

## Redworld: Year One

**A. L. Collins**

**Tomislav Tikulin, Illustrator**

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Inventive and highly entertaining, A. L. Collins's *Redworld* is set in a future where Mars has been colonized and serves as home to several alien races, including humans. Clever explanations for how the planet was made livable, and how its inhabitants create and use energy to sustain it, build a believable setting reminiscent of the old west.

Belle Song, a young girl who has no desire to live on Mars, has a spirited sense of adventure that makes her a good fit for life on this alien world. Her parents' engineering jobs on Mars fall through, but her father decides that the family will stay and become farmers.

Life on the farm is filled with hard work. Living conditions are fairly primitive, and the two friends she makes, each a different alien species, do not get along. All of this is of small concern when Belle and her friends find themselves facing wild dogs, raiders, big-city criminals, and a lost cave full of sacred artifacts.

The martian setting is enticing, especially as explored by naturally curious Belle. An android helper and aliens add interesting elements.

This book follows courageous Belle's first few seasons living on Mars. It is divided into four parts, each of which could stand alone as an independent story. Throughout each of the stories, Belle and her friends learn to trust one another and that "we're all aliens to each other ... until we become friends."

*Redworld* is fun, unique, and well plotted, with interesting characters and dangerous adventures that make it difficult to put down. Subtle lessons about creating a sustainable environment and learning to see past superficial differences heighten its appeal.

CATHERINE THURESON (January/February 2018)

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