



# Beyond Our Stars

*Marie Langager*

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Fleeing a destroyed Earth, seventeen-year-old orphan Hope grew up living in the confines of a spaceship heading to CR-3, a new home planet. She's been kicking the steel walls for too long and ever since she broke her boyfriend's heart, touchdown could mean open air and a fresh start. But no one expected the Locals.

Hope's dreams of freedom turn into nightmares when the Locals trap the humans and mark groups for observation. At any moment she can be called into a holographic observation room for testing. Some days she's drowning in a strange dark ocean, some days she's locked up without food, and all with the one boy she can't seem to forget.

As the Locals study Hope, she studies them. She wants to believe the tall grey creatures could be peaceful, but as the simulations become more dangerous, Hope is about to become the human race's last chance for survival.

## **Beyond Our Stars Details**

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# **From Reader Review Beyond Our Stars for online ebook**

## **Pocket Mouse says**

Solid 3. Would be 3.5 if there had been any epilogue

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## **Christine Duval says**

I'm not usually a Sci Fi girl, though I should be considering how much Star Wars my husband has forced me to watch - um, I mean shared with me - over the years. But since our books were launching together, I wanted to read Marie's book. So I picked it up and from page one I couldn't stop. I was immediately intrigued by the plot: a hundred thousand humans escape a burning earth to seek refuge on the only other planet that can sustain them only to discover it is already inhabited by alien beings. A handful of humans, including young Hope, get marked for observation and are subjected to a series of ever more challenging and dangerous tests. Hope soon realizes that she is the key to the human race's survival and she sets out to get the "locals" to trust her. I found myself really involved with her story, rooting for her to succeed and I loved the underlying tension between Hope and her ex-boyfriend.

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## **Judith Tewes says**

Upon the demise of Earth, honour, worthiness, and Hope is tested when her group of survivors finally arrive on the planet they've identified as a new home - only to find it inhabited by a mysterious and technologically advanced society. Will the humans be accepted? Or will they destroy themselves before their fate is decided? You'll be taken "beyond" in this sci-fi exploration of love and redemption.

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## **Kelley Lynn says**

I REALLY loved this book. I will admit, that I was kind of confused during the first chapter. But then in Chapter 2 we go back in time a few months and everything is explained really well. Hope and Chance are such well developed characters and I was rooting for them the whole time. I like the constant conflict and struggle between those from Earth, with themselves as well as what to do with the Locals. A very well written story. I will definitely be reading more of Langager's work.

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## **Shanti says**

Look, this book was weird. I liked the ideas, but the characters were really unlikeable. Why did Chance and Hope like each other? What did Legacy add to the equation? Why did Hope want peace with the Locals? Don't get me wrong- I liked that they were looking for peace and not fighting- this is something that should happen more. But what was with the characters. They were all annoying. They had weird names. I just didn't get it. It felt a lot like Across the Universe but much much less awesome. I also don't get what was with all

the Repopulation and stuff- that was not pursued once they reached the ground. I think that you should read this book if you don't want to be involved with the characters, like vague worlds, perfect and emotionless characters and want to be irritated.

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### **Kristine Asselin says**

I loved this science fiction! I loved the teenage girl as the emerging leader of the new world. She's the surrogate daughter of the chief and often serves as his Adviser, she's looked to for guidance from the survivors. But when things start to go bad with the locals, her positive attitude and hopeful strategy start to be questioned. She has a lot of doubt internally, but she's an awesome strong MC. I love the smoldering relationship with Chance.

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### **Marcy Evick says**

Different, but interesting.

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### **Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says**

**Do you hate having a brain? Do you find that the act of thinking is just so difficult?** I mean, fuck analytical processes, really. Well, ladies and gentlemen, step right up. Leave your better judgments at the door. Wave a fond farewell to your brain's cerebral cortex. Kiss your rationality and common sense goodbye. Engage your suspension of disbelief, because man oh man, this book is just for you!

No imagination. No creativity. No rationality.

