



Earth Bound

Emma Barry, Genevieve Turner

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Houston, Texas, 1961

The race to the moon is on, and engineer Eugene Parsons has two enemies: danger and distraction. Nothing is more distracting than his attraction to the brilliant, beautiful computer scientist on his team, but he's determined to overcome it since he needs her to help America win.

Charlie Eason is used to men underestimating her. It comes with being a woman in engineering, but it's worth it to join the space race—even if she can't figure out what's behind the intense looks one tightly wound engineer keeps sending her. But life isn't as unemotional or predictable as code, and things soon boil over with the intriguingly demanding Parsons.

With every launch, their secret affair grows thornier. The lines between work and play tangle even as Parsons and Charlie try to keep them separate. But when a mission goes wrong, they'll have to put aside their pride for the greater good—and discover that matters of the heart have a logic all their own.

Earth Bound Details

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From Reader Review Earth Bound for online ebook

Mandi Schreiner says

I absolutely loved this book. It is very much a stand alone, although I've enjoyed all the books in this series set in the 1960's. This book gives us two, very intelligent protagonists - a hero who falls in love with a heroine for her brain (and the fact she is wild in bed) and science. I love it.

Charlie is an extremely smart woman who decided to go into computers (instead of physics much to her parents dismay). She gets the job as the deputy director of computing at the America Space Department (aka nasa). She should have been the actual director, but she is a woman in the 1960's in an absolutely male dominated field, so she accepts the deputy position. Her boss is not that great, so she basically ends up running the department. In the early 60's the Americans were racing to get to the moon first, but first they have to get a man up in orbit. Our hero is Eugene Parsons, a growly, grumpy, work obsessed man who is the director of engineering and development. He works very closely with Charlie to bring the space program to where it needs to be, and to constantly be putting out fires in this very high-stress job.

Parsons quickly realizes how intelligent Charlie is. He falls in love with her brain. He loves that she is headstrong, stubborn, well-spoken and holds herself accountable. He knows it's hard for a woman to work in this field filled with men, and while he supports her, he lets her face her critics head on. Parsons intimidates almost everyone he works with. He demands absolute perfection, and his social skills are very lacking. He never smiles, he has to be forced to not work on Christmas day. He has no social life outside of work. As Charles notices:

His expression was pained. Altogether, he looked damned uncomfortable. But he struck her as a man who hated comfort. He would think it common. And there was nothing pedestrian about him.

Charlie is successful in her professional life, but her parents still judge her and write-off her computing career since it's not the path they wanted for her. She is confident but it's still hard on a child when your parents don't give you credit for what you have accomplished. There is a scene in the book where Parsons meets her parents and realizes they brush off their daughter and her accomplishments. The support Parsons gives her in this scene is swoon-worthy.

Which brings me to their chemistry. Their chemistry in this book is written so well I didn't want to put the book down. Charlie makes the first move, which made me cheer. She walks into Parson's office and is basically like - fuck it - let's go do something dirty together.

This was terrifically ill thought out. He was the only man in the place who treated her decently - at least the only one with any power who did. He'd been flattering her, and she wanted to what? Get sweaty and naked with him?

Yes, to begin at least.

Their romance scenes are so intense. At work they have to be on all the time - there is so much at stake, human lives at stake, and such a rush to get it all done before the Soviets. When they meet at their seedy hotel at night - their intensity is almost too much to bear. They both like to be in charge, and that comes out in the bedroom. The sex is raw and dirty. There is something about their chemistry and emotional intimacy that just makes you say - damn.

He took in what he'd done. Yes, that was what he wanted, this face of her marred. He only ever saw her putting makeup on - he wanted to take it off. Deliberately.

He put his thumb back to her lip and smeared again. Her lips were gloriously messy now, almost completely undone.

The third time he did it, she parted her lips and took his thumb deep within her mouth.

He gasped even as he smiled. She always had to surprise him. She sucked on his thumb making his heart pound and his breathing go harsh.

Then she dropped to her knees and reached for his belt.

"You don't have to - "

"Shut up."

So he did.....

Parsons is so supportive of her, and when there is that darn ending conflict that drags them apart, he is so devastated I couldn't stand it. They have a great reunion though.

Charlie is an amazing heroine. Fighting to be heard, so confident and sure in her abilities at work (and in bed. Loved). Very well done.

Grade: A

Lyuda says

Having read and liked the previous two installments in the *Fly Me To the Moon* series, I was looking forward to this read.

The series focuses on a subject that is sparsely covered in the romance genre- the legendary space race - a 20th-century competition between two Cold War rivals, the Soviet Union and the United States, for supremacy in spaceflight capability.

When reading historical romance, both historical setting and romance are almost equally important. Unfortunately, neither worked for me here, albeit for different reasons.

Initially, the historical setting and the sense of place is what drew me to the story. I love the time period and the subject. It is obvious that the authors did tons of research on the subject of space exploration and the authors' note at the end confirms it. The interworking of the fictional American Space Department (ASD), the pressure that its employees went through trying to win the space race occupies the major part of the book. Initially interesting, the story gradually became so bogged down by the "shop talk" that it turns into somewhat dry and uninspiring narrative. At times, I felt I was reading an engineering manual.

