



Escape from Earth: New Adventures in Space

Jack Dann (Editor) , Gardner Dozois (Editor) , Allen M. Steele (Contributor) , Kage Baker (Contributor) , Geoffrey A. Landis (Contributor) , Orson Scott Card (Contributor) , Walter Jon Williams (Contributor) , Elizabeth Moon (Contributor) , more... Joe Haldeman (Contributor) ...less

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Imagine a world where interplanetary travel isnat just possibleaitas commonplace. Human beings have terraformed Mars. You can reach into another dimension through a wormhole. The virtual world can be the only place where you exist, because you donat have a body. The possibilities are endless. Escape from Earth, inspired by Robert Heinleinas ajuveniles, a featuring stories by Orson Scott Card (Enderas Game), Elizabeth Moon (the Vatta books), and Joe Haldeman (The Forever War), among others, will take you places beyond your imagination.

Escape from Earth: New Adventures in Space Details

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From Reader Review Escape from Earth: New Adventures in Space for online ebook

John The Totally Awesome says

a good book overall

Craig says

This is a superior anthology of youth-oriented stories. The title story is an excellent work by Allen Steele, and I was also quite taken by excellent stories by Elizabeth Moon, Kage Baker, and Geoffrey Landis. The last story in the book is actually the first section of a novel by Joe Haldeman.

M.i. says

This book is too hit or miss for me.

There were no stand out stories per se, at least not as far as I am concerned, but there were some that were extremely well written even though they did not resonate with me.

Skjam! says

Per the introduction, in the Fifties and Sixties, many young science fiction fans' introduction to the genre was "juveniles", books aimed at an age above "children's" but not quite "adult." In the 1970s or so, this category was re-labeled "young adult." In the early 21st Century, while YA fantasy was flourishing (see also Harry Potter) most of the SF in the category was dystopian fiction like The Hunger Games.

Thus this anthology of longer stories aimed at the YA market, meant to evoke the same sense of excitement that the classic Heinlein and Norton books did. All the stories were new for this volume (though some of them might have become full-fledged novels since.) The cover is by Nicholas Jainschigg but alas is not related to any of the interior stories.

"Escape from Earth" by Allen M. Steele is of course our title story. Eric always wanted to be an astronaut, but a few years after 9/11, it's looking like that dream is impossible. Eric's father died in Iraq, and even with his mother working two jobs, the family barely makes ends meet, and college is out of reach. It doesn't help that Eric's brother Steve has become a dope dealer—that family tie won't look good on a school application.

Eric is hanging out on the corner waiting for his nerdy friend Ted when he's accosted by three oddly dressed teens. One is the prettiest girl he's ever seen, which means Eric isn't thinking too clearly when he gives them directions to the nearby nuclear power plant. The one that was closed down because it was unsafe.

When Ted convinces Eric that something's wrong here, the pair head to the plant in Steve's car. Ted gets distracted by Steve's gang in pursuit, so it's up to Eric to determine what the motive of the strange visitors is,

and this leads him on a new adventure.

This story ends on a strong note of optimism about the future, even if it's going to take a while to get there. The insta-love romance subplot might grate on some readers.

"Where the Golden Apples Grow" by Kage Baker is set on Mars during relatively early colonization. Bill is the son of a long-haul trucker who mines the poles for frozen gases, while Ford is the son of a farmer in the slowly growing terraforming project. Neither of them is happy with their projected future, and when Ford's father and brother get into a brawl at the trading station, he takes the opportunity to escape his father's strict observation. Ford promptly gets in trouble with "legal" slavers who want to get him to sign a labor contract, and is rescued by Billy, Bill's irresponsible father.

Billy takes Ford along on his and Bill's next run, much to Bill's annoyance. Both the splendor and danger of the open road reveal themselves to Ford, and Bill learns about farm life. Tragedy strikes, but who should we weep for?

"Derelict" by Geoffrey A. Landis concerns the dead orbital colony Hercules. Dylan and his friends aboard the colony of Malina have often heard how dangerous the derelict is and how they must never go there. But they've also heard that it's the only place to get "weed", a mild aphrodisiac. And besides, going to forbidden abandoned buildings is cool! Even if it's in space.

Dylan and his buddies find a way to sneak off to the dead colony which happens to be coming extra close in its orbit (and it's pretty obvious that the adults have deliberately not plugged the security holes.) While there, they experience dangers both expected and not, and learn the reason none of their elders ever speak of why Hercules died.

This story is fairly plausible as a coming of age tale, though one has to wonder about some of the other orbital colonies that aren't keeping an eye on their kids. The romance angle is rather abrupt, but seems more earned than the first story.

"Space Boy" by Orson Scott Card features Todd, a young fellow who doesn't believe his brother Jared's story about the closet eating their mother. She probably just abandoned them and their dad. That is, until the day Todd sees a naked "dwarf" appear from midair.

Turns out Todd's mother went through a wormhole, and this fellow has known all along. Unfortunately, Eggo has no interest in helping Todd get his mother back—seems that he's his planet's only scientist, and his access to wormholes could be taken away if the other people of his world knew. It's up to Todd and his family to bring back their missing member!