Without a doubt, this is the worst book about aliens and intergalactic travel I have ever read. If you mashed YA dystopia and sci-fi together with a rotten banana and some liver and fed it to a hyena, the hyena would eat it, regurgitate it, then cackle uncontrollably for around 20 minutes afterward. **This book is not so much a sci-fi as it is the glorification of the most wonderful, smartest, most perfectest girl in the whole fucking universe ever and how her sheer fucking brilliance saves the fate of humanity in a way that I can't understand myself, except to say that she does it brilliantly because the book tells me so.** Somehow.

The most powerful figure on the ship trusts our main character, Hope. She's got a posse of boys who pretty much bend to her beck and will. Female friends? Merely bodies to fluff up the book. Fuck girl friends, really. Who needs girls when you've got one bad, bad, naughty dickschnozzle who's secretly in love with you---but man, does he not show it! I mean, there's teasing a girl you like in 3rd grade, and then there's calling her a bitch.

*"You shut your stupid mouth! Stupid bitch who believes these things are our friends! Do you feel friendly now?"*

*"Stupid bitch," he said again.*

There's another boy who loves you and wants to marry you, and yet another one who is permanently friendzoned. It's raining men!

**Oh, and adults? They're fucking dumb.** For a girl who's so utterly perfect, Hope hasn't got a lot of respect for the wisdom of the elderly, instead constantly calling them "**old-erly**," Hope's attitude constantly belittles adults who are, naturally, not so wise as the brilliant kids.

*Seriously, the elderly that had made it onto the ships had gotten crankier and ruder than I'd ever known them to be on Earth. Like there was some unspoken agreement between all of them that this was all our fault, the young people were to blame, that they deserved better in their twilight years. Lectures from some grouchy, pissed off old-erly hunched over on a cane were not uncommon. 'Respect your Elders,' they said. Like they wanted to teach us, to impart their wisdom before it was too late. But in my book it already was too late.*

This book is juvenile. It is simplistic. It is devoid of imagination and creativity. The writing is sophomoric, filled with errors in punctuation and grammar, like the use of "you're" instead of "your" in the possessive form. The dialogue is childish, filled with exclamation mark that leaned towards histrionics instead of implying drama. Were it not for occasional sprinklings of profanity and some very slightly sexual scenes, this book could easily be a grade school book. But then again, **saying this book is grade-school quality might be an insult to some grade school books because there are quite a few exemplary children's books that contains the complexities and the plot and the character development that this book utterly lacked.**

Summary: The premise is simple enough, and the book blurb summarized it quite well. Earth is destroyed, the demise happened around 2058. It is some 15-20 years after. There are less than 100,000 survivors on Earth, and 5,000 of those survivors are on a spaceship, the *Reflection*. They are off on a 5-year voyage to a planet they have called Haven. They land only to encounter a seemingly hostile alien species, on this planet, the humans ARE the aliens. The "aliens" are called "Locals," by the humans, and the Locals have selected 10 of each age group, children, adolescents, adults, elderly (or rather, "old-erly," fuck you, Hope). Hope is one of the adolescents chosen by the Locals, she and her group are put through some tests, used more or less as lab rats by the Locals under certain conditions. And somehow or another, **Hope and her brilliant fucking brain turns out to be... "the human race's last chance for survival."**

The premise is simple enough, so what went wrong? Oh, my. Where do I start?

**The World Building**: Pitiful. Laughable.

1. The naming of children - "Weeks got his name from parents who'd given in to the doomsday thinking on Earth, near the end. Some of the kids had names like his now. Days, Weeks, Hours. People named their kid after the amount of time they thought they had left."

As a result, we have some utterly ludicrous names. Because 90% of parents will want to give their children fucking ludicrous names like Pilgrim, Legacy, Chance, Marseille, Cairo. I'm just glad we didn't actually encounter anyone named Seconds. There's nary a normal name in the book.

2. The demise of Earth - Incredibly vague. Your usual formulaic shit without much sense or explanation. I am so sick of this eco-disaster bullshit. It makes no sense, it is sensationalistic without an iota of truth, and it is even more incredible given the fact that this book takes place so close to the near future.

