



Rosetta

R.J. Johnson

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Murder, betrayal, the fate of Humanity... it's all in a day's work for Jim Meade: Martian P.I.

In a slow orbit around the sun, just beyond Mars, a mining colony known as Rosetta houses thousands of Consortium citizens who mine the valuable ore Humanity uses for space travel. Over the last three years, Rosetta has grown exponentially, from a tiny mining colony, into an economic behemoth that threatens the delicate balance of power between The Consortium and Coalition - two nations who are still healing from a devastating nuclear war that turned Earth into a hellscape of hopelessness and despair.

After a prominent scientist for The Consortium dies in an apparent accident, Jim Meade is hired by the victim's family to find out what really happened to their father Dr. Sanjay Sinjakama. There, Meade finds himself caught up in a power struggle between the diabolical CEO of Nebula Mining Dimitri Koschei, and Lazarus Rincon, the charismatic leader of a vicious cult.

With the assistance of his friend and confidant (the beautiful Emeline Hunan), Meade races against the clock to find Sinjakama's murderer and prevent a catastrophic disaster that might mean the end of all life on Earth.

Rosetta Details

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From Reader Review Rosetta for online ebook

Ray Briggs says

This being the first book of a series I expected it to be much rougher than it turned out to be. While a few of the situations that Jim Meade found himself in were very predictable, that was not the case for the majority of the book. I found the book to be an enjoyable read and would recommend it to others. There is no doubt that I will look for the next book in this series.

William Bentrim says

A hard boiled detective story set in space. Jim Meade is a man who lives by the rules, his rules, not societies. Jim finds himself trying to save the world when he thought he was just trying to solve a murder.

The characterizations are good. You like Jim and his Leroy Jethro Gibbs type of rules. He struggles to be a hard nosed, no nonsense tough guy but can't hide his innate goodness.

Emeline was a bit of a contradiction. She was introduced as a major butt kicker but the author seems conflicted with that role. Several times in the book, she squeals or cowers when her character seems more likely to knee someone in the groin.

The concept and ensuing rendition were well done. The plot moved quickly and there was plenty of action. I am fond of this style and look forward to reading more by Johanson.

I recommend the book.

Karen says

I am giving this 3.5 stars and wishing to read another in order to get more background on the central character. This was an interesting concept with some good characters who make it worth reading again to make sure I got all the details. The story runs a bit slowly until you finally arrive at the destination and then things pick up a bit and continues to build. The characters are both fleshed out and not fleshed out depending on how long they are in the book, the main character has a lot more personality and background than any of the others but you still feel that he is lacking somewhat. I like the world that has been created, it has the ring of authenticity mainly because of it's resemblance to the world we now find ourselves living in. The technology is real enough that you would have no problem believing in its existence or at least the possibility that it could be created.

James Meade is a runabout who was born on Mars, this means that he does not bother himself with the politics of either power running things. In this case there is the Consortium, a fascist society that uses its citizens as virtual slaves based on whether they are born into wealth or not, and it is impossible to gain wealth if you are not born to it. The other side is the Coalition who claim to be better and allow for a democratic society, while you can pull yourself up to a higher standard before you can get there you must

pay off the crushing debt you have been forced into. This is the world Jim lives in and still is unable to get away from.

When a Consortium engineer is found dead on Rosetta it is decided that Jim will do the investigation because of his neutrality. He is not given much of a choice in the matter and decides that if he has to do it he might as well get paid as much as possible. He figures it will be a simple job with little work involved and a good payday, but he has no idea of what is going on that asteroid far out in the belt. And what he does not know will likely get him killed.

For some reason Meade reminded me of Harry Dresden, not just because they were both PI's but the way he dressed and the use of sarcasm and humor. This is a detective story in space with a noir feel. You have the female bar owner with a heart of gold, the femme fatale, the crime bosses, the crazy zealot wanting to save the world, and our detective who is less and more of hero than you expect him to be. All in all a good read but could have been even better with a more serious mystery.

Suzi says

I don't often read books that take place in space, but I do love a book with action and interesting characters and locations and this book fit that bill. There were a few typos in the text but the editing wasn't bad for a self-published title.

Rosann says

Though I found the concept intriguing, and the beginning sequences fast paced, I couldn't finish it. I had the e-version and perhaps this was the problem. I began to come across blatant editing problems (repeated phrases, actions that were described twice on the same page ex: he took his last shot of whisky twice---just phrased differently.) This was irritating and disappointing after a promising start. Perhaps this was just a problem with this edition?

