

Frederics, Paul

Space Coyotes and the Secret of the Blue Planet

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This action packed sci-fi adventure reads at a very fast moving pace. Its sits just in between *Dr Who* and *Star Wars* and is set in the future on a planet called Anilar. The main character is JoJo, who is fourteen, but do not get the impression that this book is solely for girl readers, it can be enjoyed by boys too, especially as it has so many scientific/space type references, and the fact that part of the story is centred around a rock band. It is a joint collaboration by two male authors Paul Frederics and Paul Arnold, who met at a writers' workshop and who both play in rocks bands – which is the other strand to the story.

On the planet of Anilar, 14-year-old JoJo has taken two years to prepare for a journey to the Blue Planet (Earth) – one million light years away – in search of her grandfather who mysteriously disappeared 40 years ago while on a mission. She is a clever girl, wants to become a Space Coyote and enlists the help of her reluctant brother 2B to help her on her perilous journey across the galaxy.

Meanwhile on Earth, in the heart of Apple Valley, teenager Jimmy Green needs to find a singer for his pop group Applejuice to sing at the final round of the town's most prestigious Battle of the Bands competition. Music, magic, intrigue and space are brought together in a very exhilarating climax. Jimmy dies, but is brought back to life and JoJo also fights for her own survival. All ends well and JoJo and 2B return to Anilar to answer questions about their disappearance.

This book, part of a trilogy, is a busy challenging read, and the reader has to stay with the story the whole time. There is a lot of technical space/high tech language to digest like 'gravitational destabilisation facility', plasma filtrons, and lots of made up words with footnotes from the authors as to their meanings – these are always good fun for readers!

Janette Perkins