*Most of the Gov officials had died in the cataclysmic failure of Earth that had come suddenly after twelve years on the precipice.*

Oh, cataclysmic failure. That's soooooo fucking detailed. Oh wait, there are floods. There are Tsunamis (which, for some fucking reason is capitalized like that in the book. Editor, where are you?) There are volcanic eruptions, lava flows that kill people.

Are you fucking kidding me? Where did all this come from? Did the world fucking implode between the years 2014 and 2058? If so, *could we get some fucking explanation besides, "well, the world collapsed?"* Tsunamis don't happen out of nowhere. Volcanic eruptions don't happen out of nowhere. How did the remaining people survive? **The portrayal of the destruction of earth is poorly portrayed, without an ounce of ingenuity.**

3. What fucking spaceship? - Along with an extremely vague past, we have an extremely vague present. If you're going to put humans, and not just one human, **five thousand humans on a spaceship in the year 2070 or so, you better give me a good fucking explanation.** There was none. **Technology? Fuck that shit, because apparently when you are writing to a YA audience, there's no need for an iota of veracity and explanation because your audience is too dumb to care about that, right?** Fuck that, seriously.

There is no mention of the development of space technology in the years between 2014 and the book's present. There is no mention of the advances made before we put one man in a spaceship to the point where we can take 5000 people on a journey taking five years to a distant planet.

Was there warp speed? Are we traveling at the speed of light? How distant is the planet? How big is the spaceship? **How did that many people survive on that spaceship for all those years? Speaking of which...**

4. Fuck Rationing on the Spaceship, Because We Have Motherfucking Cheetos and Chips! Ahoy: Seriously, they have "cheese puffs" and packaged chocolate chip cookies. What, man? What? Are you fucking serious? There is no food manufacturing technology on board, and all we're told is that they have enough food on board for 5000 people to last 5 years. THAT'S A LOT OF FOOD. THAT'S A LONG FUCKING TIME. Was there no greenhouses? **Don't we have better use of room on board a motherfucking spaceship than to use it as fucking storage space?** I find that absolutely idiotic.

There is an explanation for why the spaceship doesn't need ration. It's fucking stupid.

*Rationing had never been necessary because more ships were built and stocked than had actually taken off.*

*During that time we'd taken food from other vessels and over-stocked ourselves.*

WHAT? Ok, let's get one thing straight. **When you are up in the motherfucking air, space and weight is of the essence. That's why you get charged so fucking much for carrying on additional bags during flight. It doesn't fucking matter that you have a lot of food on earth left over from other spaceships so that you can overstock yourself. The issue is capacity on board a fucking spaceship.** It doesn't make any sense!

5. The Fairy Fucking Fantasy of a Foreign Planet: Hostile space?! Not fucking likely. It's a gloriously Earth-like environment, with twinkling multi-colored stars and a Northern Lights-like sky!?

*there were beautiful green, yellow and pink dancing lights waving across the sky and illuminating the land below. It looked like the northern lights back home, but it was everywhere.*

Fuck you! And news flash, Hope. You lived in fucking Reno, Nevada. There ain't no Northern Lights to be seen there!

Let's get one thing straight. This planet ain't nowhere near our galaxy, since scientists have found no Earth-like environment anywhere near us with our current technology now. Any other galaxies are thousands of lights years ago, so this planet better be fucking far. So how did they get there so fast? Gasp!

There is a complete oversimplification of alien life. Everything is so fucking convenient. There are edible fruits, which are Earth-like but of course, slightly different for vanity's fucking sake. There is water. There is a similar gravitational pull (my assumption, because the book didn't fucking mention anything about it).

**There are already-grown crops on the planet, ready to be harvested, since aliens plant crop circles on Earth they surely must plant crops on their planet, right?** How fucking dumb do you think we are?

