

## **Galahad 1**

**Dom Testa**

**Reviewed by: Amaran**

**Star Teen Book Reviewer of *Be the Star You Are!* Charity**

[www.bethestaryouare.org](http://www.bethestaryouare.org)

You really know you've read a good book when you start to feel as you read the last few pages that you don't want the story to end. You start feeling pangs of regret that you're about to leave characters you've become fond of and involved with and that you'll never know what happens to them.

I have two predictions concerning this book. The first is that by the time you have finished this book, you will feel the same sense of relief that I did on being informed, by the narrator of the story, who, by the way, is also a major character, that yes, in fact, there will be a sequel. And that this will be welcome news to whoever reads this book tells a lot about how good a read it is.

This book has all the elements of a good story – plot situation, characters you care about, and believable dialogue.

First, the set up: Earth has been infected by particles left by a rogue comet which has crossed its path that will cause the untimely demise of every person on the planet age eighteen and older. In an effort to preserve the human race, 251 teenagers are selected and trained for two years in preparation for a five year journey to a distant planet on a huge spacecraft. They must run the spacecraft, grow food, continue their education, and govern themselves all on their own. None of them older than sixteen.

OK, so you're thinking a teenage *Battlestar Galactica*. Well, maybe, and what exactly is wrong with that? Especially when the characters are appealing, their dialogue is hip and sounds authentic, and we get to share their very realistic emotional responses to this life and death situation – having to leave their home, parents, etc. and find ways to cope with the huge responsibilities they must take on.

The story centers mainly on the 5 teenage members of the “Council,” which is the governing board of the ship. It follows each character from the time they were invited to participate in the program, how they dealt with leaving their parents, trained for the mission, took on the adult responsibilities of their jobs, and how they began to find their roles with each other, and then dealt with a dramatic unexpected challenge that might have aborted the entire mission just weeks after their departure from Earth.

In addition to the 5 Council members, there is, of course “the computer.” Every space story like this has to have its “Hal,” but “ROC” is a lot more personable, hip, and downright funny as he provides a kind of Greek chorus narrative role that lightens the mood for everyone on the ship as well as for the reader. Here's Roc talking directly to the reader as he comments in his inimitable style on his own role as well as on one of the other characters:

*“Let's get one thing straight, all right? I'm not a babysitter. These kids are way too old and way too smart to need that. If I'm looking over their shoulders from time to time, it's not to baby them; I just happen to be a natural snoop. A nosy computer, Roy called me. Okay, maybe I listen in sometimes when I should be busy testing the filtering system in the water recycling tanks, but is that interesting? Is it? No, it isn't.*

*Gap Lee is interesting. A good looking kid, too. Good athlete. Funny when he wants to be. Smart. Oh, and the coolest of the Council members.*

*Yes, I do know cool when I see it. Who do you think you're dealing with here?  
Anyway, Gap is cool, and one of my personal favorites on the ship. Just don't tell anyone I told you that.  
Anyone, okay? Especially Gap." (page 27)*

How could you not love this character.

I would recommend this book to anyone over the age of eight, but I think it it's especially made for kids aged 11 to 17. Make that kids of all ages who are 11 to 17 somewhere inside of them.

Oh, here's my other prediction. You're going to be seeing this story as a movie or TV show sometime in the next few years. It's a natural.