



Colony One Mars

Gerald M. Kilby

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All contact is lost with the first human colony on Mars during a long and destructive sandstorm. Satellite imagery of the aftermath shows extensive damage to the facility. The fifty-four colonists who called it home are presumed dead.

Three years later, a new mission sets down on the planet surface to investigate what remains of the derelict site. But, it's not long before they realise the colony is not as lifeless as everyone thought. Someone is still alive -- hiding out somewhere.

Yet, before they can find the elusive colonist a strange illness starts to affect the crew. Pressure now mounts on Biologist, Dr. Jann Malbec, to locate the source and find a way to fight it. However, as she investigates she begins to suspect a dark and deadly secret lurking within the colony. A secret that threatens not just the crew but the entire population of Earth.

With limited resources and time running out, she must find some answers and find them fast. Because if she doesn't, none of them will be going home.

Colony One Mars Details

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From Reader Review Colony One Mars for online ebook

Fred Bloggs says

poor

some very unlikely stuff mixed in with bad science. Little characterisation and lots of cliché. typical much hyped sf kindle rubbish. better than some, but still not very good. I read the plot - in better books - before.

Thomas James says

This destructive alien is from Earth!

It is a fun story about alien invasion where all of the people die except one and a robot. Sound familiar? Anyway, the single glaring negative to me was, how could all these people be so naive? Going to a station destroyed by something really bad, but they act like the gang from Scooby Doo: "Let's split up!" No weapons and no precautions. Oh well, ya gotta be flexible in Science Fiction.

Ryan Fitzpatrick says

So... In fairness, I didn't realize this was horror/sci-fi, and expected a more straight up sci-fi.

That said, it's very possible to create a horror sci-fi work that features an intelligent plot and characters. This book features neither of those things.

The basic plot makes a few leaps here and there, but I guess in retrospect that's kind of forgivable - it serves the story. Take the illness that's central to the story - it infects one crew member immediately, while the others experience no issues. And the eventual attempt at explanation is lousy and nonsensical.

But the characters... They're dumb as stumps. From the first officer who just wants to murder everyone who shows any signs of illness - even before they realize that there IS an illness. Or the doctor whose only unique identifier is that he's Italian and loves espresso. The characters just stumble from one stupid decision to the next - and yes, a story can be based on reasonable characters making dumb choices. But stupid characters (especially ones who are highly educated, highly trained astronauts) just doing stupid things is just lousy and lazy writing.

On the plus side, the audiobook was only about 5 hours, so I didn't exactly waste a TON of time on this...

Sheryl says

Probably more like 3-1/2 stars. The audiobook was a quick, easy listen at just under 6 hours. It was pretty fast paced with a lot of action propelling the storyline along. The story didn't really feel fresh or original, and

the characters weren't very complex, but it was entertaining, nonetheless. While the book does not end with a cliffhanger, neither does it feel completely "finished". (And as there are at least 3 other books in the series, I am guessing that is why.) You could potentially stop with this book and not necessarily feel like you've wasted time. I was originally not planning to keep on with the series, however, after reading the blurb for the next book, I think I may give it a try after all. I will put the audio in my queue for when I'm "in the mood".

The narration on the audio was pretty solid. I could tell most characters apart by their voices, only a few blurred together. I wouldn't say the audio enhances the book but it doesn't hurt it either. I listened to it on 1.25x speed which felt normal, not rushed. Overall, an entertaining almost 6 hours.

Clare O'Beara says

This is a jaunt into the future of Martian exploration in which the plot hinges around the time it takes to get from one planet to another, and the cost of sending expeditions. The plot would be in the space between where *The Martian* ends and *Red Mars* begins with a healthy dose of *Silent Running* (for those of you who read/ watch lots of SF). A first colony was sent but some mysterious malady overtook them and the transmissions went dark.

A new team has been sent to find out what happened and whether any research data is salvageable. The senders are a mix of private enterprise and state bodies, the requisite spy is aboard and we mainly follow a young woman botanist who isn't sure she's up to the job.

