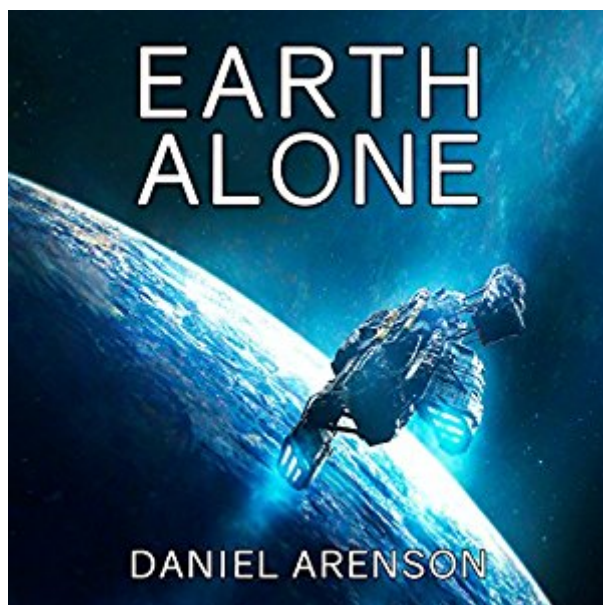


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Earth Alone: Earthrise, Book 1



Synopsis

They came from deep space. They came to destroy us. Fifty years ago bloodthirsty aliens devastated the Earth. Most of humanity perished. We fell into darkness. But now we rise from the ashes. Now we fight back. Marco Emery was born into the war. After his mother is killed, he joins the Human Defense Force, Earth's ragtag army. Emery must survive basic training, become a soldier, and finally face the aliens in battle. Against the alien onslaught, Earth stands alone. But we will fight. We will rise. We will win. If you loved Ender's Game, Starship Troopers, and Old Man's War, you'll love Earthrise, a new military science fiction series. From a USA Today best-selling author.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Earth Alone is military science-fiction if you had to shelve it that's where you'd put it. You'd be limiting the readership too much though. Listen. I know all about military sci-fi. It often starts with, here's the arc:1) Meet the protagonist & see him in normal environment/home. Nice guy. Likable. Maybe a bit artistic/sensitive.2) MILITARY!!!3) Boot camp is hard, a series of examples of how hard it is and how overwhelming and "I just wanna go home, I miss... stuff."4) Things start coming together, the company/platoon/whatever starts gelling and getting less haggard feeling.5) Death. Someone dies. Not an important character but one that's been added in there, perhaps after the story was written because all boot camp stories need this person to die. You can literally remove them from the story and it doesn't change in any way. It just serves the purpose Coulton's Death did

in The Avengers and brings the team even closer together. "We're doing this for DEAD GUY!!!"6) Graduation. Everything's golden.7) Off to war. OMG - it's horrible. I hate this. Thank Glob for all that training! this is what we trained for people! Our protagonist turns out to be a great leader of men but denies it and says he was just doing what had to be done.8) Much death but remains of the troop go on to bigger things. That happens in ALL boot camp stories. It's THE story arc and I felt like this book was doing the same thing. Hitting all the same beats as Ender's Game (The Ender Quartet series Book 1) (Orson Scott Card - read the book, ignore the movie) Starship Troopers (Robert A. Heinlein - read the book, ignore the movie), and countless others that've gone before. You know why it happens this way? Because it works. The death scene that is always there and that I always see coming even if I don't know who it's going to be... it's there and it is the click. It's the moment the hero goes from the person he was when we met him to the person he is going to be in the end. It's a transformative death, the chrysalis moment where he changes and the death is a punctuation mark, an exclamation point when done correctly, and a comma when done incorrectly (I'm looking at you Madonna's baseball movie A League of Their Own... nobody even knew who that character WAS! You knew the beat, but you did it wrong.) This book hit all those beats, and you know it's going to. It's that kind of book. And it did it exceptionally well. To the point where I finished the last of the book (Beats 6-8 above) in Taco Johns eating their super nachos and drinking a giant tea and crying. Literally wiping my eyes with a napkin and sniffing crying as I read it. I cried from happiness and joy and sadness and pride. It was outstanding. I cried unashamedly and kept reading right there in public with a napkin in one hand as I blotted my eyes with it one at a time so I didn't have to stop reading. At one point I thought I was going to choke on my churro as I tried to swallow it and found that being "choked up with emotion" is more than a figure of speech. My throat rebelled against the idea of swallowing at that moment. The characters are good. I liked them. There's one, a tiny girl, who has a story she tells about two times too often but, it's there to make a point so Arenson beats us over the head with it, the characters too. I get it. I went to boot camp and the mouthiness these characters had... and the punishments they were given... that part was unrealistic to me. They had quite a few more smart-assed remarks than I thought they should have. That bugged me some. But it didn't take away from how much I liked the characters, the story, or the book itself. Listen, it's not A Tale of Two Cities, or The Stand (seriously, one of the best books ever written) but it's really really good. I read it on my kindle and on the last page when it offered to sell me the next in the series I clicked BUY NOW without a moment's hesitation. I won't read it next though. I'm wrung out. I need something lighter.

When I was in boot camp 55 years ago, I often found the same type of things described in this story. The humans have not been more truly described as the way that they were trained. The beginning of the training in the past and the current situation in this story is very different because of the most horrible aliens that had already devastated the Earth. I was only a very different and simple person who was not training to kill, but to be a technical repairman on electronic devices during the Vietnam war. However, I did get some of the same type of training with automatic weapons.

This was my first experience reading Arenson. I'm solidly impressed with what he's done here, both with the story premise and how I felt in the end about wanting to read on in the series. The blurb says this is an ideal fit for fans of Ender's Game and Starship Troopers. I agree. Earth Alone delivers on the sense of camaraderie that builds in a boot camp setting, while empathizing with the difficult scenarios that brought each member. The main character has a strong love triangle situation going, and while Earth Alone is not a romance, you feel for the young man being a bit of a romantic, and getting his heart broken once or twice along the way. We have plenty going for it as the series builds off book two in this regard, but more so in the aspect of him learning to be a soldier. I don't want to spoil the transformation, so I'll just say Arenson did a great job with this character and making me want to root for him in subsequent books. The premise is a good one for fans of alien invasion and military science fiction. The aliens that invaded fifty years ago pushed Earth's buttons, and got nuked pretty bad because of it. The strategy shifted to more of a death by a thousand cuts approach, where they send advance troops that land like meteors, can infect people with hideous and sterilizing diseases, and can certainly kill hundreds at a time before they're taken down. This takes our main character, who would rather read and write his life away in the comfort of peace, and forces him into war. I really empathized with him in this. I have so much admiration for our service members for doing what I don't and can't. Well, our main character doesn't have that freedom to avoid the sacrifices and struggle to come in the war he'll be thrown into, and I admired seeing not only how he reacted, but also how Arenson crafted his story. There's a sense looking back on books like Starship Troopers, Ender's Game, and more modern examples like Germline and Quarter Share that books this good, and the authors who write them, are hard to find. I believe Earth Share is one of those books, and seeing how prolific Arenson is encourages me of the many more stories I'll have to enjoy. The narration by Jeffrey Kafer is as always a rock solid contribution to audiobook loving military science fiction. This guy keeps getting gigs for a good reason, and I'm glad to see him joining this project.

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