapter 2. Lots of irrelevant details but crucial plot elements left out entirely ("and two years later ...") Dated SciFi. Zzzzzz
