



The Deep Range

Arthur C. Clarke

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This story takes place about 100 years in the future, when the earth's population is fed principally from the sea--on whale products or from plankton farms. Its hero is Walter Franklin, a grounded space engineer now assigned to a submarine patrol tending the whale herds.

DEEP RANGE vibrates with exciting adventures of the mysterious sea: a fight with a giant squid at 12,000 feet, a search for a great sea serpent, & a heroic rescue of a damaged submarine--all vividly & plausibly portrayed.

The Deep Range Details

Date : Published November 10th 2005 by Gollancz (Orion) (first published June 1957)

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Author : Arthur C. Clarke

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Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction



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From Reader Review The Deep Range for online ebook

C. Scott Kippen says

There is a comfort that I often find in classic SF. The stories are fun, full of wonder, and often, pretty light-weighted. They don't tax your brain as you read, and you are there just for the story. *The Deep Range* is such a story. Apparently this is an expansion to a short story, which I would like to read. I am curious what story it told.

The Deep Range is the story of Walter Franklin, an astronaut who suffers from astrophobia who no longer can work in space. He is then transferred to work as Warden of the Deep. In this future, humans now farm whale meat as a primary source for meat, oils, and other parts, and this is the story of Walter Franklin as a recruit to later administrator.

I enjoyed this short, fun novel quite a bit. It does suffer from being written in 1958 in that the role of women is marginalized to men, and raising a family, but other than that, this book does quite well in not being too dated. If you are a fan of old SF, this one is quick, fun read that does not overstay its welcome. Is it perfect? Far from it, but it is an early, solid Clarke book.

Eugene says

Outstanding and thought-provoking book. Must read more from the great man's canon ...

Alex Sarll says

Normally, reading Arthur C Clarke, one is struck by how much he got right about the future. This time...not so much. Opening in 2022, it details a world where, since "the scientific and sociological triumphs which had irradiated the opening decades of the twenty-first century", the global electorate can be trusted to vote fairly sensibly on the issues of the day in planet-wide referenda. "Christianity, which had never fully recovered from the shattering blow given it by Darwin and Freud, had finally unexpectedly succumbed before the archaeological discoveries of the late twentieth century"; "the Mohammedan faith" has likewise faded into near-insignificance. Gender relations have advanced a little past the time of writing, but only because the book was published in 1957; all the front-line jobs on the ocean are done by manly men, who communicate in the sort of painfully manly banter recognisable from any third-rate mid-twentieth century film portrayal of pilots or lumberjacks. Oh, and 16mm film is still the recording medium of choice. Most shocking, though, is the way in which the novel's main topic is treated so blithely - the oceans have been fenced, like the prairies of the American West before them, and turned to producing food for a hungry future populace. A significant chunk of the world's diet comes from chowing down on farmed whales. Knowing what we know now about cetaceans, this feels far too much like a version of *Soylent Green* where everybody knows it's people, and nobody's too bothered.

Except it turns out that Clarke is one step ahead after all, of his time if not of ours. He plays it deadpan for two-thirds of the book, gradually letting doubts slip in, never preaching, until characters start being won around to the idea that maybe this isn't OK after all. That maybe, even if humanity can't be weaned off meat

altogether, at least some species should be off the menu for our own sake as much as theirs. If this is a spoiler, I apologise - but after all, the book is old enough to claim its pension (even under the current government). Still, part of me regrets giving it away, so thoroughly had I been lulled into taking everything at face value. And despite (because of?) that apparent acceptance of the monstrous at the centre of the story, it still had the authentic tang of Boy's Own adventure in its descriptions of adventure on (and mainly under) the high seas, daring dives and tricky rescues, a new frontier for the future's cowboys - there's one sequence in particular so tense that I had to take a brief break from reading to escape the nauseating uncertainty over whether our hero was going to make it.

Plus, there's a passing but crucial reference to Dunsany at the heart of the book, which will always tend to win me around.

Petr says

It is very sad that the Ocean (which by words of some number guys takes up 72% of Earth surface) receives so little in the department of sci-fi literature. Yes, many stories includes Ocean as a background or even "ground", many uses it as a scenery, some even try to make it alien life from. But how many takes Ocean as a system "environment<=>human"? I'm not talking about scientific papers or longwinded dreams of "what if?", I'm talking about stories where author actually explores situation when person changes ocean and ocean changes person in return.