I was fine with the story until it turned into a haunted house tale, with the tiny team willingly making themselves vulnerable and fragmented, infected and careless. I'm just not into horror and others may enjoy it better for that reason. However, I kept reading and agreed that further stupidities might be the result of a lurking infection that runs people down just enough that their brains don't work as well as they should. Just having low blood sugar is quite enough for that to occur.

Not all questions are answered, but this may be because it's the first in a series. I would read more of the series, provided it was thriller rather than horror. This is an unbiased review.

Rachel (TheShadesofOrange) says

3.0 Stars

The premise was fantastic, but unfortunately the actual story was lackluster with flat, forgettable characters.

David P. Duffy says

Weak Story, Low Brow Plot, and Poor Writing Skill Set

"Colony One Mars (Colony Mars Book 1)," authored by Mr. Gerald M. Kilby, has a weak story, very low brow plot lines, and poor writing skill set in execution.

The story takes place in the near future, where 3 1/2 years after a Mars colony of 50 or so colonists have

been lost, a survey crew of six are sent to investigate. Satellite imagery during breaks in prolonged sandstorms, had shown bodies strewn outside the facilities, damage to habitats, and some modules missing. A cryptic transmission sent before full loss of contact, indicated a pathogen was causing violent, homicidal rages, and abruptly broke off. Following landing, the six (6) survey crew members, march off to the colony, enter the main dome, take off their EVA suits and investigate.

The kernel of a story - Mars colony, total wipeout of colonists, undisclosed info on a corporate genetic research project - may have been pedestrian and formulaic, but with some intelligence, imagination, creativity, and decent writing, doable. The author was not up to the heavy lifting required. A few examples follow:

[Spoilers Ahead]

Highly probable, indeed likely, as laid out prior to the landing, that the colony was infected by a pathogen - virus, bacteria, or environmental. Bodies, some missing limbs, are spotted and examined outside of the habitat. The crew enter the dome, visors go up, breathing atmosphere, while shortly later, EVA suits off because they're getting too hot inside them. Ridiculous or dumb, each reader can make their own call. Some members begin to exhibit strange behavior, but no real concern. Movement is detected, possibly a survivor, but only lackadaisical interest. Feelings, emotions, are all important to the characters, not survival and reason. Smoking some primo, Mars "weed," will even out their uneasiness. Compound fractures, broken ribs, collar bones no hindrance in Mars reduced gravity.

The author writes much of the narrative as if it took place in the past, Edwardian times, as opposed to the present or near future. "Nevertheless...", "Nonetheless...", "At least...", "Of course...", are a few of the incessant repetition of bad phrasing.

Overall, "Colony One Mars...", is an example of a hobbyist author, striking out too soon into the commercial sphere. "Entanglement," written by Mr. Kilby a few years after "Colony One Mars...", is marginally better.

"Colony One Mars...(Book 1)," is not recommended and was fully read via Kindle Unlimited.

Patrick Barnes says

Beach read

The story has so many plot holes that it's more hole than plot. The writer has a great premise but he's not clear in his own mind apparently about the background. The organizations and the original colonists are thin and cartoonish. The Mars mission, first and second don't seem to have a clear purpose. There isn't any timeline to put any story element into perspective.

The characters are flat as one review pointed out. The characters have some real flaws, which makes the story just readable. Some of the characters are awful people but all of the characters are either over eager amateurs or just incompetent. Even then, the lack of caution is hard to believe. The end game of the corporate sponsors isn't really explained.

They know about an infection caused by their scientists, who either without sufficient caution accidentally released the bacteria or purposefully released it to destroy the colony presumably before they returned to

Earth. The corporation wants their agent who is infected, to return to Earth with the infection which is super-contagious and expect to profit from a worldwide, deadly outbreak or what? Unless they can destroy the ISA spaceship, they can't stop the disease because all landing and processing on return is handled by the ISA. That's a weird plot hole as big as a Mars lander.

