



The Last Colony

John Scalzi

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Retired from his fighting days, John Perry is now village ombudsman for a human colony on distant Huckleberry. With his wife, former Special Forces warrior Jane Sagan, he farms several acres, adjudicates local disputes, and enjoys watching his adopted daughter grow up.

That is, until his and Jane's past reaches out to bring them back into the game--as leaders of a new human colony, to be peopled by settlers from all the major human worlds, for a deep political purpose that will put Perry and Sagan back in the thick of interstellar politics, betrayal, and war.

The Last Colony Details

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From Reader Review The Last Colony for online ebook

Marijan says

tre?a knjiga, tre?apri?a, i opet prili?no razli?ita. mrvicu slabija od druge. i mada na kraju knjige najavljuje oproštaj od storylinea, vidim da se nije baš oprostio :)

Mayim de Vries says

"It is an interesting thing to be both critical and expendable to humanity's effort to populate the stars."

Woodrow Wilson's wet dream goes interstellar!

"The Last Colony" is so far **the weakest in the Old Men's War** series. After "old people" (part one) and special forces (second volume), in the third instalment, Mr Scalzi focuses on the colonists and colonial life in general. The main characters are our old friends, John Perry and Jane Sagan. In a sense, this book finalises the stories of these two. John is an ombudsman on the remote planet of Huckleberry. It is a just the right job for a war hero without any experience useful in the daily life of a backwater rural colony. Jane is the local constabulary. Zoe, their adoptive daughter, has a blast of a teenage life. They even have two domesticated aliens to keep them company. Life's good.

And then, for reasons beyond my understanding, **John and Jane decide to abandon this quiet corner of the universe in order to participate in another venture sponsored by the Colonial Union. Are you surprised too? I was definitely outside my plausibility zone.** The whole "twist" was beyond my comprehension. They are not blackmailed. They have no obligations (except for a perverted sense of moral duty). They even have no direct or indirect benefit in it. Still, they hop on. And I have to say that the author did not manage to convince me why they shouldn't say "no, thank you" to the CU. I would.

While it is **nice to see John Perry** (his POV is very distinct and **I love his high sarcasm** - the scene with Chengelpet brothers and their goat was just priceless), **the overall plot is of lower density** and so the book read slower (at least for me). Frankly speaking, the **initial chapters are just boring because suddenly it is a Wild West in the space.** I have no fondness for Westerns and frontier towns and all the settler business was not that appealing.

After the initial boredom, as the whole scheme goes awry (as expected) **somewhere in the middle of the book, Mr Scalzi goes pollyanna and presents Woodrow Wilson's wet dream of the universe.** This was the precise moment when I understood why I had previously enjoyed the series so much. Simply put, it wasn't serious. It was fun, pure entertainment. And it was OK because not everybody needs to attempt to mimic Immanuel Kant. Not everybody should do that, in fact. And here, within few pages, we go **from Scalzi making fun and playing with the genre to Scalzi turning preachy and pushy.**

The **push direction is towards a full-blown utopia** ignoring the simplest laws of alliance building and working in concert as a security community. There is a UN without the Security Council (it is called Conclave) and it operates as if in the space the obstacles to ~~international~~ interplanetary cooperation (lack of trust, lack of information and free riding) were as absent as gravity. It would be hilarious if it wasn't obvious that Mr Scalzi is serious this time and not winking at the reader. And that he really believes in the beautiful

dream of multi-culti in the space where many races would live in peace and harmony, and among rainbows and unicorns... wait. No. No unicorns.

For those of you who wonder why I am so vehemently opposed to this blatant and stupid propaganda, please read John Msarsheimer's essay on international institutions as a cause of peace here in the full text and here in a 5-minute video. I promise it is worth your time.

On top of all this **hubris**, there is the totally **reified** Colonial Union as a **caricature of dictatorship** and the wise Conclave leader who eschews power but would kill for (pun intended and justified!) deliberative democracy and burden sharing. The whole book is written on **idiotic assumptions** (view spoiler), **conveniences** (view spoiler) and **inconsistencies** (view spoiler)

When I say that the book is much worse than the first two volumes, it still remains a decent reading. If you ignore the absurd geopolitical background, you might enjoy reading about the 'borderland settlement' tale and the problems of a small community.

