



The Rings of Saturn

Paul French (Pseudonym) , Isaac Asimov

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Earth officials were hard on the heels of the mysterious Sirian spy, Agent X, when he blasted off in a stolen spaceship. But before they could catch him, the master spy jettisoned the capsule that held his report into the icy rings of Saturn. In a flash, Lucky Starr and Bigman Jones found themselves in a race with the Sirian war fleet to recover it.

When the Sirians couldn't find the capsule, they kidnapped Lucky and Bigman, bringing them to their secret military base on Titan. There the arrogant Sirian commander offered Lucky a terrible choice: turn traitor to Earth—or Bigman would die!

It was not an idle threat.

The Rings of Saturn Details

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From Reader Review The Rings of Saturn for online ebook

Hugo Cervantes says

Nice conclusion to the series...

SPOILERS AHEAD!!!

During the whole series we only witness the Space Ranger once, and the unlikely use of the Sooting Starr once as well, although it was used several times in a “likely” way.

I was glad to meet the Sirians and also quite glad to see more robots, but of course the main point was seeing Lucky save the Terrestrial Federation and avoid war, for now.

Xabi1990 says

6/10. Juvenil y tontorrón toda la saga de Lucky Starr...pero Asimov (se suponía). De esta misma saga los hay mejores.

Sean says

Lucky Starr is always a fun read. These are quick adventures of James Bond mixed with Star Wars. I have to admit that the side kick is a little annoying, but it always pans out in the end.

Catherine says

Liked this wrap-up to this series

King Ævil says

The world of Isaac Asimov's Lucky Starr is a young science geek's wildest dream come true. Imagine: a thousand years from now, the solar system's secret agents and protectors of the weak are...scientists! —Who don't mind showing off what they know!

Dr. Asimov often lamented the pernicious and ever-growing current of anti-intellectualism in American society. Was his series of young-adult Lucky Starr novels merely the public expression of an escapist fantasy universe, or did he intend to win young, intelligent minds to scientific inquiry by showing just how cool science could be?

In the final story in the *Lucky Starr* series, we finally meet Earth's sinister enemies, the Sirians. They have

secretly built a military base on Saturn's largest satellite, Titan, and seek to legitimize their invasion of the Sol system before a conference of all the peoples of the galaxy. Lucky and his sidekick, Bigman, are taken prisoner after a hair-raising chase through the moons and rings(!) of Saturn. The Sirians plan to use Lucky's "illegal" penetration of the Saturnian system as the centerpiece of their case before the conference. Lucky and the Council of Science, however, have their own ideas about the purpose of Lucky's voyage.

While not the strongest story in the series (I would give that award to *Oceans of Venus*), *Rings of Saturn* is both the most complex and most suspenseful. Through most of the book, Lucky conducts a series of increasingly nonsensical—and life-threatening—actions, which have the young reader convinced he's gone plumb loco, but in the end reveals springs an incredibly clever trap on Earth's longtime enemy, the Sirian Federation. Dr. Asimov also wove into the story a topical message of tolerance and the importance of human diversity.

This story has held up well in terms of astronomy. The most "glaring" scientific error is that the Cassini division is nowhere near as free of orbiting material as it appears from Earth—and only the most serious outer-space geeks among Asimov's target audience would know it.

Andrew says

This is the last of the series and for me a far more for filling read, there are actual politics and reasonings at work here as shown at the end of the book when the conference takes place (go on read the book I am not giving anything away). One thing that interests me after I finished it (although I had my suspicions while reading it) was that the book being written in the late 50s used astronomical knowledge of its time - number of moons, physical dimensions were all correct at the time of writing but have since been corrected or added to. As such (scientific inaccuracies aside) I think this really demonstrates what Asimov was trying to prove. that the world of scientists is not a scary place but in fact one that is positive and productive for all - (another of Asimov's personal crusades was the elimination of the "Frankenstein effect" where people were pathologically terrified of robots, hence his creation of the 3 laws of Robotics). For me the book will always be a juvenile read however as is the case with many of Asimov's books there is far more thought and work gone in to their writing than many give him credit for.