*Straight lines, different patches, like a quilt.  
Then I realized what I was looking at. Crops. Huge, rolling fields of crops. Others realized seconds after I did. Then the image got so close the plants became unmistakable. There was obviously food growing in abundance.*

**And there are edible animals! Let's just call the animal Steves! Eat the Steves! Eat all of them!**

*Almost immediately we discovered that our landing site was a nesting spot for animals about the size of a pig, with mud-colored shells, hard as diamond. The kid got to be the first to name something in our new world, and he called them Steves.  
Chief had ordered a special feast tonight with some of the reserve Steves."*

6. The Oversimplification of Alien Life: Is it just me, or is it really lacking in imagination to make an alien world so completely similar to our own. It is such an over-assumption and a **superimposition of our own beliefs towards something of which we do not know**. This book is essentially assuming that a distant planet is almost identical to Earth in biology. It has similar crops, similar animals, that are digestible to human beings. There are aliens, but they come straight out of Area 51's little (or rather, large) gray men. Elongated gray men with large heads. There's just no imagination there. They bleed, but they're aaaaaaliens because they bleed blue. It is a stupid assumption to assume that aliens look like anything we are familiar to, that their method of living is similar to ours, that they are out of a fucking Hollywood movie. This book is so lacking in creativity that it is incredible.

The Mary Sue: Hope is beautiful, well, she's not beautiful, but she supposes that she could be considered good looking. But it's not important, anyway. Really, it's not important.

*I supposed I was pretty-ish. Somehow, I'd grown into a girl that some boys might like to look at. But it didn't matter.*

Hope is extremely tough, she survived a trek ON FOOT of roughly 150 miles in a country supposedly devastated by fires and volcanoes. At the age of 13. But there's no explanation of how she actually accomplished it.

Hope is so popular, she doesn't even know it.

*"Oh, everyone knows me?" I asked, not understanding.  
"You're only the most popular girl on Reflection," the girl answered.  
That shut me up. I was? Not to my knowledge.*

Hope is a natural leader, someone with charisma so well-disguised I never would have realized.

*People looked at me first. Everyone assumed I was a leader so I went with it.*

Hope is so fucking special, even the Chief of the spaceship wants her opinion as to what to do regarding life or death situations regarding the new planet. The Chief brings in a few other teenagers, too, but ultimately, it is always Hope to whom the Chief turns for advice. Hope tells the Chief what to do. Adults are fucking idiots who can do nothing without the superiority of Hope.

*I whispered into Chief's ear. "Let Legacy out, bring him to the depository. Resume removal of the weapons."*

If she does something wrong, the Chief covers for her. Hope never gets into trouble.

*"This girl is providing intel to the creatures after all! Behind your back, Chief!"  
Chief's face became completely composed. "I asked Hope to create those."*

Hope is so amazing.

*"Chance said you were amazing."*

Yep. He's not the only one who thinks Hope is amazing.

*Legacy paused. "The truth is I think you're amazing."*

So brilliant. So strong.

*"You're so strong, Hope. How can you be that strong?"*

Her every intuition is correct. Her spider senses tingle as she looks into an alien's eyes.

*I searched its eyes and I thought maybe I saw sadness.*

Women's intuition ain't got nothing on fucking Hope. Sure, the aliens torture them, they play games with the humans, they almost killed them. But Hope's got feeeeeelings, man. There's really a kind heart underneath all of the aliens' cruelty. She knows it. How?

*I had no answer. We weren't their enemy. Each session seemed so different, I couldn't explain it.*

She doesn't know. She can't explain it. But she can fucking FEEL IT.

**Don't take this book with a grain of salt, take it with an entire jar.** You might be killed by sodium poisoning, but that might be preferable to reading some parts of this book.

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## **Jen McConnel says**

Wow. This is an intense read! After the destruction of the Earth, a handful of survivors have spent five years in space en route to a habitable planet, only to land and discover that it's already inhabited. The motives of the locals are nearly impossible to understand, but Hope and the other teens on board the ship keep trying. Desperate to make a new life, but frightened and angry, is it only a matter of time before the last remaining humans destroy each other...or will the locals beat them to it?

This is a story of love, loss, and an unlikely leader. It's filled with hope (and the protagonist is aptly named!)

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## **Mary Summer says**

I love this book with the power of a thousand suns. Even if I didn't love the carefully crafted characters, and the beautifully drawn world, (which I most certainly do), I'd still be head-over-heels for the timely themes and ethical dilemmas the characters have to navigate. I couldn't put this book down. I stayed up way too late reading it and had a serious book hangover at work the following day. I highly recommend it. Just wait till the weekend to read it. ;-)

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## **Dani says**

*Beyond Our Stars* is sci-fi romance book and nothing else.

