

Royal Reviews: Book Review 'Jurassic Park'

Spoiler alert: The lawyer doesn't get chomped by the T-Rex while sitting on the toilet.

It generally goes without saying that a book is better than its movie version. This is true for Michael Crichton's "Jurassic Park," which the 1993 film of the same name and its sequels were based off of. I watched the movie so much, I had it memorized. I expected the book to be relatively the same.

It was interesting to see how scenes were portrayed in the book compared to how they were portrayed in the films. Scenes such as the child getting attacked by Compsognathus, portrayed in the film's 1997 sequel "The Lost World: Jurassic Park," takes place before the main characters are even introduced to the park and its visionary, John Hammond.

The characters are all there of course archaeologists Dr. Alan Grant and Dr. Ellie Sattler, the mathematician Ian Malcolm, the lawyer Donald Gennaro, the children and so forth.

Many of the characters, however, are different than how they are portrayed in the film, which helped to keep my interest. For example, Grant likes kids, Sattler is in her 20s and freshly graduated from college, and even Hammond is different (though I won't say how here).

The book contains many more dinosaurs with their own scenes than the film does as well.

The characters are introduced to the Stegosaurus, Pterodactyl, the previously mentioned Compsognathus, two Tyrannosaurus Rexes, rather than just one and over 30 Velociraptors, compared to the film's three, and more.

What really kept my interest, apart from all the dinosaurs, was how the author detailed how Jurassic Park and its genetics program developed. Corporate sabotage, the promise of a colossal profit, and applied science gone awry all have a role, and the way Crichton weaves it all together makes a Jurassic Park entirely plausible.

How the dinosaurs are made is given more attention including a discussion about why the dinosaurs in the park lack feathers when it's been confirmed that many species had feathers, as well as how many species were more closely related to birds than to reptiles.

While I enjoyed how the characters of the book differed from their film counterparts, they still lacked development. I didn't particularly care when one of them was injured or killed. Sure, some deaths were surprising, as those characters survived in the film version, but the

lack of sympathy for any of the characters made me simply go, “so that happened.” I think the island’s fate at the end of the book affected me more than the fate of the characters.

Also, no, Samuel L. Jackson’s character, Ray Arnold, does not say “Hold onto your butts.”

Few flaws aside, Crichton’s “Jurassic Park” is worth the read for any fan of the film series or fans of dinosaurs in general.

4 stars out of 5.