The main conflict of the story is a struggle of a beautiful and brilliant scientist, Charlie Eason, to overcome

prejudice, forge a pass for herself as a woman, and succeed in male dominated world of scientists and engineers. Again and again, we are presented with examples of snubs, ignorance, and sexism she experienced while working with her male colleagues. The picture became so saturated that the only conclusion I could draw is that all of her colleagues, with exception of Eugene Parsons, our hero, were just a bunch of chauvinistic pigs. This environment and added expectation from her parents shaped Charlie's character. And that is where I come to the point of why the romance didn't work for me. I appreciate the fact that the authors wanted to show Charlie as being strong and capable enough to withstand the barrage of sexism coming her way. But it also made her unsympathetically harsh, detached, cold-hearted creature who used her looks to gain the advantage in certain situations.

Graduate school had taught her an important truth about being an intelligent woman, one she hadn't been able to learn growing up in Princeton: It helped to be stunningly beautiful, especially when dealing with the Zeppelin-like egos of scientific men. The never saw her coming; it was only after she'd outthought them that they realized they'd been flanked.

Even sexual assignations she had with Parsons in a seedy motel room (of all places) were all about dominance, detachment, release of tension.

She was a capsule here, serenely making her orbits, while he was the rocket casing, jettisoned to burn up in the long fall back to earth.

There was almost no femininity left in her. That is fine and, I'm sure realistic, but it didn't work for me as a romance heroine. (view spoiler) As far as Eugene Parsons, I felt there was a lot of potential there but his character was underdeveloped. I wanted to know more about why he appeared to be so grouchy all the time, so intense to the point of being intimidating to others, expecting perfection from himself and everybody around him. (view spoiler)

Overall, the book had a lot of potential but didn't deliver it for me. The romance was not really romantic.

herdys says

Though they lost me with all the science stuff, I really loved this book and our two great leads. Plus I'm still amazed at how good this HR in the sixties turned out to be *_*

Brandy Painter says

This book was so very much my thing I can't claim in any way to be objective about it. It is from now on probably going to be my automatic romance comfort read go-to.

I fell for Eugene Parsons in his very first scene in Star Dust. I wanted this next full novel in the series to be about him because from that very first scene I knew he had the potential to be exactly my favorite sort of hero. I have a weakness for intelligent men who come across as arrogant asses on first encounter-because they are actually partly an arrogant ass, but also because they are equally a socially awkward nerd. Parsons lived up to every expectation I had for him in this respect and then some. He may be favorite romance hero ever. I'm going to have to give it a couple more reads to say that definitively, but I'm 98% sure of it already. He is a perfectionist who demands the best from the people working for him and is downright scary (and sometimes mean) when he doesn't get it. Parsons does not process or deal with emotions well. But he is also

a man who refers to his mom as adorable, is sure to call his older brother on his birthday first thing in the morning, keeps salt water aquariums of beautifully colored fish he gets adorably dorky about, and does his best to work within a difficult system to include and boost the women who work for the space program.

Pair a hero like this with a heroine who matches (if not exceeds) his intelligence, doesn't take any of his crap, and teases him about his nonsense, and you have my exact favorite type of love story. Charlie is an amazing and perfect match for Parsons. She is super smart, incredibly competent at what she does, and her sly and sassy wit is more than a match for Parsons. He doesn't quite know what to do with her most of the time and I loooooove it. Charlie is in a position of being second in command when she should be first, but isn't because she is a woman. She went into a field her physics professor parents think is beneath her, and is often dealing with their disappointed expectations and her mother's projected issues about women in science and career sacrifice. Charlie also has a difficult time processing and dealing with her emotions and feelings, which leads to much of the conflict between her and Parsons.

Much of the attraction between Charlie and Parsons is intellectual. They are both incredibly turned on by the other's competence and drive. This leads to them having an incredibly steamy affair, but the main focus of the book is on their intellectual connection. As a result this book has a lot of magnificent banter, flirting at work in ways that no one else knows what they're doing, lots of heated looks, and some delightfully awkward moments. The majority of the book takes place in the labs and offices so there is a lot of technical discussions in it, which I loved. You can't tell me your characters are super smart and competent at what they do, and then not show them actually being that. We know Charlie and Parsons are these things because we see it. (YAY!) Personally I really loved all the politics and scientific details about the space program.

The last final conflict is one that could have been cleared up a lot faster if a rational conversation took place. Ironic considering this deals with two people who consider themselves uber rational. This ordinarily drives me bonkers, but it made sense for who Parsons and Charlie are. As I said, they are both terrible at dealing with their emotions. Parsons wants to ignore the problem and fix it with sex. Charlie is too angry at the sense of betrayal she feels and chooses to just walk away and pretend it's unimportant. It made complete sense given her personal insecurities and position. It is frustrating in exactly the way it's supposed to be. My heart hurt for both of them. (I confess it hurt for Parsons a little more who was just so happy and excited and wanted to show her his stupid fish and then all hell broke loose.) The way this is resolved is perfect though. **PERFECT.** (Fish and everything. Seriously I never thought I'd be turned into a pile of mush over fictional fish. I have no patience for real fish.)

