



Rise

Brian Guthrie

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On a world brought to the brink of destruction, life now clings to the shattered remains of the planet's crust. These fragments are the Shells: fragile wastelands of desert and rock, protected from the cold of space by a water shield. In the struggle for survival, its people have depended on ancient technology, controlled by the omnipresent Network, to sustain the entire population.

But the Network is breaking down, water is sparse, and a complete societal collapse is imminent. As the stakes become clear, the inhabitants of the Shells begin to turn on each other, and appear headed for all-out civil war.

Now the paths of several strangers will converge at the opportune moment. From a woman who seeks to protect her family as it's ripped apart to a prison warden hiding from his past, this unlikely group has little in common--but together, they may hold the key to saving humanity from its worst enemy: itself.

Rise Details

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Author : Brian Guthrie

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From Reader Review Rise for online ebook

J-F Dubeau says

Guthrie has, with *Rise*, dug a deep pool of character and mystery and, within the first few pages pulls, you right in. There's a rich mysticism woven in the fabric of this science fiction story. Told through vivid images and descriptions, the author manages to make a dystopia feel oddly beautiful. My only complaint, as is often the case with some of my favourite books, is that the sequel isn't close at hand for me to read.

Rick Heinz says

I'll start off by stating that Science Fiction isn't my go-to genre. I grew up on the classics and was a big Bradbury and Heinlein fan but swapped genre's later on in life.

This is important as I picked up *Rise*. It had a slow start and onion-style world building. Where each chapter reveals just a little bit more, so on and so forth. So I tossed the book in my bag and carried it around the behemoth with me. Picking up a chapter here and there in daily life.

Normally, this would be the sign of a bad review or a bad book. If a book doesn't hook you and make you feel like tearing through it, it's rubbish they say. In this case, and in the case of most classic sci-fi, the book carries you from day to day allowing you to escape a bit each time. You find yourself pondering the world of the *Rise*, the Shells, and the broken earth, wondering how they got there.

This is why I rated it as high as I did. Very few books provide me with a month of entertainment while reading, and then have enough depth to spark an imagination afterwards and engage in theory craft.

So, if you are a looking for a great winter read, check out *Rise*.

Antigone says

Rise is a crowd-funded publication.

What this means is that potential readers are provided a synopsis of a story and asked if they'd like to pre-order the novel. Once a certain financial threshold is met, the work is published. The publisher (in this case Inkshares) will then ship the book to those who ordered it and supply additional stock to selected sales venues. I bought my copy at Barnes & Noble where, it must be said, the seller made no mention of this. Had I been aware of the grass roots course this novel took to reach my hand, I would have approached it in a more flexible frame of mind. Still, the aim here is to give an outsider an equal shot at the wider reading public. In taking that shot, you also take on the expanded field of reaction and review.

I mention these factors because I had difficulty with the story, and because this is a Goodreads author, and because at the end of the day we have become - however the method - joined as writer and reader. This is me trying to be aware of all of that.

At five hundred plus pages, *Rise* is a hefty science fiction novel fresh to the shelves by first-time author Brian Guthrie. It's a good-looking paperback that nestles nicely in the hand. The cover blurbs are filled with promise. One, by podcaster Tom Merritt, aims an arrow straight to the heart: "*If Arrakis had just a little more water and a network instead of spice.*" This is where the well-read fantasy fan has a tendency to cock his brow and start calculating the hit to his funding. And while I suppose that's the purpose of a blurb, there really should be some ounce of truth in the quip. I did not find this story to be particularly *Dune*-like, *Dune*-inspired, or even *Dune*-influenced. There's a water issue, sure. But, hey, Los Angeles has a water issue too. Doesn't mean you're going to find Reverend Mother Gaius Helen Mohiam walking down Hollywood Boulevard.

Guthrie's tale revolves, quite literally, around a planet that has suffered a cataclysmic event. Chunks of its crust have broken off and now orbit the core. These chunks were artificially-equipped with some sort of water-shielding and seeded with the planet's surviving population. So there are a number of these "shells" with diverse communities upon them, a few of which can be visited when they happen to be in range.

