



Midnight Robber

By Nalo Hopkinson

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It'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.

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Midnight Robber By Nalo Hopkinson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

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*

From Publishers Weekly

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.

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From School Library Journal

YA-Hopkinson regales readers with a tale in which West Indian folklore and cadence are combined in a futuristic fantasy set on a planet that borrows from both Haiti and Canada in its geography and cultural history. Sixteen-year-old Tan-Tan, the victim of incest, murders her trespassing father, only to become a permanent runaway from her society on the planet of Toussaint. Her childhood heroine, the Robber Queen, becomes something more personal to Tan-Tan as she fights to survive in New Half-Way Tree, a land of exile and horrifying creatures: Tan-Tan learns to emulate her heroine. In this compelling and literary novel, the author provides fully developed characters of both genders and all ages. Tan-Tan's allies include her old godmother and a male peer who quietly took the implied blame when Tan-Tan became pregnant at 14, although her father was that aborted baby's sire. The beasts of New Half-Way Tree are also fully realized,

making Tan-Tan's world seem less like one of a horror story and more one of myth. While the language consistently blends Creole with standard North American English, teen readers will have little trouble following the linguistic nuances. As she did in *Brown Girl in the Ring* (Warner, 1998), Hopkinson provides an engaging nexus of science fiction and folklore.

Francisca Goldsmith, Berkeley Public Library, CA

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mario Rice:

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Kimberly Niemeyer:

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