As you can probably tell by the length of this review (I never write romance reviews this long), this book is everything I wanted it to be. (And my expectations were super high.)

Georgie says

Quite one of the best books I've read this year. It works on all sorts of levels - the background is truly fascinating (the early days of space flight and the role of computers), there's an indictment of the outrageous sexism of those times, and - above all - it's the moving love story of two flawed characters.

Charlie Eason is the first female senior appointment at the American Space Department (a lightly disguised NASA) - the deputy director of computing. Her adult life has been directed towards such a role, and as she admits to herself "*she was a damn sight smarter than most of the men they'd brought on*". She's realistic about her success - "*Graduate school had taught her an important truth about being an intelligent woman*,

one she hadn't been able to learn growing up in Princeton: It helped to be stunningly beautiful, especially when dealing with the Zeppelin-like egos of scientific men. They never saw her coming; it was only after she'd outthought them that they realized they'd been flanked."

Her dedication to the programme to get a man into space is matched only by that of Eugene Parsons, Director of Engineering and Development, a man whose whole being is bound up in his work. *He was either "he" or "him" or simply "Parsons"—no first name required.... An engineer [who] took precision and turned it into torture.*

I liked the way Barry shows their growing professional respect for each other, undercut with lashings of UST, before they move into a scorching secret affair. Barry is particularly good on the edginess that surrounds Charlie & Eugene's decision to never to talk about work in bed & vice versa - it's a division that chimes with the way they have trained themselves to compartmentalise problems professionally.

Their deepening involvement is contrasted with the increasingly blatant sexism exhibited by the ASD bosses, and also, in a different way, by Charlie's own family. There's a brilliant scene where her family, professional and emotional worlds collide during a truly dreadful meal. Finally, of course, (view spoiler)

This is a brilliantly characterised book with taut (and often funny) dialogue, a strong plot, a fascinating setting and a satisfying romance.

Jess says

Super, super, super into this.

Being honest, I wasn't sure I would be at all based on the sample (which I do not feel is representative of the book), but there are so many things in this book that hit all of my favorite spots.

- 1) The hero is in love with the heroine's brain.
- 2) Actual meeting of equals, despite the institutional sexism at work.
- 3) The passage of time, so you get prolonged relationship development.
- 4) People falling in love without realizing or without being willing to express it.
- 5) HOT SEX.

This series is one of my favorite surprises of the last year and I am DEEPLY intrigued for the next one. Make it good, ladies.

Grace says

I kept just... not finishing this because I didn't want it to be over. So yeah, this was great.

Maria Rose says

Earth Bound is the second full novel in the Fly Me To the Moon series (considered book 3 in the series) by co-authors Emma Barry and Genevieve Turner. If you haven't started the series yet, there is a novella, *Midnight Clear* (book 2) that is free at most retailers and gives a great sense of the writing style and setting for this post-WWII race to space series. The first full novel, *Star Dust* (book 1), told the story of an American astronaut and the divorcee who moves in next to him. It's a fascinating look at the challenges of getting a man into orbit from an astronaut's point of view (and a sexy romance, 60's style). *Earth Bound* continues on that theme but delves into the lives of the engineers who made the impossible happen.

Eugene Parsons is an engineer wholly dedicated to the mission – get a man into orbit, and do it before the Soviets. When stunningly attractive computer scientist Dr. Charlie Eason joins their team, his instant attraction to her is put on lockdown. She's there to aid the mission, and though a super intelligent woman like Charlie might be the perfect fit for him, he's not going to let anything get in the way of their goals. Charlie, on the other hand, finds Parsons a fascinating man, one she wants to get her hands on. When she approaches him with herself on offer, it's too much to resist and they quickly get involved in a heated affair – but one that is kept on the sly and completely separate from their work. When the emotions spill over into the job, a decision Parsons couldn't stop from being made makes Charlie withdraw, her trust in him shattered. Yet, with their common mission goal in mind, they must find a way to work together. Can the embers of their affair be re-ignited, and more importantly, can it lead to a lasting love?

My fascination with this series knows no bounds. Any time I can find a book that mixes science with romance, you can be sure that I'm going to read it. But don't worry, even if math and physics aren't your thing, the authors have been able to take the parts of the story that require these things and make them readable at a level that everyone will understand. For me, the intense dramatic scenes that made up some of the story, meetings and discussions between the scientists on the logistical challenges of getting a man into space were some of the best scenes. Things I never thought of, and the science of what was possible then, how things were done, was really quite something to read about. This is world building at its finest, creating a picture of what it was like during that time for the men and women tasked to beat the Soviets in the space race. And then there are the personal agendas of the men and women in the room – the managers who are looking at the bottom line, the engineers who will be blamed for any failures, the astronauts and their egos. It all falls into place marvelously in a tightly woven tale.

