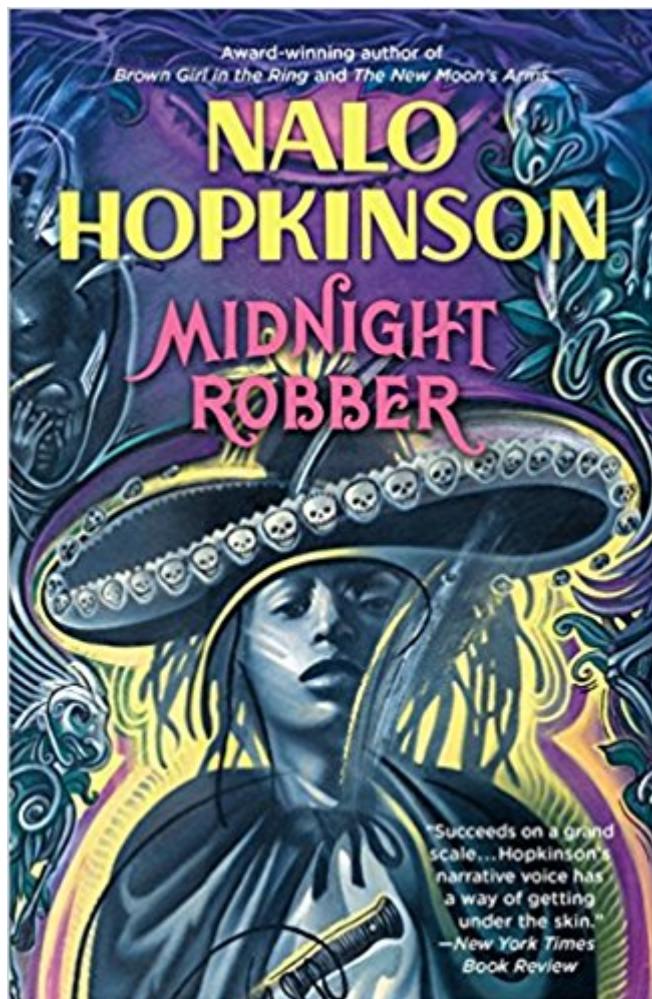


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Midnight Robber



Synopsis

"Deeply satisfying...succeeds on a grand scale...best of all is the language....Hopkinson's narrative voice has a way of getting under the skin."--The New York Times Book Review"Caribbean patois adorns this novel with graceful rhythms...Beneath it lie complex, clearly evoked characters, haunting descriptions of exotic planets, and a stirring story...[This book] ought to elevate Hopkinson to star status." --Seattle TimesIt's Carnival time and the Caribbean-colonized planet of Toussaint is celebrating with music, dance, and pageantry. Masked "Midnight Robbers" waylay revelers with brandished weapons and spellbinding words. To young Tan-Tan, the Robber Queen is simply a favorite costume to wear at the festival--until her power-corrupted father commits an unforgiveable crime. Suddenly, both father and daughter are thrust into the brutal world of New Half-Way Tree. Here monstrous creatures from folklore are real, and the humans are violent outcasts in the wilds. Tan-Tan must reach into the heart of myth and become the Robber Queen herself. For only the Robber Queen's legendary powers can save her life . . . and set her free.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nalo Hopkinson's first novel, *Brown Girl in the Ring*, was selected from almost 1,000 entries to win Warner Aspect's First Novel Contest, and after publication it received the Locus Award for Best First Novel and was a finalist for the Philip K. Dick Award. So expectations have been pretty high for her second book, and *Midnight Robber* lives up to them; it's a beautifully written, innovative, demanding, and wonderful novel. On the Caribbean-colonized planet of Toussaint, Carnival is a Lollapalooza of

music and dance, a Mardi Gras, a masquerade; and the Robin Hood of Toussaint legend, the Robber Queen, is just another costume, Tan-Tan's favorite. Then Tan-Tan's corrupt politician father commits a crime that sends them into exile on the extradimensional planet New Half-Way Tree, Toussaint's untamed quantum twin. As she struggles to survive the violent criminals, mysterious aliens, and merciless jungles of New Half-Way Tree, Tan-Tan finds herself taking on--or being taken over by--the mythic persona and powers of the Robber Queen. --Cynthia Ward