Christopher Doemel says

This book was recommended on a recent episode of The Incomparable podcast. It was an enjoyable read but the author needs an editor badly—he has good ideas but his writing gets in their way. I liked the Jim Meade character and his manservant Suresh, but the other characters were one dimensional. The nefarious surprise plot of he villain was fairly obvious, so I was disappointed in the overall story. There were some fun action sequences, however, that would have benefitted from another revision or two.

David says

For a free Kindle book, this was a fair sci-fi novel. The story was a bit weak in places but otherwise adequate. The main characters show promise, with the Martian PI, Jim Meade, having a cowboy outlook on life, or maybe "frontier" is the right word. I would like to encourage this indie-author but I couldn't stretch to

four stars. He acknowledges that he has to manage without an editor until sales pick up. The book does need a good editor because there are flaws, however, they tend to be subtle and slight and there are few egregious errors.

Mary says

This story was a return to classic-style, science fiction writing while using current science technological possibilities. The characters were interesting and the story believable. The story makes me want to know more about Meade, both his past and future story.

Brendan Creecy says

I really enjoyed this book. It is a great scifi detective story. My one criticism is that it could use some additional editing as there are some typos and other things, but when it comes to these kind of independent books I think it is fair to give some leeway. The story is still great and I was very invested in the characters, especially the main character of Jim Meade.

Ron says

"A fistful of Dollars" meets Occupy Wall Street.

At least it's enough science fiction to claim the name.

Doesn't anyone proofread books anymore. This book follows the unfortunate trend toward publishing what reads like the first draft. How else would we get gems like the following: "But first he needed to shake the boys behind him first," "...and exited the bar quickly...as he exited..." (Johnson loves "quickly", used it three times on page 21), "You know can't trust..." (and numerous other dropped words), "...broken as it was in nearly four places," and my favorite "a shot nearly missed his head." (Oh, my!)

Okay at best.

J. says

This is a great idea, sort of a cross between Charles Dickens and Raymond Chandler set in space, and the stars it does receive are based mainly upon that idea and the world-building I encountered in the lengthy prologue and first chapter.

While it's a good set-up, the author's universe is dystopian and confusing, having two superpowers with such similar names and activities that I couldn't keep them separate. At roughly 10%, when the two remained confused in my mind and the slogging through examples of social injustice threatened to outweigh the plot, I gave it up. Sorry, but despite the great idea, there's not enough here to hold me.

Note that an editor and proofreader might have helped the story. The professional cover art is awesome and the main reason I picked up the book in the first place.

Ted says

I enjoyed Rosetta. It combined the hard-boiled detective novel with a well-wrought science fiction world including, in the tradition of early Robert Heinlein, a discussion of ideas of personal morality and political justice.

Jim Meade's character was well drawn. He is definitely a lone ranger type, and his ambivalent attitude to violence grated at times. But he was sufficiently individual to be likeable. I particularly enjoyed the development of Suresh and Atma, drawn out of their subservient shells by Meade's democratic bluster. Emeline, Meade's romantic interest, was not so roundly drawn, but her role in the plot was essential. The villains were suitably villainous - evil but sufficiently articulate to argue the toss between between freedom and tyranny, democracy and demogagery.

Jim Meade says he would like enough money to pay an editor. I sympathise. But I nearly gave up on the book (and I am glad I didn't) because of repeated spelling mistakes like 'excited' for 'exited': one, the spelling was wrong, and two, better words can be found.

Overall, an entertaining read with enough of both action and ideas to keep the reader interested

Ricky Kimsey says

Start Here

If you're interested in reading this series start here. I made the mistake of reading the follow up Under New Management first instead of this which is the beginning of this sf mystery series.

Babette says

This is the first book in a series. Jim Meade, a PI on Mars. Lots of action, great banter and snark. There is a correlation between politics today and the plot of this book. Keep an eye out for more RJ Johnson!

Mark Polino says

Rosetta is solid first book. Maybe a dozen typos in 300 pages. Enough that a few stood out, but not nearly enough to take away from the story. You've got a Martian PI investigating a murder on an asteroid with intrigue, cool tech, and interstellar whiskey. What's not to like?
