

Space Trash: Volume 1

Jenn Woodall

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Stuck in high school on the moon, three teenagers deal with a rival gang and dream of going to Earth in *Space Trash: Volume 1*.

In 2091, people feared that Earth would soon be unable to support life, and terraforming colonies were established on Mars and the moon. In 2115, Yuki, Una, and Stab attend an education center on the moon. They're bored and frustrated students, though. After a fight with a group of bullies, the girls learn that Earth is still habitable, and still populated. Along with new allies, they find an old space shuttle, work to make it operational, and make plans to go to Earth.

Though the book is set in the future, the art features grungy hallmarks of the twentieth century, including compact discs. There's a mention of Planet X Company, but despite that potential indication of gender specificity, it's never explained whether the moon school is an all-girls school, or if there's something larger behind its absence of boys. Key elements of the book's backstory remain tantalizing and unexplained, with hints that more will be revealed in future volumes, as when Una comments that "revisionist history is such a proud human tradition."

With the dialogue making clever use of different font sizes and weights, and with unusual emphasis marks within word balloons, the illustrations are eye-catching. Their art is colorful and engaging, too, with detailed backgrounds and realistic depictions of the characters that morph into cartoons in select panels for comedic effect.

Space Trash Volume 1 is an exciting and dramatic graphic novel whose teenage cast contends with a space-going mystery.

PETER DABBENE (September / October 2022)

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