There is, apparently, a conspiracy. The Dragon Queen (a powerful presence who remains insufficiently explained) enlists a scribe named Logwyn to interview four key figures in an effort to uncover and address the mysterious re-routing of water on one of the shells. Logwyn's interviews are what tell the story...and while one might imagine five hundred plus pages would give her plenty of time to talk to all four of her assigned subjects, alas no. Her formal interviews amounted to two, both of which answered far fewer questions than they should have and solved not a single crime. (I read the whole book. Still don't know who re-routed the water or why.)

My observation, for whatever this may be worth: It takes more than busy characters to keep a story moving. If an author allows his characters to distract him, the most they can hope for in literary life is to exist as distractions. Then the whole thing implodes. You've got a story to tell? Tell it. That's why we're here.

Debbie says

Great book! I was hooked from the beginning. I loved the characters and the story kept me on the edge of my seat till the end. Can't wait for the sequel!

Eileen says

Noch lange nach dem Lesen von *Rise* ist mir die Welt und vor allem die Charaktere nicht mehr aus dem Kopf gegangen. Dabei ist es vor allem diese ungewöhnliche Komplexität der in *Rise* erschaffenen Welt und ihrer Bewohner, die den Leser fesseln, ihn fordern und ihn gedanklich noch lange in dieser zerbrochenen Welt leben lassen. Ich habe selten ein Buch gelesen, in dem auch über die kleinsten Nebencharaktere so viel erzählt wird, ohne sie zu beschreiben. Das funktioniert auch aus dem Grund, dass Brian Guthrie unglaublich gute Dialoge schreibt. Von tiefgründig bis humorvoll ist alles dabei ohne je artifiziell zu wirken. Das Buch handelt nicht nur von einer zerbrochenen Welt, sondern auch von gebrochenen Menschen, die in tiefster Dunkelheit wieder Hoffnung finden, jeder mit seiner eigenen tragischen Geschichte. Die Handlung, die Wendungen sind nichts, was man bereits schon mehrfach gelesen hat, es ist ein sehr ungewöhnliches Werk, dem man von der ersten bis zur letzten Seite anmerkt, dass Brian Guthrie diese Welt mit einer riesigen

Leidenschaft erschaffen hat.

Jeder, der es liebt über neue Zukunftswelten und Charaktere mit besonderer Tiefe nachzudenken, der wird von Rise begeistert sein und wie ich nach dem Lesen sehnsüchtig auf den zweiten Teil warten.

Ben Arzate says

Full review

Rise is a flawed but entertaining sci-fi page-turner and a promising set up to its series. It's an ambitious book that doesn't accomplish everything it sets out to do, but it certainly won't bore you. I recommend it, especially to fans of science fiction and fantasy

Charlie - A Reading Machine says

Rise by Brian Guthrie

Our story takes place in a world formed of scattered landmasses or 'Shells' that are kept in gravitational rotation around the earth's core by an ancient computer known as the Network. Protected from the unforgiving darkness of space by a water shield also supplied by the Network it's as though the earth has become a mini cluster of planets, so when this omnipotent being recognises her own failing reasoning she tasks a seemingly ordinary man, but a man who sees things others miss, to go looking for answers.

The afore mentioned man is a scribe named Logwyn and he receives a visit from a Nomad with a note telling him that the Queen will soon summon him with a task. With very little justification or reasoning he is told to respond a certain way and show her the contents of a box that he himself must not even view. These two stipulations or orders are the first of many things this character must take on trust and also the first of many breadcrumbs readers must follow and it is only much later that their purpose comes into focus. The mission is vague other than to seek out three people, two of whom are lost to everyone but the third, but the way the reader is enveloped into this strange and wonderful world is inviting and bound to inspire their curiosity.