Of course, a key aspect to the story is Charlie, a super smart mathematician who has disappointed her parents by choosing to go work for the US Space program instead of following a career path at a university. A woman in a man's field in the 1960's, she's used to being overlooked, to having her physical appearance mean more than her brain, and takes all of these things in stride. It doesn't stop her from doing her best, and devoting herself to her job, in this case, as deputy director of the computing department. She's got some smart women who work under her as well (a nod to remember that some of the best code breakers in WWII were women) and together they play a significant role in getting the missions underway and salvaging some of them too. For Charlie, Parsons is a man after her own heart, with the same work ethic. And more importantly, he's a man who sees the real her.

Eugene Parsons is a man with a persona not eminently likable. He understands the gravity of his work, has no patience for fools (or self-absorbed astronauts), and has a temper. He seems an unlikely romance hero. But the truth of the matter is that he has a soft underbelly, one that stays hidden from view until Charlie exposes it. He keeps a salt water fish tank at home, and his care of them is a direct link to his character, to show that when he loves something, he puts his full effort into keeping it (or her) happy, any way he can. I

loved seeing the glimpses of his character in these small scenes, and the adoration of Charlie that he tries to hide but can't quite manage. And unlike many men of that time, he has a full appreciation of women as equally intelligent to men. The two of them together are a perfect match.

I enjoyed the background of both Charlie and Eugene that made them into the adults they are now. Eugene comes from a farming family, with a brother who died as a war hero, and another who has taken over the family farm. He's a bit of the odd man out, his parents not really understanding his career choices. On the other hand, Charlie comes from a scientific family, her parents both researchers (and her mother, bitter at her own choices, reflects that in her disapproval of Charlie's chosen profession because she never had that freedom). Charlie knows her parents don't really understand or respect her work, and this, while hurtful, she's become accustomed to. It doesn't stop her from doing what she wants.

The conflict comes naturally, with the hierarchy of their working positions causing them to sometimes be at odds with each other. And for Charlie, keeping her affair with Parsons under wraps is necessary to maintain the level of respect from her male colleagues that she struggles to achieve. Yet when an astronaut's life is on the line, their true feelings can't be hidden. I enjoyed how the story played out, the dramatic scenes becoming real page turners as the mission becomes a life or death endeavor. Combining that with some very sexy love scenes between the couple, and the eventual finding of their way to a compromise and happy ending makes for a wholly entertaining story. 5 stars, and I can't wait to see what's in store for us next!

Note: a copy of this story was provided by the authors for review.

???s Xamante de los spoilersX says

D N F at 53%

Tuve problemas para conectar con los personajes, los sentí tan fríos y cerrados, tan similares entre sí, me faltaron sentimientos. Creo que el romance quedó desdibujado entre tanta subtrama y sinceramente no me interesa todo lo del viaje del hombre a la luna. Entre que son todos hombres y toda esa boludez que los estadounidense vs rusos y los estadounidenses creyendose mejores que los demás. No gracias.

En resumen me pareció muy insulso, le faltó chispa, los sentí de cartón a los protagonistas. Ojo, no es malo pero a mí no me dijo nada la historia.

Puntos positivos: El héroe no es misógino, tropes fuck buddies fall in love, protagonista inteligente.

Kelly_Instalove says

This book KILLED ME DEAD and that is why it took me so long to rate it.

saxe says

All she knew was that every moment for nearly two years had led to this. Every staff meeting, every time he'd gestured with his hands, every time he'd asked more of her, and celebrated with her when she'd offered it, it had all been about this.

About what she was feeling ... that she believed him when he said she was perfect.

She didn't think she was perfect, but she thought that together, they might be more than they were apart.

Together they might be something like it.

I've been wanting to read this book for quite some time. (And yes, I am starting with an anecdote, because why not, right??) This book (well, an excerpt from it on Emma Barry's website), was what got me interested in the series to begin with. I happened to come across the cover reveal (which must've been on Twitter, I think), which then led me to the excerpt (and let me just say, that was one hell of an enticing excerpt, especially for someone like me who loves a pining hero). I just *had* to read the rest of the series after that to see what was up, and I'm *so* glad I did. I've adored most of the characters (there are some who I still side-eye) I've come across so far in the books (though I did have that one issue with Kit and the OW), and I'll be adding Parsons to the list of adored characters.

Eugene Parsons was great. He's the over-stressed, in-control, and starchy Director of Engineering and Development at ASD (American Space Department, which is basically Turner and Barry's NASA). In the first book, we were greeted to the astronauts' POV of Parsons, which wasn't very flattering because he's so controlling and angry. (Well, tbh, I would be, too, if I had to deal with a group of poster-boy man-children.) And in this one, we're shown Parsons's view of them, which, of course, isn't flattering, either (because, again, they're a group of poster-boy man-children; or, in Parsons's view: *arrogant little shits*). I gotta say, I liked him a lot more in this book than the first (though I've never disliked him).