Phil Giunta says

Saturn's largest moon, Titan, has been claimed by invaders from the planet Sirius, the first of many extrasolar Earth colonies. Over several generations, the Sirians and their allies on many of the outer worlds turned against their planet of origin, citing social, scientific, and military superiority after generations of ethnic cleansing. Despite an intergalactic law stating that any planet in an inhabited solar system belongs to the people of that system, the Sirians have constructed a military base on Titan as their first step to attacking Earth. The Council of Science, an organization sworn to protect Earth and its neighboring planets with minimal violence, fears that the Sirians have become too powerful to defeat.

After a Sirian spy named Dorrance escapes Earth custody, Councilmen David "Lucky" Starr and his tiny-but-mighty companion John Bigman Jones set off after him in their ship, the Shooting Starr along with several vessels from the Terrestrial fleet. They pursue Dorrance into Saturn's rings, where his vessel is

destroyed. However, a Sirian vessel contacts the Shooting Starr and orders it away from Saturn, informing him that the Sirians now occupy Titan and any aggression from Earth will be considered an act of war. Starr retreats and orders the Terrestrial fleet to do the same.

Later, Starr, Bigman, and fellow councilman Ben Wessilewsky return to Saturn in an unauthorized expedition aboard the Shooting Starr to find a information capsule that Dorrance had stolen from Earth. When Sirian ships again detect their ship and pursue, Starr "crashes" the Shooting Starr on Mimas, Saturn's closest moon. There, he leaves Wessilewsky behind and takes off again with Bigman--only to be captured by Sirian forces. The leader of the Sirian base on Titan, an irascible tyrant named Devoure, attempts to coerce Starr into confessing to espionage and to testify against Earth at an upcoming peace conference on the asteroid Vesta. Devoure offers to spare Bigman's life in exchange for Starr's compliance.

Will Lucky Starr betray Earth at the conference and join the Sirians? What of Councilman Wessilewsky on Mimas? Will the other planets vote against Earth and allow the Sirians to occupy Titan as a prelude to war?

Lucky Starr and the Rings of Saturn is the final volume in a series of six. Much like its predecessor, Moons of Jupiter, Rings of Saturn takes on a noticeably darker tone than the first four books.

I was forced to wonder if perhaps Asimov started off with the intention of creating a light-hearted space adventure, but later allowed real world tensions of the time, such those between USA and the USSR, to inform his fiction. The tension and stakes in Rings of Saturn are higher than they'd been in the previous books, but it could also be construed that each story builds upon the last to culminate in this final confrontation between Earth and Sirius. Though it's easy to see the potential for future adventures in this universe.

Chuck Carey says

Lucky (David) Starr, member of the council of science for the terrestrial federation (earth) chases a Sirian spy, agent x, to the rings of Saturn where agent x self destructs his ship while releasing a capsule into the rings of Saturn meant for the Sirians to pick up. The capsule contains intelligence gathered by many robot spies seeking to gain access to earth's superior technical advances, presumably including the coveted anti-grav device. The crisis accelerates as it is discovered the Sirians are in the process of colonizing the Saturn system, a breach of custom, to say the least, amongst the outer 50 worlds and earth in which a solar system is assumed the property of the first colonizer. The outcome looks like nothing less than full scale war as the Sirians seek to recruit the other outer worlds to war against earth, of whom they all have lingering fears due both to earth's technological advances and 'impure' gene pool and reservoir of all sorts of disease purged from the outer planets. The rash and irrepressible Martian, John Bigman Jones, and Lucky are captured by the Sirian Devoure, outpost leader of Titan. Devoure plays unwittingly into Lucky's clever but very uncertain plan to save earth. An effort much aided by the seeming bungling of Bigman, who, at one critical moment manipulates the robot code to do no harm to humans to manage his escape. Asimov cleverly hides just what Lucky's secret plan is until the last few pages and succeeds well at building suspense throughout. Other mentions, the ice moon of Saturn, Mimas. Councilmen Ben Wessilewsky and Hector Conrad. Secretary of State Lamont Finney. Sirian servicemen Yonge and Zayon. Agassi Doremo of the agricultural planet Elam who plays a critical role at the conference of the planets on the neutral territory of Vestas at a moment where Earth's fate is to be decided.