His first stop is Micaela with her story potentially leading him to Suyef and Quentin, the other major players. Here we learn how a father's obsession with coding allowed him and his family to have a fighting chance when their water allocation starts disappearing and also the ramifications of getting inside the system and changing things to suits one's needs. Micaela's first and unique encounter with the Queen, where she alone is left unharmed after an attack, points to her being a person of some supernatural importance and from here things really start to amp up. To reveal any more of the story in terms of these three characters would push things into spoiler territory but each voice is distinctive, rich and also tragic in it's own way.

There is something incredibly original and fantastical within these pages. The world building is second to none, the characters are relatable and inspire empathy and the story is unlike anything I've come across. What kept me enjoying Rise was that it's an equally fulfilling blend of science fiction, gumshoe mystery and fantasy with the mechanicals of space being balanced by, and this is just a taste of the otherworldly magic, some people's ability to manifest themselves into dragons. This is only the beginning of something much bigger and watching this world unfold further or even come apart altogether will be a real treat for readers.

Tony Valdez says

Brian Guthrie's *Rise* opens with a quiet conversation between two strangers in a single room. Yet it expertly paints a picture of an expansive world to be explored, and kicks off the plot with an intriguing mystery to be solved. I found myself reminded of Gandalf tasking Frodo with protecting the One Ring. So many questions to be answered, but for now, just enough need-to-know details to begin what is sure to be an epic quest. I am sold!

Matthew says

In Brian Guthrie's *Rise*, he starts with a science fiction setting based on a familiar idea, the scarcity of water, then takes the world and literally breaks it into dozens of floating pieces (or shells in this case) and tops it all off with the addition of dragons.

The main character Logwyn is tasked by her Queen to find and interview four individuals in hopes of understanding and piecing together the answers of a problem that threatens to destroy everything. Unlike many fantasy novels, it is not necessarily Logwyn's job to take action, but instead to sort the pieces of the puzzle in hopes of uncovering the answers that seem to be eluding the Queen. That perspective, along with the recounting of the tales from her interviews give plenty to hook and draw the reader deeper into the world.

The twist of having the world broken into different shells instead of kingdoms or regions adds another level of complexity. Most people grow up knowing about the other shells, but never visiting or meeting others from any other than their own. Logwyn's puzzle affects them all, but isn't the only connection. Across the shells is a network of knowledge and information. The network controls the flow of water to different areas of different shells and that network is breaking down, decaying.

The more you read and the further you dive into the world the more you get sucked in wanting to not only help find the answer for the Queen, but the desire to learn the stories of these people Logwyn is interviewing and what is it that connects them all so deeply.

Where are the dragons you ask? If tracking down four different stories and solving a problem that threatens the whole of existence isn't enough, there are always dragons striking seemingly from nowhere while raining terror and stealing lives when unexpected. The dragons hold an additional puzzle piece, but what, and why? Those questions and others are left hanging while the reader pines for the next installment of this epic series.

Dave says

Deep and compelling story in a cleverly designed world, *Rise* is a solid read. I'm looking forward to the sequel!

Peter Ryan says

Fantastic world building and outstanding character development. I had an absolute blast reading this book. Well done Brian Guthrie!

Janet says

This started as a good book, it had an interesting world and characters, but then just ran around in circles punctuated by lines such as this:

Those words occupied my mind, which tried to find their meaning. I didn't have to wait long.

But you did have to wait long, because at the end of this 540 page book you're still not really any closer to any tangible answers or reasons to anything that happened in this story.

Bookish Linguist says

Can I just say wow?

That was some crazy ride I went on. What began with a classic tale of a post-apocalypse world running on ancient technologies that they can barely use let alone understand turned into something....more.

In Rise we start with the scribe getting mysterious orders from a cloaked figure and is then sent to meet the Queen, which is unheard of for a small time scribe. The book takes off from there as we try to hunt down these key people and have them tell us their stories. The people we meet are broken in ways that are both obvious and not.