For me, the Last Colony was a lost colony.

Also in the series:

1. Old Man's War ★★★★★
 2. The Ghost Brigades ★★★★★?
 4. Zoe's Tale ★????
 5. The Human Division ★★???
-

Mpauli says

Overall this was a fantastic read and a lot of fun. Seeing the story again told from John Perry's point of view was a blast and the combination of humor, plot, twists, characters and action worked really well for me. The only complaint I have is that for the plot to really work at two points people who should have known better make actually some stupid decisions. I think if everyone had really acted like I would assume leaders of large political groups would act, then the story couldn't have played out the way it did. So, technically I would deduct a half-star for this, so it is a 4.5 star read for me, which I'm still rounding up to 5, cause the book is just a lot of fun.

Terence says

After retiring from the Colonial Defense Force, John Perry and Jane Sagan started a new life on the Human colony Huckleberry. The two of them live with their adopted daughter Zoë, work local jobs, and have a farm. All of that changes when they are approached to be the leaders of a new human colony which will be colonized by people from other human colonies. There is more to this arrangement than they were told and the family finds itself once again forced to fight to survive.

John Scalzi shows another part of his universe with The Last Colony. In Old Man's War we learned about

how The Colonial Union gets recruits, *makes* them fighting ready, and the dangers of the universe. In Ghost Brigades we see the inner workings of the Special Forces and the increased danger they face. The Last Colony shows what life is like as a colonist and it's dangerous and boring. A whole lot of farming is involved which made the beginning drag quite a bit.

John Perry, Jane Sagan, and the colonists got thoroughly screwed in this book. It was shocking to see how even after such betrayal what people could be capable of doing. I'd like to think people would be smarter than this, but the colonists are probably similar to the majority of individuals in the world.

The story has a lot of moving parts and an air of mystery. Unfortunately for me most of it seemed quite obvious. It was good to see John Perry again, he's just as funny as a sarcastic young man as he was as an old man. I still don't like how neatly Scalzi wraps up his books and The Last Colony was no exception. I did like how he left the ending open for future tales.

The Last Colony was a solid conclusion to the Old Man's War trilogy.

Michael says

This review from October was wrongly placed with the entire piece of the serialized book:

This was a well-paced, fun space opera in the same universe as Scalzi's series starting with "The Old Man's War". The confederation of human planets known as Colonial Union was formed in response to alien civilizations out to exterminate our species, and in response to their success hundreds of alien species have formed their own confederation, the Conclave. The resulting peace from strength has become shaky as the Union has been so brutal in maintaining allegiance and control that Earth has dropped out, removing a big source of their resources and soldiers. A recent attack by the Union on Conclave forces was restrained from becoming all-out war only by the wisdom of their leader, General Gau, who now can barely keep the alien confederation together.

The plot here concerns a fiendish plan by an alien and human renegades called Equilibrium to get rid of both the Colonial Union and the Conclave by fomenting a war between them. There are significant military actions in the story, but most of the tale is taken up with intelligence work and political maneuvering. The narrative is presented in four cohesive sections told in first person by different players in the drama. At the ground level, we start with the accounts of a male commercial space pilot whose ship is hijacked and now is enslaved as a "brain in a box", with his only means of living mediated through a virtual reality interface. His hate for the human traitor behind his capture and murder of his crew, a th Union's Secretary of State drives him to brilliant heroic action. Another section is told from the perspective a female assault trooper with the Colonial Defense Force engaged in quelling rebellions seeking independence from the Union. She begins to question why they keep putting out fires but do not address the root causes. At a higher level, we get the perspectives of a Colonial Union State Department spy and of an alien which is second in command of the Conclave. They end up partnering with diplomats from the Earth and the Union to pull off an intricate trap for the shadowy Equilibrium forces, outfoxing both their secret supporters in Conclave legislature and others who just want all humans wiped out.

