Clarion Review

General

Oisin: Book 1
Leo Cabral
978-1-4208-9730-2
Two Stars (out of Five)

Oisin first in a sci-fi series by Leo Cabral begins on the edge of fiction. Earth prepares excitedly as astronauts head to a moon research station to seek out extraterrestrial life. Then everything turns surreal when the hapless astronauts are caught up in the schemes of alien warlord Karma who wants to conquer the universe. Can the warrior Oisin save our species?

Cabral an actor dancer and bodybuilder turns to his first novel with the same energy of his earlier pursuits. With great ambition he takes on a story with an intergalactic scope. Cabral's scenes cut quickly from Earth to other planets as he tries to encompass a plot that spans the cosmos. Within each scene action moves swiftly often in dialog. Here for example main characters Fletcher and Brunski deal with an alien attack:

> *'The new Starship!' [Admiral Fletcher shouted.]*
> *'What?' Hannibal questioned.*
> *'Quickly Lieutenant. Sound the alarm for Base 61!' Admiral Fletcher ordered.*
> *Lieutenant Brunski pulled a communicator …out of his pocket. 'Attention! Red alert! Base 61 is presumed to be taken by hostile forces! This is not a drill! All ops gather at Base 61!'*
> *Admiral Fletcher turned towards Anita and Hannibal. 'Come on. I'll explain on the way.'*
> *They charged out of the room followed by Brunski …*

While the breakneck pace does engage the reader there are almost no transitions between scenes so the book moves choppily without a smooth flow.

Though the pacing of *Oisin* needs work Cabral provides an interesting basic storyline. A small band of unlikely heroes against unlikely odds — such is the stuff of countless bestsellers.

The Earthlings a space crew from around the globe — including the skilled tough-talking captain Hannibal Smith and his adopted brother Miles Curtis Smith — are easy to relate to especially when ranged against baddies like Karma. Though the bad guys do suffer from some stereotypical villainy being mostly ugly and power-mad the cast is easy to follow.

One flaw compromises the book though: the editing. Misused apostrophes random quotation marks and typos (one chapter is titled “DISPAIR” [sic]) litter every page distracting the reader’s eyes. Furthermore Cabral’s descriptions can be just plain odd; for example the clothes of an alien who has no knowledge of modern U.S. fashion are described as having “a GQ look.” Even though it is a lively story *Oisin* becomes a struggle to read.

Oisin’s strengths come from its energetic storytelling and its clear basic plot. If one wants a simple escapist read *Oisin* can be good for a diversion.