The elements of Scifi blended into sci-fantasy. The "magic" system took me a bit to get used to. But it just fit with the world. Now I can't wait until it is explored more! Can anyone learn this language? Or only people with that special "knack?" And the dragons!! Yes -Dragons. Enough said.

I did want the shell's politics and culture explored a bit more. We were kept very confined in the story and only had hints that there were other people on the shells beyond the main characters. They had almost no interaction with anyone apart from themselves, partly because of their circumstances, and partly I think because it wasn't "necessary". I would like to learn more about the culture/world that they live in. I mean it is ending - so for us to truly feel Micaela's heartbreak I think we needed to connect a bit more to it as well.

I enjoyed the distinct voices from each character and, while very confusing at first, the mode of story telling. There was one slow bit, when the first transition happened between Micaela and Quentin, and that was a bit of a struggle to power through. I also think that some of the narration transitions were a bit off. Some were obviously meant to be jarring. But I felt they weren't jarring enough - I once went on for a paragraph before realizing that I was seeing through another character's eyes. But after Quentin's story got into gear it was an epic roller coaster from then on out. I literally finished the second half of the book in one sitting because I couldn't put it down.

There is a lot going on in this book. So many raised eyebrows, the classic "wink, wink, nudge nudge" stuff going on that wasn't answered. It is almost a bit confusing and I think it is meant to be. One of those sorts that you are supposed to hang on to until the end of the series and it sorts itself. Well, I hope that is the case! This book definitely leaves on a cliffhanger royale so it better sort itself!

Overall I really can't wait for book two. I was so surprised I loved this as much as I did. I am giving it a 4.5 for slight disappointment on the world building and that middle 30 pages that took me more time than the rest of the 600 pages did all together.

Amy Manners says

Warning: Don't start this book unless you are happy to read all four books in the (forthcoming) series. You will have questions upon questions, and Guthrie likes to keep us in suspense while he carefully weaves his story.

I enjoyed this book and its blend of genres. I was there for the characters and the story, and I could let the sci-fi details of terrain and technology wash over me. It's not just for hardcore sci-fi/fantasy fans. I was surprised several times throughout the story by what else appeared in this strange new world Guthrie has created (I won't post any spoilers, you will have to find out for yourselves!). The story also deals with some tough issues in a sensitive manner, creating some very emotional moments.

I became a little weary in the middle, but just because there is so much story to tell and no answers to all the questions. The writing style has room for improvement, but seeing as the whole series hasn't yet been finished, I'm sure Guthrie would appreciate your feedback for his future work. I have already given him my two cents! All in all, an enjoyable and intriguing book that will leave you wanting more.

Ciera says

Actual rating 2/5

Per the author's request, I'm adding a written review to this book.

I was initially really excited to read this book because I've been on a science fiction kick lately, and this was exactly the type of sci fi I was really digging. But after five chapters, I really couldn't continue anymore. And that's because there was a stark lack of filler, for lack of a better word. Let me elaborate.

So for me, in order to enjoy a book and really get involved and invested with the characters and the story, it needs to be organic, and the plot needs to move naturally rather than stilted and contrived. The book dropped us in the middle of a story, and while I enjoy en media res in certain cases, sci fi is NOT a genre you can do that with. We meet the protag in this wasteland shell of an asteroid, and then suddenly this mysterious stranger showed up and quite literally jump started the plot without giving the reader a chance to discover this world. Within the first chapter, we met the protag, the mysterious stranger, the queen or empress or whoever, and the protag was given his mission. In my opinion, that entire scene, which took 15 pages, should have taken double, if not triple, that amount, so we could enjoy this setting to the fullest.

There was also a lot of telling rather than showing. This is an issue with most sci fi novels, however, because there's so much science and technical language and world/universe building that really needs to be explained, but there are artful ways to do that. I would have preferred an organic conversation between characters about their world, rather than a narrative by the author telling us where we were and why we were there.

Overall, the idea was there, and it was a really interesting one. The plot could have been great, and the characters could have been really dynamic. But unfortunately, the caliber of writing I prefer just wasn't there.