This story comes off more middle grade than YA with its body function humor and rather two-dimensional antagonist.

"Incarnation Day" by Walter Jon Williams is about a future solar system civilization where people can be downloaded into any body they need for the environment they're in. One culture, headquartered near Ceres, has taken full advantage of this to raise their children in virtual reality. Thus the kids are not messy in real life while their personalities and minds develop. And if a parent doesn't like the way the child is turning out—they can delete them, no fuss no muss.

This happens to a fellow named Fritz. Protagonist Alison didn't like Fritz, but she didn't want him to be deleted. And she feels guilty about the last thing she said to him being a lie so she wouldn't have to interact with Fritz on a fun trip.

Which makes it much more urgent when Alison learns her best friend Janis is at loggerheads with her own mother. Anna-Lee had wanted a miniature version of her own personality and beliefs, but Janis is a rebel and despises Anna-Lee's politics. Worse, Janis is way smarter than Anna-Lee and isn't afraid to say so.

Can Alison find some way to keep Janis un-deleted until Incarnation Day, when Janis will be able to get her own body? Honestly the most imaginative and interesting story in the collection.

"Combat Shopping" by Elizabeth Moon is about Andi, an orphan girl adopted by asteroid miners. Andi is looking forward to a rare trip to civilization so that she can hang with some of her friends (mostly met online) and earn her pilot's license so that she can contribute more to the family's bottom line.

Unfortunately, one of the other adoptees has gotten sick(er) and Mama decides the trip will be cut to one day, which the kids will be spending getting checkups at the clinic while Mama loads supplies. Mama puts Andi in charge of her siblings Gerry and Bird. Andi, being a teenager (but looking like an elementary school kid) comes up with a zany scheme to have Gerry look after Bird while Andi at least gets her license exam.

Andi passes the exam, but discovers that her siblings have vanished, and most of her online friends aren't nearly as helpful in real life. It looks like Andi's going to have to think fast to rescue Gerry and Bird from slavers!

There's a high level of coincidence involved in this story, but it's well told. Content warning for child abuse and neglect.

"The Mars Girl" by Joe Haldeman rounds out the volume with the story of Carmen, one of the first teenagers on Mars. The head of the colony does not like children and for reasons not adequately explained has a special grudge against Carmen individually. When youthful hijinks are met with disproportionate punishment, Carmen goes walkabout in frustration.

This naturally leads to disaster, and to Carmen meeting the hidden Martian civilization. But we're only halfway through the story....

I found this the least interesting story in the volume and started skimming. Also, I felt the way Carmen's crush on a much older man was handled came off as creepy. (It feels like it was written more from the perspective of an older man than from that of a teenage girl.)

While the intent of this anthology is good, I noticed that it leaned heavily on older veterans of SF writing, with Kage Baker as the newest author at the time. This might have been a chance to showcase talented YA authors who wanted to do science fiction rather than the other way around. (*Ender's Game* is not YA in my opinion, despite the protagonist's age.)

Recommended primarily to fans of the individual authors, and young adult readers who should skip the introduction and just enjoy the stories.

Murray says

All the stories in the collection are really good. I wished they were all longer!

Tony says

I enjoyed this book, for the most part. There were several stories that didn't do much for me, but a couple that did a lot: one by Joe Haldeman and the other by Elizabeth Moon, both at the back of the book, so I'm glad I made it through to the end.

Tim says

Most of the shorts stories are good, but as with most collections, a mixed bag.

Ryun says

escape from earth reviewIf I only could give one reason why the Science Fiction Book Club rocks, I'd have to go with the exclusive anthologies it cranks out. They're huge, dense volumes put together by the best editors in the field.

More: <http://www.bookgasm.com/reviews/sci-f...>

Max says

This is a pretty good anthology of YA science fiction stories. Most of them were pretty good, especially the first three. Incarnation Day was also very interesting, and while I'd read it before, it was fun to read it again. The Orson Scott Card story feels kinda out of place in that it deals with travel between universes rather than travel in space. It's also the exact same thing as the version published as a separate book, minus illustrations. The only story I didn't like was the Joe Haldeman story, since by the time I got to it, I had grown tired of the repeated use of the cliché "clever teen protagonist has to overcome asshole adult" plotline. Also, the "Martians" kinda stretched my suspension of disbelief, especially as the rest of the stories (excluding Card's) had lacked any form of alien creatures.

JC says

This was a fun little read of several Science Fiction authors' short stories. It's written for teens, yet has that hard-sci-fi feel, with most of the adventures taking place in our solar system.

Bart Everson says

Another young adult anthology, edited by the same folks who did *Wizards: Magical Tales From the Masters of Modern Fantasy*, only with a broad theme of travel in space. (I don't ordinarily read "young adult" fiction, nor was I aware of how well-defined this category has become, but these two books were selected by my

club.) Of the two I thought this one was superior. The stories are longer, fewer, and better. They are written in frank imitation of the old science fiction "juveniles" by authors such as Heinlein. As such, they're fun, but definitely aimed at the adolescent reader.