The high stakes for the human species adds to the thrills for this story. The weaving of multiple threads and complex strategies lift the novel a bit above the pulp level. Characters are sketchy but vividly rendered with special quirks and a lot of ironic humor. The aliens fail to appear different from humans in their motivations

and thinking, and any biological differences are not explored but merely tossed off in a virtually comic fashion. This conforms to a long tradition in space opera, where space is just a playground for human drama (some of the best, like the works of Bujold and David Weber dispense with aliens altogether). What lifts this from 3 to 4 stars for me is the dynamic presentation of the tale, the caper-like feel to the schemes employed by its lovable heroes, and its marshalling of interesting technologies by “showing not telling.”

mark monday says

stupid fucking humans, you are the worst! always getting shit wrong and not caring!

John Scalzi sort of agrees but sort of doesn't. he's a humanist who loves the individual as well as a scornful critic who slams systems, systematized secrecy, imperialism, and the use of conflict as a way to achieve goals. so he gets to have his cake and eat it too. his love of people is on display as ever, and although his characters often lack depth and aren't particularly interesting, they are still warmly characterized and pleasant to be around. sympathetic characters because Scalzi is a sympathetic sort of author. but he also finally gets to openly slam the Colonial Union and their war-mongering, secretive, tunnel-visioned ways. this is the third book in the series and the preceding books almost function as a wind-up to what turns out to be a mean right hook. stupid fucking Colonial Union, they've been long overdue for a knock-out.

as usual the writing is pleasant and also generic. I did notice an increasing tendency to make things a bit too much *on the nose*, if that makes sense. there's the name of the colony itself, "Roanoke", which of course has all sorts of resonance. but at least Scalzi acknowledges that. what's rather aggravating is the on-the-nose quality of the dialogue. it's always snappy and sarcastic and everyone responds with perfect timing; it's like a sitcom minus the laugh track. the end result is that it comes across as a bit plastic and characters sound a lot like each other.

still, that's a minor complaint. overall this novel is fast-paced fun, full of adventure and politics and battles and aliens. because Scalzi is more interested in the human condition than anything else, his aliens often act just like humans. that can be annoying, but fortunately in this one he has a couple that don't: Hickory and Dickory. they were also pretty fun and I'm looking forward to getting to know them better in the follow-up novel.

oh the synopsis, in my rush to get out of here I almost forgot: characters from prior novels lead a group of colonists to a new planet. the book is all about the layers upon layers of intrigue that surround this colony.

seak says

I think Scalzi's a fun author to read, one you can always go back to knowing you'll have an entertaining read. He's got smart characters you can root for, fast-paced plots, and you always know you won't have to think too hard. I love to be challenged in my reading, but I don't want to be challenged with every single book I read. Thus, authors like John Scalzi make for the perfect break in your intellectual readings.

The Last Colony is the final Old Man's War universe novel with John Perry and Jane Sagan. At least until the next one comes out right. I haven't read Zoe's Tale, but I assume it's predominately her (I'm good at making inferences from my reading aren't I?), at least I know it's her perspective of the events in The Last

Colony.

Here, John and Jane have been living the life on the planet of Huckleberry. Low key is the word and they couldn't be happier, maybe. Then, they're offered the chance to head a new colony that really needs them. Of course they agree and soon find out that things are not quite as expected. The good ol' Colonial Union isn't the most forthcoming with information about just about anything and they find themselves in lots of trouble (another 'of course' belongs here too).

Scalzi's tight plotting keep things moving nicely and the mysteries keep the pages moving as well. The actual intent behind the colony is slowly revealed and not once did it lose me in believability (unlike Redshirts I might add). This was a great conclusion to John and Jane's story although the surprises in the first book, *Old Man's War*, just can't be beat for me.

3.5 out of 5 stars (recommended)

Lata says

[namely, that Charles Boutin wasn't just a crazy, evil genius, and the CU really are fairly unethical]

Tom Merritt says

There's an easy brilliance to the OMW series that I think shines at its best in *Last Colony*. At any moment you may feel like you're reading a light novel with snappy dialog and a straightforward plot. The phrase 'beach reading' may even flit through your mind. But then. You'll realize that these characters are green super soldiers, alien generals with eye stalks and emotionless guardians of a teenage girl. Then it strikes you that the themes aren't just love and family and such but also war and oppression and politics and the meaning of being human. And that's when you realize that Scalzi is a devilish little genius with a clever plan behind his smile. I believe and fervently hope he uses his powers for good.