There is soooo much literature about space exploration, space wars, space romance, space culture clashes... I would really liked to see more like this in the waves of most dangerous and most mesmerizing thing on earth some people having just a hundred meters from their doors right now.

?Ruth? says

I picked up this book because Arthur C. Clarke is generally a good writer and I liked the sound of the title and the write-up. Unfortunately it didn't really live up to my expectations. It's not a long novel but even so it's split into three individual, but linked, sections. Parts 1 and 2 were fairly interesting - although in places I felt there was a bit too much technical detail concerning the under-water operations, which rather spoiled the flow of the story. Part 3 on the other hand I found quite boring. The theme was more political and provided a vehicle for the author's views on what the future scenario for world food supply should be, in a vastly over populated earth.

osoi says

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annikeh.net

David (???) says

A different book than Clarke's other space-oriented books. Good message passed. Speaks about man's idea of animal slaughter as used in the future for whale breeding and their meat. Displays parallels as against the same thing that has been happening in our present world. Expresses hope of how mankind can very well be able to get beyond the idea of animal torture, in its unnecessary killing of other creatures.

I loved the idea of the novel, which is actually an expanded form of the short story by the same name published originally in 1954. The story remains to the point, and involves sub-marine lifeforms, the speculated possibilities of largest deep oceanic life-forms like the Giant Squid and such. Although these, as per my thinking, are mainly put in as a part of adventure for a general reader not to get bored, the message is more importance. A truly fabulous book, and indeed the integration of an important element, for today's meat-frenzied world!

"Within a century or so, we will literally be going outside the solar system. Sooner or later we will meet types of intelligent life much higher than our own, yet in forms completely alien. And when that time comes, the treatment man receives from his superiors may well depend upon the way he has behaved toward the other creatures of his own world."

Michael Fierce says

Written in 1957, *The Deep Range*, is based on the Arthur C. Clarke 1954 short story of the same name, published in the April edition of **Argosy magazine**, seen here:

The short story version was later published again in *Star Science Fiction Stories* No. 3, edited by

Frederik Pohl, seen here:

& again in an Arthur C. Clarke short story collection, Tales from Planet Earth, seen here:

This isn't what most have come to expect from an Arthur C. Clarke science-fiction saga. It feels more like Robert A. Heinlein or, someone I can't quite put a finger on while writing this.

Clarke proposes a near future world, whose seas are fenced in, by using ultrasonics, to create and procure rich plankton meadows grazed by herds of whales, now domesticized animals raised to feed the masses, like the cows and chickens of today.

The story centers around **Walter Franklin**, formerly a space engineer.

At the beginning of our story, Franklin has just been reassigned and transferred into a new career to an underwater facility, its location hypothetically decided upon as, existing on Heron Island, Australia.

His job is to now perform as a **Warden of the deeps**. It isn't easy for him to let go of his past life. The details of which I think you would want to learn reading it yourself.

Learning to operate a mini-sub, it is his job to oversee specific designated territories using high-tech sonar equipment to govern and control daily aspects of his job as well as any unforeseen occurrences. Other engineers are assigned their own territories in rotating scheduled shifts.

There is an oldschool sci-fi feel to the fresh ideas here that can be fascinating, in both dark and light speculations, to our own real future. The parallels to our world are some of the highlights of this adventure.

The real grabber, however, may be that through the demanding daily routines of Walter Franklin's new life, somewhere deep below in the bottom depths of the ocean, lies a mystery or two that may not be at the story's center-piece but, is Arthur C. Clarke writing, what is essentially, one of the first cryptid adventures.

Yes. This novel has giant sea creatures. And not just whales.

What are they, exactly?

? I'm not going to tell you ?

The ratings by reviewers for this book are up & down and all over the richter scale.

I give it 5 stars for having been fully engaged with this science-fiction world, and one that, I not only believed could be possible but, felt I had been transported to, and really cared about.

It's true that it is not a high-octane modern tech-thriller but it was fun and for me, both, rewarding and one I will come back to.