The concept behind it was great. Fleeing a destroyed Earth, a girl called Hope lives on a spaceship heading to a planet called CR-3. Unfortunately, the planet is already occupied by creatures the humans call "locals"

So, what is interesting about this book is that the "aliens" are the humans and through the locals' experiments we realize how we, humans, would act if some extraterrestrial beings landed on Earth.

So that's why I rated it 2 stars and not only 1. The premise was great, but the author didn't develop it enough.

The world building is poor. There were some interesting things such like "the slamming finals" (a competition between the inhabitants of the spaceship) and the tunnels used to get to the simulations the locals held for the humans. Oh, yes, you hear me right. The book is a succession of simulations in which the locals "study" a group of the humans. I felt it was like a cheap copy of *Divergent* for that and *The Martian Chronicles* for the utopian approach of the situation.

What upsetted me the most was that the new planet, CR-3, is very very similar to Earth. There were a lot of possibilities to develop here but the author decided to give us a planet that is almost equal to our own.

Another bad thing is that we are not given a lot of information about the destruction of Earth and I'm tired of this in futuristic books. The cataclysmic vision is overused in modern literature.

And to end with this review, let's talk about our characters and the romance. The characters are not heroes, they are insufferable, silly teenagers. The protagonist, Hope, is so stupid and annoying when she is pictured as the ultimate savior of the human race, hence her name. Her part-time boyfriend has only one aim in this

book: to save our protagonist and be the martyr.

So, not a lot of imaginative things happened in this book. I'll stop ranting, I guess you all got a picture of what happens in this one and it's approach into the apocalypse.

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### **Phil Langager says**

Great story! Great read! Can't wait to see what happens next!

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### **Rochelle says**

I was confused in chapter one about what was going on, but then we jump to chapter two and it's 3 months early and we start to get an explanation. The book starts out good and then just keeps getting better and better until you are so hooked you are reading it as fast as you can, holding your breath. It was a quick, exciting read that I finished in one sitting.

This was my kind of sci-fi, I absolutely loved it.

Earth is gone, and what's left of the human race is heading for the closest inhabitable planet they can find. It's been a five year journey and at the start of the novel they have almost reached their destination.

Hope is just as excited about T.D (touch down) as everybody else. But when her relationship with her long time boyfriend, Chance, falls apart, she is suddenly facing the new world alone. When they reach CR-3 there is one thing they didn't expect – The Locals.

After the first night on the planet, some of the humans wake up with marking on their foreheads – including Hope and Chance.

Those who are marked are thrown into 'the Stacks' and are put through virtual reality type experiments that test their level of endurance. I thoroughly enjoyed these sections of the novel. They were action packed (well most of them) and very gripping.

The experiments keep throwing Chance and Hope together, even though he is trying to avoid her after she broke his heart. I love the tension between these two characters and waited in anticipation for times they had alone together. There was no insta-love because they already had history, which made for a much more realistic relationship.

The experiments start to intensify, but Hope holds on to the hope that the aliens are good, though she seems to be the only one. Another thing I loved about this book was the role reversal in it. This was no aliens invading Earth story, this was a human invading aliens story. It looks at our humanity and questions our morality.

Thrilling, captivating and achingly romantic, Beyond Our Stars is one YA sci-fi not to be missed. It reminded me of why I loved this genre so much. I highly recommend it. Marie Langager is definitely an author to watch. I will be reading future novels from her.

And if anyone from Bloomsbury spark is reading this, I know you are an e-imprint, but if you think about making print copies I'd definitely buy one so I could have this wonderful book on my shelf :)

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**Brandi says**

Thrilling book, I read it in a matter of days. Earth as we know it has been destroyed and the remaining humans must preserve what is left of mankind. Exciting, scary, gripping, and even young love round out this book. Highly recommend it!

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**Ami says****Not Bad**

Good structure to the story, kind of wish there was a little more explanation in a few places. Over all its a good and quick read.

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