



Humans as Martians? Earth to Luna, Humans as Interplanetary Species in *The Lunar Chronicles*

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ABSTRACT

Throughout history, humanity has gazed up at the sky with awe and aspiration. The desire to live among the stars has persisted from the earliest fantasy of celestial beings to the technological revolution that launched rockets beyond earth. *The Lunar Chronicles* by Marissa Meyer envisions a fully formed society on the moon that has been influenced by both biological evolution and political manipulation. Meanwhile, Elon Musk's Space X program sees Mars colonization as the next big step for humanity and a concrete plan to establish a multi-planetary species. This paper aims to analyze how Marissa Meyer's fantastical and imaginary lunar society and Elon Musk's aspirations for Mars Colonization, Meyer's series is a warning against the perils of power, colonial exploitation and alienation, while Musk's aim is a yearning for survival, creativity and hope. By combining these viewpoints it is understood that how science fiction influences and critiques humanity's real-world space futures in addition to providing entertainment.

**Introduction:**

Science fiction has revolved around theories about extraterrestrial life, even before rockets were invented, writers have depicted space life in their works, like Jules Verne who has imagined how human ingenuity may carry people to the moon through his work, *From the Earth to the Moon* (1865), H. G. Wells' novel *The War of the Worlds* (1898) has portrayed alien invasion and Arthur C Clarke's 1968 novel, *2001: A Space Odyssey* has explored humanity's fate in space. In reality, The Soviet Union's 1957 Sputnik satellite launch and the 1968 Apollo 11 Moon landing marked the beginning of space exploration and turned human imagination into scientific innovation. Private space exploration companies like Space X and national space agencies like NASA, ISRO, ROSCOSMOS and CNSA have recently focused on exploring Mars.

Marissa Meyer's novel series *The Lunar Chronicles* follows this line of speculative fiction with a distinctive twist, rather than aliens visiting earth, Meyer envisions humans as people who migrated to the Moon and got adapted to that life as Lunars. This reversal makes it easy to draw comparisons between Musk's futuristic aspirations and literary warnings, "Either we spread Earth to other planets, or we risk going extinct". (Musk, 2017)

Humanity's urge to explore space has become very common today, which has paved way to human desire of exploring other planets in space. Cosmic exploration and expansion has been a pioneer in achieving space travel through today's space agencies and space transportation companies. Space X is an ambitious space exploration company owned by Elon Musk, who has future plans to invade the Moon and the Mars by making space travel easier. Elon Musk envisions in colonizing Mars, which has become humanity's desire to ensure survival of human life by becoming a multi-planetary species.

Humans on the Moon:

As seen in the novel series *The Lunar Chronicles* where Marissa Meyer mirrors the present generational idea of exploring space and invading other planets and satellite like Moon

and Mars, Lunars are people who live in Luna, with special power to manipulate people. Though they are in Luna, self-proclaiming as Lunars, they were once Earthen, who colonized Moon making it an Earthen colony, later evolved as Lunars. Luna has become a fully developed society on the Moon determined by political manipulation and biological evolution.



Luna is not a natural place to live for humans; it has been made a place to live with certain artificial setups, which can be seen in the novel series portrayed by Marissa Meyer, “Winter missed the sun and its warmth. Their artificial days were never the same” (Winter 4), through this Meyer shows the lack of sunlight exposure, which has made the people of Luna to use artificial sunlight. Even though today it has not become plausible to place foot on the Moon without an oxygen suit, astronomers believe that landing on the Moon as a colony of Earth will become a reality one day through technology which could lead to artificial environment. Only with the help of advanced technology this could be possible as seen in the novel series.

To escape human extinction:

Planning to land on the Mars to escape human extinction is Elon Musk’s Space X company’s mission, colonizing Mars for the survival of human species in future by making humanity a ‘multi-cosmic species’. Musk believes that his idea of starship rockets will be helpful in transporting millions of people to Mars to enable a colony. Musk’s aim is to have a second home for the human race, he envisions in making it happen sooner also to be affordable for every individual, which few of the Space X team members believe to be Musk’s lifetime goal.