Though not as brilliant, The Deep Range inspired two time Hugo Award-winning writer, Allen Steele, to write a tribute of sorts called, Oceanspace, pictured here:

* The edition pictured to the left of my review is not the edition I own. It is my favorite cover version of the many that exist. If you are a book connoisseur like me, check them all out before buying one because they all go for pretty cheap.

Recommended!

Kate says

Loved it! Read as the September novel of my Arthur C. Clarke 2013 Reading Challenge.

Annerlee says

The book had some excellent ideas and started really well. For me, it was too long drawn out with no enough action or depth of character (please pardon the pun)

Bertrand says

Un roman de SF avec comme toile de fond les profondeurs océaniques de notre bonne vieille planète bleue. Ça paraît bête mais il n'y en a pas tant que ça. C'est terriblement d'actualité dans son traitement et la seconde moitié du récit avec son questionnement écologique et philosophique est tout aussi moderne. C'est bien à cela qu'on reconnaît les bons auteurs et les bons livres. Par contre, on repassera sur la place de la femme...

Sharon Barrow Wilfong says

Like the last Clarke I reviewed, this book relies heavily on world building. A plot is practically non-existent. Clarke simply wants to share a possible vision for the future.

Walter Franklin was an astronaut, with a wife and children on Mars. A traumatic experience on his spaceship left him mentally and emotionally disturbed. He cannot return to space and is therefore stuck on Earth for the rest of his life. His family can never join them because since they were born and raised on Mars, their bodies are too light for Earth where the heavier gravity would kill them. A convenient caveat Clarke arranged in order to justify his story line, which is to give Franklin a new love on Earth, even though it is peripheral to his main idea.

Franklin now works at a Marine Center where he has learned to drive underwater subs to monitor sea life and maintain herds of whales which are used as sources of food, the way cows are now.

With his new co-worker, Don Burley, we see a future world underwater and how it functions to support human life.

As I have said, there are few bumps in Clarke's story. He just wants us to envision what life would be like a hundred years from 1957 and how life would operate. I found a lot of his descriptions about as interesting as reading a "how-to" manual because much of what he writes is, well, how to operate a sub, how the sub operates in the water, herds whales, fends off killer whales and sharks etc...

I would have liked a little more development between Franklin and Burley, there was a lot of potential there that he only touched upon as they start their relationship cynical and distrustful of each other, eventually allowing a grudging mutual respect to finally admiration and friendship.

The woman he marries on Earth is interesting-she's a marine biologist who studies vitamin levels in shark livers- until they marry, then she is relegated to the background as someone he kisses good bye as he leaves for work and the mother of his children.

Again, people who like world-building and don't care about character or plot development will enjoy the book.

Daniorte says

Cogí el libro sabiendo que es uno de los libros de Clarke que muchos consideran "Obra menor" pero ha resultado ser un gustazo de leer.

Haciendo uso de un personaje atormentado con un trauma, que denomina Astrofobia, Clarke nos relata la rehabilitación de este y para ello nos sumerge en el mar. Por una vez la ciencia ficción de Clarke no nos lleva al espacio y se permite imaginar como será el aprovechamiento de los recursos marítimos dentro de unos 100 años. Granjas de placton, rebaños de ballenas, exterminio de tiburones, debates mundiales sobre el veganismo...

Un libro muy rápido que va enlazando una historia con otra sin llegar si quiera a flaquear. Será porque no esperaba mucho de el pero me ha dejado muy buen sabor de boca. Si sueles disfrutar con los libros de este autor este no puede faltar. Ciento que no esta a la altura de Cita con Rama pero no defrauda.

Geoff says

This was fine. Lots of discussion about whales and submarines, if you are into that.

Andrew says

I read almost all of the Arthur C Clarke books as a teenager and really loved them. Re-reading this book after all those years makes you realise how the world and yourself has changed. This book is science fiction, but it has really dated - hardly any of it is prophetic, in fact, quite the opposite. It was written in the late 1950's and is set at around 2020, however, it has 1950's values. Basically, it's about commercial whale farming - a concept that would be totally abhorrent today - along with the slaughter of killer whales and sharks. In fact, Clarke is very casual about killing things all throughout the book - despite the 180 degree shift towards the end. Feminism also takes a back seat with the pretty young scientist, giving up her career and becoming a

housewife and mother. Despite being well written, it was a bit of a chore reading this book at times - in a nutshell, it was very Victorian in its outlook.
