

Crazy Publication

By Elizabeth Rosales

Literature Editor

Weekly Contributor: Writing Scene

A young girl's first attempt at "real" writing or publication often happens on Wattpad. Wattpad is a website where anyone can write and share stories about anything, just like in the real world of writing. However, it is an easy publication, so there is a huge emphasis on "anyone." Here, online authors have become published ones, stories have evolved into films, but there are more instances where writers go nowhere. In this article I'm going to talk about a writer who (unfortunately) managed publication in bookstores.

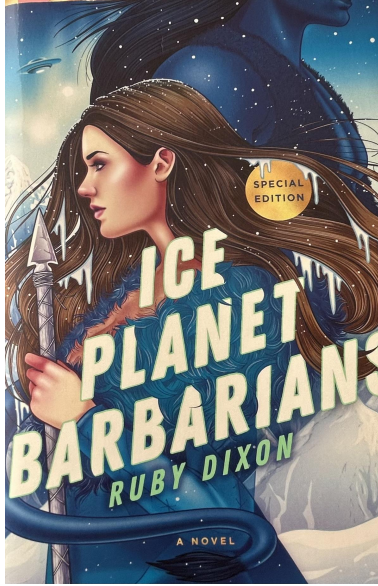
When I was in my senior year of high school, a friend of mine told me about a novel called "Ice Planet Barbarians" by author Ruby Dixon. My friend and I listened as the other shared details about the book. She characterized it as both subpar and explicit, and I was genuinely intrigued. She compared it to a Wattpad story. That same winter we decided to make a mini book club with just the three of us, bought the book at Barnes & Noble, and read it during a sleepover.

Quick Review

It was horrid. The three of us were writers, who were currently taking a creative writing class. While reading it, we'd call out weird sentences or phrases, and after every chapter, gather to discuss it.

The story is about a woman who gets abducted by aliens along with several other women her age. They manage to crash the ship on an ice planet. The main character, Georgie, tries to find food or safety for the other women. That is when she meets Vektal, an alien.

The novel is explicit. It's essentially smut which is a sexual piece of writing. It's okay to write about that, but Dixon did a horrendous job. Her grammar was lacking and her imagery was almost nonexistent. The way she listed adjectives was just wrong. There was too much slang and the syntax in her sentence framing was ridiculous. There were too many moments when she said the word "heck" which was completely strange to me considering this was a published novel. It's insanely repetitive and unprofessional as it is up to interpretation due to it being slang. "Heck" and "crap" come up too often and it's not in the dialogue. Dixon has a habit of making a lot of her sentences a question when it is not necessary. The main character? She won't stop talking like this. The other main character? He does the same.



Publication

When reading *Ice Planet Barbarians*, I thought, “How did this get published?” I did research on this author, Ruby Dixon, and she has millions of stories, but only this storyline was published. There are two novels that follow this one. Prolific is often followed by words of positivity to describe an author, but Ruby Dixon is just prolific.

Yet, it was published and now popular for a reason! While looking at what others thought about Dixon’s stories, I found that some people like its simplicity and escape into a different world. They aren’t dense books but they’re just not that good.

How to Syntax: Lesson One

What is syntax? It’s the arrangement of words and phrases to create a well-formed sentence in a language.

The syntax that was involved in this novel almost sent me into a spiral. There were several instances where Dixon separated her words with periods. Sometimes she makes them into separate paragraphs:

“Just.

A.

Minute” (Dixon, 42).

That's a real... section in the book. One of her paragraphs could include just one word or even one letter. It's too comfortable and casual, and of course, frowned upon in the writing world. Other times she'll talk. Like this. Where there's. Periods. As if she were. Pausing. It's too close to a way someone would text.

A way to make your writing more interesting and fun is playing with syntax. Oftentimes in my writing I include run-on sentences that work due to the mood. An example is if there was an exciting or scary event, run-on sentences can reflect the main character's reaction. Ruby Dixon isn't great at fitting clever syntax in her writing, and it could be improved.

Final Note

If you're looking for a book filled with instant surprises, then Ice Planet Barbarians is for you. Every chapter is filled with second-hand embarrassment. You'll think "How did this get published? Why is this in stores?" then you'll remember you bought that with your own money.

Editors:

Angelina Lazzareschi

Gianna D'Arezzo