Kemper says

I'm no expert at colonizing newly discovered worlds, but I gotta think that naming your new planet 'Roanoke' and your settlement town 'Croatoan' is just asking to be pimp slapped by fate. Why not just christen a ship '*Titanic*' or call that new nuclear plant 'Chernobyl'? What's the worst that could happen?

The third installment of this series finds John Perry and his wife Jane retired from the Colonial Defense Force and living quietly on a colonized planet with their daughter. The CDF approaches them to head up a new colony, Roanoke. All the other colonies have been started using people from Earth, but Roanoke will be the first to be made up of a hodge podge of people from different colonized worlds, and this makes it a political hot potato. John and Jane agree to head up the new colony, but they quickly learn that the CDF hasn't told them everything and that the Roanoke colony is a pawn in the conflict between the CDF and other alien races.

Like *Old Man's War* or *The Ghost Brigades*, *The Last Colony* is a fun and fast mix of space combat and

politics. Scalzi creates characters you like and then throws them into plots that race from one huge event to the next, and he also injects a welcome sense of humor into the books. My only complaint is that the pace is so fast that Scalzi skimps on descriptions of settings, people and alien creatures in favor of dialogue and action so that I sometimes had a problem getting a clear picture in my mind of what was going on.

This is space war action several notches above what you usually get in this genre, and any sci-fi fan should check out this series.

Semjon says

Während ich vom ersten Band begeistert war (5 Sterne) und den zweiten Band zumindest gemocht habe (4 Sterne), hat dieser 3. Band mich von Anfang an nicht überzeugen können. Stilistisch unterscheidet er sich deutlich von seinen Vorgängern, die technischer und abenteuerfixierter waren. Vor allem die Idee, Senioren zu Kampfmaschinen umzubauen, hatte im Krieg der Klone einen großen Unterhaltungswert. Unser Held Perry war sich auch nie für eine Aufgabe zu schade beim Kampf der Menschheit gegen fremde Wesen auf fernen Planeten. Die ersten Bücher leben von ihrem Humor und der lakonischen Beschreibungen bei den Kampfszenen.

Die letzte Kolonie ist dagegen ein Buch, in dem es in erster Linie um politische Ränkespiele geht. In Zeiten, in denen auf dem Planet Erde gerade Frau Merkel und Herr Seehofer die Republik mit dergleichen unterhalten, wirkt die Handlung des Sci-Fi wie ein müder Abklatsch der Realität. Im Grunde handelt es sich in der ersten Hälfte um einen Wild West-Roman mit einer Menge anstrengender Siedler, die in ein neues Land (hier Planet) ziehen, begleitet von Sheriff Perry mit Familie. Mich hat dieser Part des Neusiedelns und Kompetenzgerangels sehr gelangweilt. Ich war kurz vor dem Abbruch. Als die Handlung später universeller wurde, wurde es unterhaltsamer, aber trotzdem mit Schwächen. Insbesondere dieses plötzliche Auftauchen eines Deus Ex Machina, der die Kolonie vor der Zerstörung rettete, war mir zu plump. Ich habe das Gefühl, dass Scalzi einfach in zu kurzer Zeit seine Folgebände nachlieferte nach dem Erfolg des Erstlings. Das ist schlampig konstruiert, teilweise gezwungen komisch und auch nicht plausibel.

Während Perry ruhig und entschlossen die Aliens aus dem Weg räumte in den ersten beiden Bänden und dabei absolut loyal zu seinen Vorgesetzten war, wird er nun aufsässig und gewährt dem schlimmsten Feind, der ohne weiteres alles ausgelöscht hätte, auch noch Gnade. Entwicklung in einem Roman sind ja prinzipiell zu begrüßen, aber ich konnte bis zum Schluss nicht verstehen, was seine Antriebsgründe waren, sich gegen die KVV zu stellen. Ich möchte den guten Anfang der Reihe nicht weiter herunterziehen und werde daher jetzt aus der Old Man's War-Reihe aussteigen.

Veronique says

Third volume in the Old Man's War series

This one felt rather different to the previous two - much lighter in a way although the stakes are still pretty high - but as enjoyable to read.