In *The Lunar Chronicles* the people of Luna has to hold on with the artificial set upto lead a normal life with basic human needs like oxygen and water. Meyer says,

All of Luna’s population lived beneath specially designed biodomes that provided them with breathable atmosphere and artificial gravity and the ability to grow trees and crops. Destroying one of those protective barriers would kill everyone inside. (Winter 123)

So living on the Moon is not easy unless proper arrangements are made, as Elon Musk and his Space X team has plans to have such a development to make a proper human settlement in Mars.

According to *The New York Times*, Space X has a Mars colonization team which has plans to build habitats in Mars by working on with proper spacesuits and exploring about the possibility of human reproduction in such a new atmosphere. People rumor that, the doubt has made Musk to volunteer his sperm as an initiative in building a colony in Mars. In 2016 Musk has told the *International Astronomical Congress* that the passengers might be transported to Mars through a rocket built by his company remarking that saving human species is under urgency, so, immediate action should be taken by making humans a multi-planetary species.



His ambition is seen as limitless and absurd by people who believe that living on the 'Red Planet' which is totally a different atmosphere with icy temperatures, barren terrain and unbreathable air without enough oxygen. Even NASA, being one of the leading space agencies is still researching on Mars landing which the agency believes cannot be expected until 2040s, so Musk's confidence on taking humans to Mars is seen to be pointless. But as seen in the novel series technology can do things which may seem to be impossible, Meyer shows how technological developments can change everything.

Robert Zubrin is an aerospace engineer who is a prominent figure in Mars exploration professes in the extraterrestrial life saying, "if we desire peace on Earth, we need to prepare for war on space" (Wikipedia). He believes that Mars could be a place to live, but government's lack

f interest disappointed him, so he established an international organization, 'The Mars Society', a mission to Mars, with a private funding. Zubrin also says "you can't just land one million people on Mars" (Wikipedia), he conveys it is difficult to land on Mars without proper arrangements but not impossible, may need more time, Elon Musk's team may have to take that time for developing their ideas, because reality is different from fiction, but fiction has been the source of new ideas and will be in the future too.

Even though the atmosphere of the Mars differs from the Earth, the seasons of Mars is moreover similar to earth's, compared to the other planets in the solar system, like that, a day has similar number of hours, 24 hrs and 40 minutes, land mass of 144.8 million km². Among other planets Mars seems to be a place where human settlement is possible. According to NASA's research with few people of their team who had spent 378 days in a sealed Martian environment, to understand and familiarize such an atmosphere, these kind of missions would help astronauts and aerospace engineers to make such travel easier. NASA also believes that the trip to Mars would take up to nine months as Mars is located about 140 million miles away from Earth.

Elon Musk believes that he would take humans to the 'Red Planet' to save humanity from extinction as his Dragon Spacecraft of Space X crew brought back Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore to earth on 18th of March 2025. The astronauts were left in the *International Space Station* for over nine months due to a technical issue in NASA's Boeing Star liner spacecraft. Like Meyer's Luna is a habitat with artificial setups, Musk's Marian mission can have certain artificial setups like artificial suns as shown in *The Lunar Chronicles* and solar panels to heat the homes of his colony using thermonuclear



explosions, as told by Musk in a 2022 podcast interview. Most of his companies contribute towards his Mars colonization mission.

Summation:

Musk believes that in 20 years Martian colony will be ready to invite humans as its own, he assures his desire will come true one day. Musk's vision would become a success, where his belief of bringing fiction to reality will make humans meet Martians in future, as seen in Meyer's universe. Meyer's Lunars are people who evolved biologically, after migrating from the earth to the Moon. Musk's Martian idea will be similar if humans migrate from the Earth to the Mars and represent themselves as Martians which could happen after colonization of Mars, that relies on engineering and technological habitats like AI, robotic, oxygen domes etc... as seen in the novel series.

Humans visit other planets or extraterrestrial beings visit earth, it was just seen and heard in science fiction but now researchers and astronomers of certain space agencies and space transportation companies are aiming to bring it to reality through Mars colonization. Science fiction and space science ultimately have a mutually reinforcing relationship: fiction imagines, science creates and together they determine humanity's fate beyond the stars.

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