Andrewcharles420 says

Part of a presumably young adult series starring David 'Lucky' Starr. Here he chases an intergalactic spy from Earth to Saturn, gets caught up in a colonization dispute and then cleverly outmaneuvers... pretty much everyone, single-handedly saving the day.

Light reading. Some interesting facts about Saturn and its ring system (I didn't notice any inaccuracies, though more is known about Saturn now than when the book was written), and other stellar bodies (though Vesta does **not** have a calcium carbonate surface). There was a surprising acceptance and presumption of violence (Starr's loyal, dimwitted sidekick would want to fight whenever someone spoke with him). And a galling lack of women. At the intergalactic summit, no society, even several thousand years in the future and evolved toward other ends than Earth, would elect (or allow) a woman leader. Not that there was a single woman mentioned elsewhere in the book, but you'd think somewhere in the universe some human system could escape patriarchy. There was some genetic diversity, with specific skin color adaptations for other stellar systems, but it seemed like no intermixing and little interaction between these worlds of different, but internally-universal color (and the Sirians were horribly racist too).

This book is part of Asimov's robotic universe and thus assumes his poorly structured three laws of robots. The fact that these laws don't make sense is used as a plot device to short-circuit some robot captors. That seems to me to be admitting the laws don't make sense to use, yet he still uses them--baffling, and bothersome. Did he just not try because he intended this for a simpler audience? Perhaps. 'Space' was used as an expletive (was he even trying?).

It would make sense for a space/science-interested young boy to want to read this, and to get something out of reading this... but there are better books in writing style, culture, and inclusivity, so why bother?

Chris says

I would say that this series finished off well, it was left open but I think Asimov was pretty much done with SF for a while after being so prolific in the 1950s.

The story is OK but it is not too much of a challenge to figure out. I am glad I am done with this series as they are all very short novels targeted at such a young audience. With this I am going to keep my Asimov reading to a minimum in 2019. Perhaps, two maybe three books if I need a short break between the larger books I hope to get to this year.

As I finished this while still on vacation, I get to start *Originals* by Malcom Gladwell before resuming my nominal to read list.

Kissu says

Un gran conflicto. Me gustó la resolución final, el mundo que los sirianos hicieron suyo y las particularidades de los habitantes de otros mundos. Me encantan Bigman y Lucky.

Thoraiya says

Bigman said, "You know, Lucky, it's nearly nine hundred million miles away. The Sun, I mean. I've never been out this far."

Oh, Asimov. How we love your dialogue. Scientists totally talk like that. And in Imperial.

Nonethousand Oberrhein says

Technological race

David Starr, half a secret agent and half the futuristic translation of an “Old West” Marshall, is the swashbuckling hero watching over our Solar System peace! Stretching a bit (but not too much to break it!) the Science to fit the Fiction of a solar system peopled by human colons and extraterrestrial intelligent life forms, Asimov cooks up a fun, fresh and adventurous space opera saga, peppering it with quite a few Western genre tropes and leaving the tone evolve to a Cold War investigations series (moving with the author’s times, so to say). On a separate note, the saga bears the seeds of the universe explored in the *Robots* and *Foundation* series: an added value for any Asimov enthusiast!

Written in the immediate aftermath of the *Sputnik I* launch by the Soviet Union (4 October 1957), this last adventure of the “Space Ranger” is the one that most resonates of Cold War themes using the Terran-Sirian standoff to mimic the USA-URSS tension lived by the author and his first readers. It follows *Moons of Jupiter*.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Lucky Starr and the Rings of Saturn (Lucky Starr, #6), Isaac Asimov

Lucky Starr and the Rings of Saturn is the final novel in the Lucky Starr series, six juvenile science fiction novels by Isaac Asimov that originally appeared under the pseudonym Paul French.

Alex says

Another in the Lucky Starr series. Like the others, you need to keep in mind when it was wrtitten...
