



The Military Form

Christopher Rowley

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Eons ago, a war was fought to the death between the parasitic and ferocious Vang and a gifted but doomed race. As a last resort, these gentle beings were forced to use the Starhammer to smash the Vang spacefleets and homeworld, leaving only a handful of survivors. For a billion years a silvery shape drifted through space. More than three thousand years after humanity first went to the stars, an asteroid miner named Seed of Hope was illegally prospecting for radioactives in the Forbidden Areas of the saskatch star system. There it chanced across an alluring silvery object which looked like it would fetch a good price in the market for alien antiques. It was an encounter most of the crew would never remember.

The Military Form Details

Date : Published February 12th 1988 by Del Rey (first published January 1st 1988)

ISBN : 9780345331762

Author : Christopher Rowley

Format : Mass Market Paperback 369 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction, Space, Space Opera, Horror

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Mark Lawrence says

The better of the two books I've read in this trilogy. More hard-edged violent and pretty gruesome Sci-Fi.

Here we get to meet the race that the star hammer in the previous book was designed to deal with. A relentless parasitic alien species that will rapidly destroy man's empire and any other they can reach. The Vang are a quality antagonist and I had great fun reading about their efforts to reassert themselves from a single long-dormant seed while humanity does its best to eliminate them. Like the alien from the Alien/s films the Vang are a species for whom the "take off and nuke the planet from orbit" strategy was invented.

The way the military form (the version of the parasite that conquers worlds) operates by infecting and taking over humans is inventive and unpleasant. It's the sort of alien that makes you glad that flying saucers fly right by Earth without stopping.

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Danath01 says

bad

Jason Bradley Thompson says

This weird, pulpy little book is the kind of sci-fi "action-horror in space" that was popular in movies in the '80s but not so much in prose. Several thousand years in the future, asteroid miners discover an ancient alien probe containing one of the Vang, a race of deadly parasites capable of reshaping their hosts into various monstrous, tentacled, clawed forms to better spread the contagion. After most of the crew are killed, the invasion spreads to a nearby frontier planet (possibly modeled on the Seattle area), where the story changes from "Alien" to a something like a zombie-outbreak novel... if by "zombies" you mean intelligent, super-fast, gun-wielding, hostile, uncommunicative mutants who reproduce by shoving eggs (view spoiler) The female victim (view spoiler) is another especially nasty bit of body horror.

While it has strong horror elements, "The Vang" isn't quite a pure horror novel. Despite a definite fascination with (view spoiler), and lots of other disgusting occurrences, it doesn't linger on the gory details as much as it could. There's also many scenes from the perspective of the Vang Military Form, which while it sees humans as nothing but hosts and food, has a bit of personality and even philosophy after floating in space alone for thousands of years... and it even gets a bit sympathetic in the final 1/3rd of the book when (view spoiler) These satirical scenes are an amusing counterpoint to the rest of the book, in which assorted human characters struggle to survive and flee as the Vang ruthlessly overtakes the planet. Competent prose, good

action scenes and really imaginative monsters make this fun pulp SF.

Technically the 2nd in a series, the book was written to stand on its own and doesn't require any knowledge of "Starhammer."

Michael says

This book is the second in "The Vang" series. The Vang is an aggressive militaristic species that was supposed to have been exterminated by a race, now long dead. This story starts some thousands of years after the last Vang sighting. They are almost considered a myth by this time and so an illegal prospector is unprepared for what he finds on an old derelict in a remote asteroid belt. The Vang is a race of "Omni-Parasite" capable of taking over any human host. Naturally he (the illegal prospector) becomes the Vang's first host. The Vang's ability to conquer (and exterminate) is equaled only by its unequaled vileness. Death would be far preferable to capture if facing the Vang. I could not put this book down. As soon as it was finished I started reading the sequel, "The Vang: The Battlemaster". I highly recommend this book to fans of Space Opera and fans of Christopher Rowley.

Phil Kozel says

Seriously nasty aliens in a fast paced romp. Not much character development for sure, but great story and brutal imagery. Not for the weak of heart.

Brett's Books says

Hard to believe I read this pulpy and extremely violent book as a child. I enjoyed it again a second time, but was shocked as I reread it that I had been allowed to read this book at all; I need to provide better oversight to my kids for sure.

Justin says

The middle book of a very loose trilogy (Starhammer, The Vang: The Military Form, The Vang: The Battlemaster), and also the best of the three. Crazy alien infestation runs wild from a single mistake. Intense, quick read.

Ein says

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Glen says

Imaginative and horrifying!
Love this series! Right there on the same shelf as Saberhagen's "Berzerkers".

Sean E Britten says

It's great! I wrote a super unnecessarily long review about it!
<https://seanebritten.wordpress.com/20...>

Suzanne says

Seriously, the alien invasion book to end all alien invasion books. It is awesome. I rec it to everyone who likes SF.

Andy says

A BRILLIANT, GRIPPING BOOK, FIND OTHER STUFF BY THIS AUTHOR!!!

Benjamin says

Holds the distinction of being the only book to induce nausea as I was reading it. To parse these words is to undergo a form of PTSD, I'm certain. Afterwards, I slept with the light on. That's not a joke. That happened.

I really just wanted to flag this with a content warning; it's super difficult to find a copy (at least in Australia) Amazon has a few, but it's otherwise out of print; I needed to hunt through countless second-hand bookstores. Regardless, I'm sure other people share my fetish for pulpy sci-fi; I could find camaraderie somewhere amongst 8 billion other denizens - 4chan if nowhere else - but I should be upfront that this book features an overwhelming number of scenes where aliens rape and violate human beings. That's essentially one of the main hooks of the entire series ('theme' feels a little too highbrow to use in association here) Proceed with caution.

Empress says

the book is good and I like the writer style. From all the reviews I read I was expecting more horror and battles but the first half of the book is just introduction to the characters, not less interesting of course. I find the way he portrays the Vang just beautiful, it made me feel empathetic toward "it".

Edit: 27/07/2017. Just watched Oats Studios - Volume 1 - Zygote and thought of this book. The creature reminds of the Military Form.

Alex Stockdale says

Read this in my teens, and found it both terrifying and gripping. Reread it recently, and it's still amazing. If you liked the film "Alien", try this book. The sequel (The Vang: The Battlemaster) is also good, but I didn't find it as scary as this one.