What I liked best about Parsons—who's a beta—was that, while we see him as this confident, controlling, and exacting guy when he's at work...he's so damn insecure outside of it.

Eugene Parsons pulled into the lot of a seedy motel. ...

The powder blue Dodge he was looking for was parked in front of room twelve.

He released the breath he always held until he saw the car. That was his fear: one day he'd show up and the blue car wouldn't be there. He'd enter the room and it would be empty.

I loved this vulnerable side of him. While he scares his co-workers—pretty much everyone, including the cocky astronauts, who all tense up at his arrival—and has them thinking he's an unfeeling robot, he's got this complete other side of him that's just so insecure, which has him sitting outside a motel in wonderment that she—Charlie—is actually there. At a later point, you even see him wondering why Charlie's even with him, being as smart and beautiful as she is. (And he's no bridge troll himself. Barry said she pictures him as Oscar

Isaac.) I liked how Barry and Turner balanced out these two sides of Parsons, which I felt was well done. (And it's damn good reading about a man who's not the typical invulnerable alpha ass.)

And! Parsons is a feminist. He never underestimates Charlie even once, even believing that she deserves a higher position because of her qualifications, skills, and abilities (particularly when compared to those of the men). When she first came to interview, he wasn't shocked and appalled that a woman had had the audacity to have come for an interview in this male-dominated computing and engineering field of the space agency. Nope. He took it in stride and just continued the interview, wanting to know if she was qualified, regardless of whether she was a man or woman.

Later on, when the idea of female astronauts comes up, he doesn't care that they're women. It's the test results that matter to him, especially after hearing the women had exceeded the men's scores. He doesn't scoff at the thought of a woman being an astronaut, as some do, like the director of the agency, Stan, the director of computing, Hal, and many of the astronauts. (It even angers him when he realizes that ASD is only stringing the female astronaut hopefuls along in order to up their own image.) At one point, there's a press conference during which that very thought is brought up. Kit Campbell and Joe Reynolds (the heroes for Star Dust and A Midnight Clear, respectively), argue against female astronauts, saying it's a "bad idea" and that just because they do well on certain tests, it doesn't mean they're equipped to be astronauts. (And good luck to the both of their stupid asses because, right after the press conference, they had to face their extremely pissed off wives, who I'm sure will be setting them straight on their sexist notions ASAP.)

When Kit and Joe were arguing against the notion of female astronauts, I wanted to be mad for having liked them previously, but I couldn't. I think it made sense, considering their positions and backgrounds in comparison to Parsons. Parsons, having grown up on a farm in Oklahoma, dealt with prejudice when pursuing his engineering degree, during which, he was dismissed out of hand due to his accent (which he worked to rid himself of as a result). Joe and Kit, on the other hand, grew up as Navy men in the late-40s/early-50s. They're not hateful and maliciously sexist or misogynistic, but they do have preconceived notions, especially considering the time period. I also don't feel that their sexist views were unforgivable or beyond redemption in this instance.

Another reason why I felt the sexist bit was necessary was because I'd find the sexist climate of society hard to believe if everyone had been enthusiastic for women and women's rights and equality. This is especially so considering their field, which is science and engineering. It's even bad in this day and age when it comes to engineering and other male-dominated fields, so it was far worse in the 60s. With that in mind, while I wouldn't usually hand out cookies to a guy for treating women as humans, I was loving Parsons all the more for being a feminist in that time.

Charlie Eason was the heroine of the novel. I liked her for the most part, but there was some of her I didn't like. What I really liked about her was how she dealt with the sexism of the time. She knew that she was certainly "a damn sight smarter" than most of the men at ASD, and I loved that she acknowledged this. (Which women are so often denigrated for doing so when taking ownership of their own greatness.) While reading about a cocky asshole can be annoying, it made sense for her to be aware of her abilities. She brings this up at a later point, saying that someone like her (as in, a woman) doesn't get to where she's gotten without realizing that there's skill and ability behind it. Even still, her accomplishments are overlooked, downplayed, or just straight-up passed off to her male colleagues. Although it does sting, she deals. I loved how realistically Barry and Turner dealt with this part of it. And because of the sexism, she's also learned to use all her assets to her benefit, namely sex.

Charlie is no virgin (and neither is Parsons), and she also doesn't have a terrible sex life, sex assault in her

past, or just hate sex because of ~REASONS~, so that was another point in favour of the book. As I said above, she's learned to use this to her advantage.

If they weren't going to fight fairly, she wasn't either. And their weaknesses were her weapons. She'd had fun, too, once she discovered her body wasn't merely a liability.

And that may sound mercenary, but I definitely agree with her. I applauded her for doing so because what she's saying is absolutely right. She has to use every weapon she's got in a time when gender far outweighed any accomplishments a woman may earn.

She picked up the report she was supposed to be reading. She set it down. She opened the cover, took her pen in hand...and slammed it back down.

