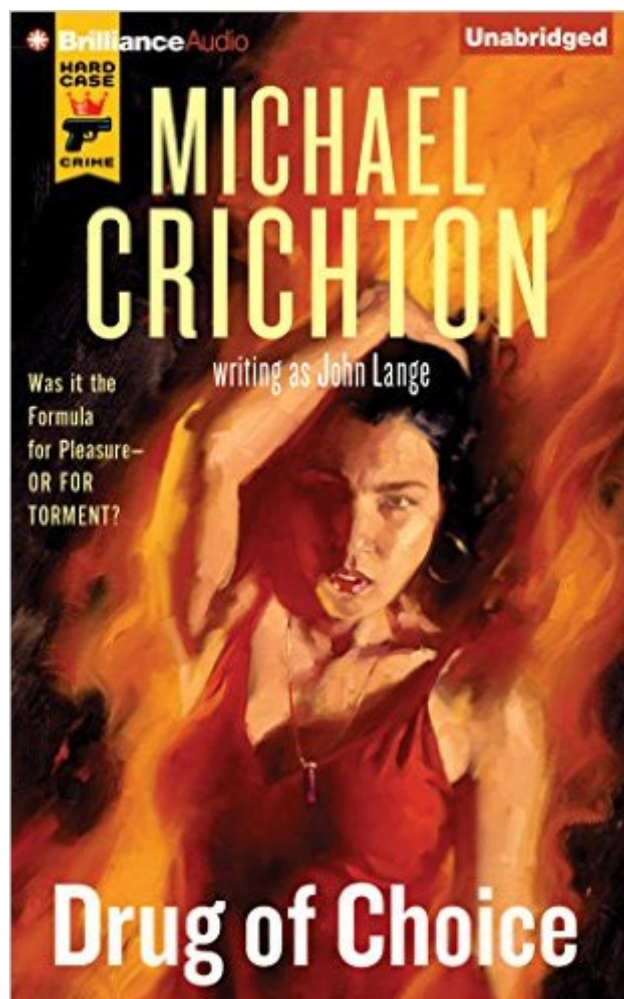


The book was found

Drug Of Choice



Synopsis

On a secret island in the Caribbean, bioengineers have devised a vacation resort like no other, promising the ultimate escape. But when Dr. Roger Clark investigates, he discovers the dark secret of Eden Island and of Advance Biosystems, the shadowy corporation underwriting it.â |

Book Information

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Authors, A-Z > (C) > Crichton, Michael #715 inÂ Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Medical #782 inÂ Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

Customer Reviews

Thank goodness for Hard Case Crime for getting these early Michael Crichton books back in print. The John Lange series of books have varying degrees of success but all of them are fascinating and entertaining. Here in Drug Of Choice you can see Crichton trying out concepts he'd explore in more detail in later novels and movies. Here, a fabulous resort promises the ultimate fabulous getaway, but then things go wrong...sound like Jurassic Park or Westworld? How about the manipulation of media using advanced science...sound like Crichton's film Looker ? Yep. There's even an odd similarity to Coma... a film MC wrote and directed but was based on Robin Cook's novel (which came after Drug Of Choice... maybe Cook read this one too ?)It is an early novel before MC became a blockbuster machine, so, his story telling skills are in development here... the medical mystery that kicks the story off is fascinating, but the climax of the story veers into some shaky ground, ending with one of Crichton's patented notes of ambiguity. But overall the book is a fun breezy read and a must have for fans of Crichton. Not as solid or assured as his later household name books, but an entertaining tale that may be more interesting for seeing Crichton trying out concepts he'd later perfect...

Michael Crichton supported himself in med school by writing paperback originals under the pen name John Lange. *Drug of Choice* centers on Roger Clark, a Los Angeles doctor who stumbles onto a dangerous new recreational drug that puts its users into a coma. His investigation soon leads him to a shadowy corporation intent on controlling mankind through science. This was meant to be a quick read, shallow but enjoyable. Lots of action, pretty girls, some plot twists thrown in for good measure--just don't think too hard because there are also a lot of gaping plot holes. *Drug of Choice* is perhaps a cut above the other John Lange books I've read. There are shades of Crichton's eventual hit TV show *ER*, as the main character is a hospital resident trying to solve a medical mystery. The story is also effective as satire of Hollywood's designer drug culture and America's obsession with pop science. It's not really fair to dismiss this (and other Lange novels) as simply Crichton's amateur apprenticeship, as other reviewers have done. Even at this age, Crichton was clearly capable of better stories. After all, by the time this novel came out, *A Case of Need* had already won an Edgar award under a different pseudonym, and *Andromeda Strain* had become a bestseller under the author's own name. These Lange books were actually well-crafted to be precisely what they are: mindless, campy, escapist entertainment. Crichton said in an interview the Lange books were written to be sold at airports and to compete with in-flight movies for the reader's attention for a couple of hours. By this criterion I would have to say *Drug of Choice* succeeds very well.

Michael Crichton became my favorite author over the years but it's obvious that he spent a lot of effort refining his skills ..or he hired on a first class editor to help him develop his plots. These early novels (many written while he was a college student) were pretty basic boilerplate 'dime' novels that really lacked the dynamic character development, superb plot and background he put into everything he wrote from the 70's until his death. He must have taken a writing class, found a great editor or come under the influence of some other highly skilled writer because there wasn't that much time that transpired between this and his other early works in the mid to late 1960's and his first really well received story "*The Andromeda Strain*" which was only written a few years later. He wrote the screenplay for it and it became a hit movie - his first. It's sure a shame that cancer took this terrific writer so soon. At one time he had the number 1 TV show (*ER*), the biggest blockbuster movie in history to that point (*Jurassic Park*) and 2 other novels in the top ten that had both been at #1. I keep hoping that someone will take some of his other outstanding novels like "*Airframe*" and "*Prey*" and turn them into the same kind of thrilling blockbuster movies that *Jurassic Park* was. They deserve it and so do his fans ...and there are many tens of millions of us out here waiting and

hoping.

Hard Case Crime has brought these early Michael Crichton novels all back in print. While I would be hard pressed to call this Hard Boiled Crime Fiction as is the staple of Hard Case Crime it is a fun read. Written under his alias John Lange, it is great to have these early books back in print. Because Crichton was an unknown these originals are hard to find and very pricey. I would classify the book as a conspiracy thriller with science fiction elements tossed in. It starts with people going into comas and blue urine. It winds as a story about a giant island resort where your every fantasy and dream can be made real. This is very much the building blocks of both Jurassic Park and Westworld. The ending is a bit clunky but it is a breezy light fun ride. Recommended.

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