The crew experienced the disease and couldn't bring themselves to take real precautions, especially the doctor. 24 hour monitoring of the captain (there's a cool little robot doing that task for the whole colony, already). Following and/or monitoring the crew person with the next highest level of infection as she mysteriously occupied herself with preparations to destroy the colony and return to Earth. Not asking to speak to ISA controllers on her miraculously operational radio themselves. Instead the doctor wants the other survivors to play nice with her (I think he actually used those words). Way to go doctor and way to go other survivors. Anyone connected with this Mars story must have had their instinct for self preservation turned off in training. Not that the corporate side has more going for it.

The COM failing because of lack of audience share is simplistic and if it were an U.S. firm vaguely possible. But a European Corp being that shortsighted with tens of billion?, hundreds of billion? euros doesn't seem plausible.

The Corp can't think of any way to generate more income, really? The only real cost to maintain the colony would be resupply flights but it's not clear that that was done more than once. Even then, the secret and illegal? research that corps paid a very hefty price to carry out, would have paid for it or them. If these corps wanted the use of the colony facilities, but didn't pay the going rate, the COM just wouldn't have launched those scientists (if no profit, then no ride).

If a movie sells twice as many billions from licensing as the hefty profits generated by the movie itself (Star Wars), tell me they at least sold model landers and spaceships. Action figures of the expedition officers, at least. Novels about the expedition and why not a TV show, movie series and more. We nerds will glue ourselves to the live feed but the rest of us will watch the movie eight times, if it's any good. The writer's imagination is pretty flat in this area as much as the others.

So you have a cliché of explorers surprised and betrayed by their corporate masters in pursuit of? All of the betrayal being carried out under the noses of governmental oversight organizations. The language use, action descriptions and dialogue aren't bad but the story has no substance. No characters to develop, no plot to keep much interest and a background too simplistic to fire the imagination.

Get a good beach umbrella, put on the suntan lotion, watch your significant other or beach hard bodies and read until you doze off. It's not unpleasant and won't make you feel guilty that you didn't finish War and Peace.

Caroline says

The one thing this book has got going for itself is that it's short, just under six hours. The plot is super simple, which is also good. Characters: not so much. I have no astronaut aspirations and all my space knowledge comes from pop culture but I still find it VERY unlikely that people who are THIS big assholes would get through the astronaut vetting process? And that you can know each other this little after spending months together on a fucking spaceship. I don't buy it!!!

Will I still listen to the next two books? Yes, because they amount to like 12 hours, which is not a lot. And it's still Mars, and space, you know.

Katie Klein says

Original and entertaining

Really good story, enjoyed Gizmo. Getting ready to read the second in the series. Will definitely follow this author in the future.

Sara says

Soft sci-fi story

Enjoyable quick read. Likable characters and nonstop action. Starting the next book in the series right away. Hopeful it will be as good as this one.

Emma says

I want to finish this because I don't want another dnf. But yeah no. I'm stopping 70% in because I Really don't care what happens next. Flat characters, boring story, terrible science, poorly executed throughout. The only thing it got going for it was that it was short. But even that wasn't enough

Jon Norimann says

Colony One Mars is about a human mission to check what happened to the first human colony on Mars after it lost contact with Earth. Apart from the Hard SF bits it contains little of interest. It starts off as excellent Hard SF but the hard classification seems more and more questionable as the story develops. Kilby just manages to rescue it all at the end, an end that comes very quickly after some 3 hours reading.

A good work of hard SF for the first half but dropping to 4 stars or lower after that. Clearly Colony One Mars is a nice read for anyone liking hard SF but it's hard to see anything of general interest in the book.

Laura Calvo says

Great great idea, terribly executed. Horrible prose and dialogues.

Duane says

Humans traveling to Mars hardly seems like science fiction anymore. It seems within the realm of possibility, just a matter of time. Probably, and I think that is why these stories are so interesting, so entertaining. I was surprised at how good this book was. Much like Andy Weir's *The Martian* in the sense that it was well written, and with enough technical description to make it believable. But this one comes with a little more intrigue, mystery, and action. I'm looking forward to reading the sequel.