It would never be enough. No matter how many papers she authored, no matter how many projects she successfully completed, deadlines she met, or snafus she navigated, all they'd ever be able to see were the breasts.

She's smarter than everyone else, even Parsons, yet gets no recognition for it. She's smarter and more accomplished than even her director, Hal, but she's still given the position of *deputy* director to his directorship, despite the fact that she pretty much ends up doing Hal's job, just without the official title. Like I said, I can't blame a woman for trying to even the odds in an unfair world (and she's not hurting anyone by doing so). And congrats to her for enjoying it while she did so. (And can I just say it's fucking nice to read about a heroine, who's intelligent, and *isn't* a virgin or has a terrible sex life? Reading about heroines with horrible sex lives is bad enough, but the ~nerdy virgin~ trope is pretty awful, too. I congratulate the authors for subverting that here.)

However, she doesn't do this with Parsons. Her affair with Parsons has nothing to do with her trying to gain a foothold or him taking advantage of it, which, admittedly, was something I was a little wary of at first. Since there's a difference in their positions, with Parsons being a director, while Charlie is a deputy director (and a new employee), things can be a little tricky when it comes to boss/subordinate relationships. In this, I liked that, while he's still technically above her, he's not her immediate boss. She's in the computing department and answers to Hal, while Parsons is the director of the engineering department. Perhaps, if Parsons really wanted, he could get her fired, but I liked that it's not that he could do so himself (which he'd then need to put in more work for because Hal and Parsons aren't the most genial of colleagues), or that she feels she needs to return the affections because he's her boss.

That's another part I liked about it. (view spoiler) I was glad with this aspect and how it was dealt with, which I felt was handled delicately and done well.

Now, while I liked the relationship between Charlie and Parsons, I did have issues. The relationship progresses through months of skipping, with the first chapter starting in January 1961 and the book going until the middle of 1963. Each passing day is not detailed, which I really liked because I don't care to hear about every day. I also liked how the book time-jumped because I don't like instalove, with two characters finding themselves in love and committed within a week's time. While they did have an attraction (especially Parsons, and I just absolutely loooove when the H is the first to fall), they didn't let it interfere with their jobs.

My issue with this, however, was that most of the story centred on their jobs and then not much else. (view spoiler) This differed from Kit's book because, in that one, he and Anne-Marie were neighbours, so we got to see them outside of Kit's work environment. Besides those, there were also interactions with other astronauts and their wives. I enjoyed seeing them outside of ASD. With this book, though, (view spoiler)

I want to say that I wanted more of them relationship-wise, but I don't know how that could've been done. (view spoiler)

That kind of works into another issue of mine. (view spoiler)

And this is by no means to say that Charlie is horrible and that I feel Parsons deserves a new h—she's really not!—I just wish that we'd been seen more of how she felt for him, like we are with all the scenes from Parsons's POV in regards to her. I needed a bit more grovelling and hurting on her part for all the emotional turmoil Parsons had to put him with in this book.

Anyway! I liked it for the most part. The book itself is low on both angst and drama, so it wasn't angst and OTT drama overload. The relationship is pretty mellow, but the space-related stuff is what really shines in this book. I'm no expert, but it felt like the authors did a very thorough job with their space-related research. While I do wish the relationship had been more of a central point, reading about their issues with space exploration and the politics surrounding it was interesting. I usually hate it when authors drop the character's jobs (and their entire life in general) in favour of just having the two characters fawn and fuck for 95% of the book. So for anyone who likes that, you may find this a bit boring, but I didn't. And my enjoyment of the book may be biased because I absolutely loved Parsons. (Hey...what can I say? I love insecure betas.)

There were some other minor things I had issues with (like: (view spoiler)), but it didn't make me like the book any less.

I was hoping that the authors would give the Computers, Dot and Bev, their own book, and it seems they will be! It seems the next book, Star Crossed, is Beverly and (view spoiler), who's introduced in this book. (view spoiler) I also hope Jefferies gets a book! He's described as a "gentle engineer," and I'm always up for gentle Hs! He had a number of appearances in this book, so I'm hoping that means good things for a possible book starring him.

ARC provided by the author in exchange for an honest review.

Tori says

This was excellent. I really liked the dynamic here. The book gives us something we don't tend to see a lot in romance:

1. A prolonged courtship! Their relationship takes place over the course of almost two years before they get

their HEA.

2. Two characters who are both and equally aloof. A lot of that has to do with their circumstances. It was interesting to see the intersection of sexism and classism here, especially for a time period we don't see a lot of in historical romance.

And I mean, the sex was really, really hot.

Amanda says

This was a very hard review to write. Not because Earth Bound was bad, but because it was **SO GOOD**. I'm sure that makes no sense but bare with me while I try, *try* being the operative word here, and get my thoughts out in what I hope will be in a semi-coherent fashion.