The sounds and rhythms of the Caribbean and Carnival suffuse Hopkinson's second novel (after *Brown Girl in the Ring*). On the Carib-colonized planet of Toussaint, Antonio Habib, the scheming, philandering mayor of Cockpit County, murders his wife's lover in a rigged duel and must then flee his high-tech planet, taking with him only his young daughter, Tan-Tan. The pair end up on New Half-Way Tree, Toussaint's alternate-universe twin, a primitive and dangerous world inhabited primarily by Toussaint's exiled criminal class and the douen, an alien race reminiscent of creatures from Caribbean folklore. There, Antonio's life lacks purpose, and although he remarries, he gradually degenerates into an angry, sexually predatory drunk. Growing to adulthood, Tan-Tan is deeply scarred by her father's assaults on her. Eventually she kills him in self-defense and, pregnant with his child, flees into the forbidding bush that surrounds their small settlement. Tan-Tan is kept on the run by Antonio's jealous widow, seeking vengeance for her husband's death. Hiding among the trees, Tan-Tan learns the secrets of the douen and gradually transforms into another figure out of Caribbean folklore, the Midnight Robber, who dresses in black, spouts poetry, steals from the rich and gives to the poor. Hopkinson's rich and complex Carib English can be hard to follow at times, but it is nonetheless quite beautiful; her young protagonist, at once violent and vulnerable, is extremely well drawn. Both Toussaint, a world almost awash in nanotechnology, and the more primitive New Half-Way Tree are believable, lushly detailed worlds. Like its predecessor, this novel bears evidence that Hopkinson owns one of the more important and original voices in SF. Agent, Don Maas. (Feb.) FYI: *Brown Girl in the Ring* won a Locus Award for Best First SF Novel. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This is my favorite book now! It is wonderful in so many ways! The language is rich, I love the way Caribbean folklore is used creatively here and the characters are so well developed. It is one of the most imaginative books I have read and it provokes so much thought about history, human nature, science, and psychology. And, it features the best aliens ever!

Very interesting book. The language is a bit hard to understand, but the story is very good and makes you think.

Patois speaking frilled lizard creatures, succulent fruits, deadly plants, a problematic father and a main character with fire in her soul. This book was hard to put down as soon as I cracked it open. The blend of Caribbean folklore and the sci-fi genre was very cool and unique. It also teaches you some patois as you read. If you want to be taken somewhere realistically fantastic, check out this book!

Different very culturally ingrained a new classic.

I don't know where to start. This book is multi-layered telling the story of one little girl who grows to be an independent, famous woman in a very difficult environment. It is much, much, more than a "coming-of-age" story. There is magic and tragedy and all told in a voice (you don't find out whose voice until the end) that uses patois throughout. The world is wonderfully built.

Overall, I really liked the premise of this story but I had a few issues with the continuity. For instance, the man who helped the mayor leave his home (trying to avoid spoilers) who said he'd follow soon was never heard from again nor did the characters ever seem to worry about it (which I can rationalize away but would have been a nice detail to add). I also had some serious issues with the way the father-daughter relationship evolved, not just with the events that occurred (which is expected) but with how those around them reacted. For instance, it is kind of insane that the woman followed her to persecute her. I also just couldn't really buy pretty much anything in the ending. I had some high hopes for the story but I was mostly disappointed with how it played out. It was highly recommended though.

I have two problems with this book. First, I found the language difficult to plow through. It takes a master to write a narrative using a local dialect. It works for Russell Banks, but less so for Hopkinson. Second, the narrative is slow-paced and uninteresting. Can't recommend this one.

I just discovered Nalo Hopkinson. Wow. Lovely writing and original narrative material. I will be reading everything she has written as soon as I can get my hands on the books. I enthusiastically agree with all the other more detailed and very positive reviews.

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