The narration is back from the point of view of John Perry, who is living a peaceful life on a colony with Jane Sagan and Zoe, after the explosive events of *The Ghost Brigades*. Eight years have passed and the two

ex soldiers look at ease in this new life, the first as an ombudsman and the other as a constable, dealing with trivial matters that creep up in small populations. Naturally, the fates want more from our characters and they are once more pushed into the centre of the action, namely, be the administrators of a new special colony, Roanoke, with heavy political symbolism. To say that things do not go to plan is an understatement, and they find themselves in the middle of a huge power play with heavy ramifications.

I really enjoyed this and not just because we are already invested in these protagonists. Perry has a very compelling voice, full of irony, and it was a pleasure to hear him again. The dynamics between him and the no nonsense Jane, was great to see, especially the banter, humour, and easy manner from people who deeply care for each other. I wondered however where Scalzi was going with this story, with its focus on imperialism and the dangers of power in the hands of the few, placing us first in a narrow perspective, and widening it three quarters of the way in. It did feel a little disjointed but not much. I still gulped it pretty quickly.

Lyn says

Way cool SF writer Scalzi returns to his Old Man's War universe.

This time around John Perry and his badass wife Jane are out of the CDF and are no longer green, having been given retired human bodies. Nowadays they are chillaxing on a colony basking in their boring new roles, living a quiet life with their adopted daughter Zoe.

But their lives change when a CDF general invites / demands / requires them to lead a party of new colonists on a brand new planetary colony that reminded me of Robert A. Heinlein's 1955 Scribner's juvenile novel *Tunnel in the Sky*.

John, Jane, Zoe and the other colonists are caught up in political intrigue and high level skullduggery and they've got to figure things out to save mankind and sort out the Colonial Union and the alien Conclave. With some help from Hickory and Dickory the Obin guardians of Zoe.

Good fun for Scalzi fans.

Dan Schwent says

John Perry and Jane Sagan have left the CDF and have been living with Zoe on a colony called Huckleberry until they're uprooted and sent to start a new colony, Roanoke. Only the CDF isn't telling them the whole truth and the Conclave is on the prowl for rogue colonies. Can Perry and his family save Roanoke without being traitors to the Colonial Union?

Wow. I loved this book almost as much as I loved the first in the series, *Old Man's War*. John Perry is back and in fine form. Scalzi crammed a lot of story into just over 300 pages; tensions between the CDF and the Conclave, the mutual respect between Perry and General Gau, the Obin, and more that I can't divulge without blowing too many bits of the lot.

Scalzi's writing is in top form in *The Last Colony* and since John Perry is the lead character, there's a bit more humor than in *Ghost Brigades*. Still, it's almost as serious as the previous book.

One of the things that I loved the most about the *Last Colony* was that Scalzi wasn't afraid to shake things up. While I'm aware that there's a fourth book and am eagerly awaiting its arrival in the mail, I wasn't completely sure any of the colonists would survive. I loved that Scalzi brought Perry and Sagan full circle since the first book. While it would have made a grand ending for the saga, I'm glad Scalzi still has stories left to tell in this universe.

I can't recommend *The Last Colony*, or the previous two books, *Old Man's War*, and *The Ghost Brigades*, enough. They aren't just great military science fiction; they're great books.

Niki Hawkes - The Obsessive Bookseller says

This is the point in the series where the story needed to make me fall in love with it as much as the first book did. Coming off a decent, albeit underwhelming second novel (*Ghost Brigades*), I wanted *Last Colony* to evolve into a series I could endorse as passionately as *The Expanse*. Alas, while I was thoroughly entertained from start to finish, the book did leave a few points to be desired.

My biggest complaint is the lack of description. Scalzi has all of these interesting alien species, but I'm at the halfway point in the series and couldn't begin to tell you what they look like. I love myself some xenobiology, but I feel the author has taken what should be a selling point to the series and glazed over it with ambiguity.

At least *Last Colony* saw the return of my fav, John Perry, and an interesting convergence of storylines from the first two books. The humor came back in force and played a huge factor in my overall enjoyment.

At the end of the day, while I've concluded there are some weaknesses to this series, all the strengths add up to give me an easy sci-fi, perfect for a light reading mood. My Fantasy Buddy Reads group on Goodreads has called it "hefty fluff" or "fluff-plus" and I don't think it inaccurate. I would definitely recommend it anyway for someone in the mood for a bit of fun.

Via The Obsessive Bookseller at www.nikihawkes.com

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