Just like in Star Dust, this book takes place in the early 1960's during the Space Race. This time however, the story centers on a hero AND a heroine who are BOTH engineers working together at an imaginary NASA-type facility called the ASD (American Space Department). Eugene Parsons, our bespectacled and adorably starchy hero, is the Director of Engineering and Dr. Charlie Eason is the program's latest, and brilliant, hire. Sparks fly almost immediately between them, although they are quick to deny it as romantic entanglements are not part per the course. They have a job to do and to Charlie and Parsons, the job is **EVERYTHING**. This was the first of many instances where they proved they were made for each other.

I was only a few pages into the prologue before I knew Charlie was a type of heroine I LOVE and wish I saw more. What heroine am I talking about? The love her or hate her because she's not easily accessible type. Charlie was first and foremost a scientist and her personality reflected that fact accordingly. Constantly having to prove herself, she came from a very strict background with science-minded parents who didn't approve of her or her career choices as she chose to leave academics and pursue her passion which in this case was computer engineering. Physics are the future according to her parents, not machinery and **arrogant sniff** engineering. So not only did Charlie not have any support from her family, but she also had to contend with the daily sexism and misogyny at her latest job.

"It would never be enough. No matter how many papers she authored, no matter how many projects she successfully completed, deadlines she met, or snafus she navigated, all they'd ever be able to see were the breasts."

Everything that Charlie went through: being judged by her looks and gender, not being taken seriously, forced to use clever ruses and manipulations to get her ideas across and then in the end not even getting credit for her accomplishments, was all horrible and yet sadly real. As angry as it made me, I'm glad the authors decided not to sugarcoat this aspect of Charlie's life.

I can see people not liking Charlie because she was hard. And even falling in love with Parsons didn't magically transform her into a person who was overly emotional. She was not *emotionless*, she had feelings, deep and strong but they did not RULE her. Mostly, she just didn't always know how to express all that she felt to others. She wore a mask cloaked in makeup and false submission because that was how she survived. Honestly I was beyond happy to see a character like Charlie, a woman whose brain mattered more than her heart and how she eventually came to reconcile and find balance between the two.

Moving on to Parsons, Gene. Parsons, whom I'd already been introduced to in Star Dust, was a grouchy perfectionist, prone to angry outbursts when things went wrong. Though he wasn't technically the boss, everyone knew that without him, there would be no space program. Parsons was controlling and didn't take anyone's bullshit, especially when it came from his dumb ass bosses and obnoxious astronauts. He didn't have much of a life outside of work, save for his beloved saltwater fish, and his ability to human was constantly called into question which just made him all the more lovable to me. He was often labeled as robotic, seemingly unfeeling but it was only because he cared *so much* that it came across as rude or demanding. Charlie saw through that hard exterior of course because it was so much like her own.

I do believe that between him and Charlie, Parsons developed the most emotionally, at least in a more obvious way, and I loved that. An intelligent, thoughtful man who was in touch with his feelings while still being an awkward stick in the mud? **PERFECTION!** Can I also get a **HUZZAH!** for Parsons being a feminist? Unlike his caveman counterparts, Parsons always believed without question that Charlie and her fellow lady computers were just as, if not more so let's be real here, capable as their male coworkers. And he was the only one who took the idea of lady astronauts seriously and wanted to see it happen. His total awe of Charlie and how smart and amazing she was just slayed me.

“He didn’t think he could have loved her more than just then, when he asked if she could do something that might be impossible---when he asked her for more---and she simply nodded.”

Oh Parsons, why aren't you real?

On to the romance! Rarely, if ever?, have I encountered two such pragmatic, closed off people find true happiness and love with each other. Parsons and Charlie's relationship was as complex and unique as their characters were, no surprise there. What starts out as mutual attraction based on their shared intellect and competence, leads to an affair of sorts. They meet in a seedy motel after work and have lots of really hot sex with no strings. What was interesting about this is that Charlie was the one to set the rules. SHE made the first pass. SHE chose to meet him. SHE chose, later, to end it. Everything was on her terms and had nothing to do with her using Parsons to get ahead at work, although she totally could have, and for Parsons their trysts were a means of releasing the built up tension between them but also because he *liked* her. He didn't **WANT** to like her, but he did. Likewise, Charlie found Parsons fascinating, she wanted to dissect and understand him. The fact that they both approached this part of their relationship the same way scientists would approach an experiment amused me to no end.

But of course, time marches on (it really did in fact since the story takes place roughly over a two-year period) and feelings changed, heightened, evolved, deepened. It was a refreshing change of pace that *love* didn't happen overnight, or like within a week, for this unconventional couple. In fact it was somewhat of a shock to Charlie and Parsons how their connection had suddenly grown into something so much more than they had originally planned.

*“When Parsons looked at her, he saw her. He recognized her. He didn’t want to alter her to be like anyone else---though he probably wanted her to work harder and better. But he understood her from her brain to her toes.
He liked her. Oh hell.”*

I thought it was quite believable, at least for these characters, that they reached the conclusion that they'd

fallen in love in their own time, in their own analytical-type ways. Parsons' journey was more direct because he was the easier to read of the pair, while in contrast Charlie took much longer to sort things out as misunderstandings and deep seeded insecurities clouded her thought process. But you know what, even as someone who absolutely HATES when couples don't communicate; I liked this. I liked that the road to love wasn't predictable, that it took time and many fumbles for these two to understand that *they just fit*.

"She didn't think she was perfect, but she thought that together, they might be more than they were apart. Together they might be something like it."

Apart from the sciencey sections that got a bit too wordy and complicated for my personal brain but were nonetheless interesting and obviously very well researched, I really don't have anything negative to say about this book. I mean we've got a darling hero who is wholly supportive of our fascinating heroine, great portrayals of ladies of all kinds getting shit done, sharp and engaging writing, an out of the norm plot and setting, a fluffy feels inducing love story. Do you really need any further incentive to read?

Also, the next book apparently features a romance between Beverly, a lady of color computer, and Geraldine, a (ginger?!) lady astronaut.

ASDFGHJKLKJHYREWQAASDFGHJKLOIUYTREWSDFGH!!!!!!!

Giedre says

Two sexy brainiacs fall in love while sending astronauts into space, and it's kind of amazing. No book is perfect, but, damn, if I'm not giving this one top marks, because this is probably as close to perfection as a romance set in the '60s fictionalized NASA (it's ASD, American Space Department, in this series) can get.

We met Eugene Parsons, the director of engineering and development at ASD and the hero of *Earth Bound*, in book one, where we quickly learned he was super serious about this space business, very shouty, very competent and very scary. In fact, Parsons was one of the best, if smaller, parts of book one. He was as unimpressed with Kit, astronaut hero of book one, as I was. To be fair to Kit, Parsons enjoys making all astronauts cry, because they're too full of themselves.

Charlie Eason - Dr. Eason, thank you very much - is a woman in a man's world. While she's beyond competent and most likely far more accomplished and intelligent than her boss, the director of the ASDs computing department, she's stuck with the deputy director position, because it's 1961 and she has ladyparts. Annoying, you say, and Charlie agrees.

The romance between Parsons and Charlie is a thing of beauty. This is a meeting between two extremely intelligent, competent individuals, who have nothing but respect for each other. They also want to bang like whoa, but only after hours—keeping it separate from their work is important to both of them, because their work is paramount. So we get to see their working and after hours relationships, which they manage to keep clearly separate at first. Of course, life doesn't work that way and those separate spheres of their lives start to bleed into each other, even if they're not exactly happy about it.

Anyway, the whole thing is a joy to read. Both of the protagonists are such well developed characters, and their respect and attraction toward each other are well written, palpable and evolve into affection over a longer period of time, making reading *Earth Bound* an extremely satisfying experience.

While I enjoyed the first book (the romance between a playboy astronaut and a divorcee) and the prequel novella (tells the story of how one of the astronauts and his wife met and fell in love years ago), *Earth Bound* is where it's at for me. What can I say, these two sexy brainiac workaholics won me over completely.

OLT says

This Fly Me to the Moon series by Emma Barry and Genevieve Turner has been an unexpected reading pleasure for me. Taking place in the early 1960s, the romance series features characters involved in the early space race to the moon. Most of the books have male astronauts and their love interests as the main characters and I have enjoyed STAR DUST and A MIDNIGHT FEAST about two of these couples and plan to read more.

This EARTH BOUND is my favorite so far. Eugene Parsons, who appeared as a secondary character in the other books I read, is our hero here. Parsons is an excellent engineer. He lives for his job coordinating, directing and keeping the space program on track and running as flawlessly as possible and he is demanding and abrupt and definitely not a people-pleaser. He is a perfectionist, as is, of course, necessary when you're sending men out into the great unknown, and expects perfection of his subordinates. Those he works with respect and fear him but do not like him. His character is developed well by the authors and the reader will grow to appreciate him more and more as the story progresses.

Enter new hire Dr. Charlie Eason. She's a brilliant and beautiful computer scientist, obviously the most competent addition to his team ever. But, of course, as a woman, she is not taken seriously by the good ol' boys of the space program. That's, of course, except for Parsons. He recognizes quality and extreme competence when he sees it. He also appreciates the fact that Charlie isn't cowed by him the way the others are and she gives as good as she gets.

The unfortunate side effect of working together is the strong sexual attraction that develops between them. When they finally act upon it, they decide it's just the scratching of an itch and must be kept compartmentalized. So what happens in the motel where they meet has no relevance to their work relationship.

Well, just keep reading to find out how well that works out. BTW, this is not just a romance. There are some relatively serious issues treated upon also: the role of and under-appreciation of women in space exploration, the relationship of scientists and astronauts in the program, pros and cons of the participation of private industry, and, all in all, a really splendid walk back in time to the 1960s. Although this particular space program is fictional, it bears a resemblance to the real one and shows that the authors have done their research. I'd suggest reading their Author's Notes at the end to round out your reading experience.

This is a good romance and a pleasant exploration of the past. (Well, at times not so pleasant as you may see that we women are still fighting that uphill battle for equality with men. But there has been a small step for womankind, I think.)
