



Monday, January 5, 2026

Dear Ann Greyson,

My name is Elizabeth Durkee, and for the last twelve years I've been the person science fiction authors quietly reach out to when a story is so fresh, so bold, and so vividly described that it feels like a crime the whole world isn't reading it yet. I'm supposed to be on a family hiatus right now: no Amazon, no new sci-fi, no letting myself get swept away to a galaxy far, far away where rogue smugglers, insurgent droids, firefights, and a young Mayorfant desiring to quench her interstellar curiosity all collide. I promised.

This afternoon I broke that promise the moment *SpaceWoman* appeared.

The weapons industry within a fractured political landscape, the Mayorfants' return to space after centuries of isolation, and the collision of aliens and droids gives *SpaceWoman* a unique and philosophical angle. I read the description and felt that ache in Neruda, who kept returning to space when she was feeling perplexed, (which seemed to be more often than not), like it was my own. This is the space opera we've all been waiting for: one that finally puts strong alien women characters at the center of their own story, surrounded by real danger.

Readers who adore James S. A. Corey and Alastair Reynolds, and every soul who still dreams of alien life and dreams of exploration and colonization deserve to meet Neruda yesterday.

I'm writing because I really felt sad after reading the part where Neruda's starship's shields were knocked out by the Arachtor warship in order to stop her starship, knowing they were going to send their boarding party. This story captures the whole range of emotions, such as the sarcasm and humor in relationships between the Mayorfants and those over-the-top and full of themselves Hantavant cousins of hers.

If the moment ever feels right for a second pair of very experienced eyes on how to carry this extraordinary, ground-breaking science fiction into the hands waiting for it, I would be honored to help. Things like strategic Goodreads Listopia placement that puts you on every Science Fiction and Fantasy Must Reads, Best Woman-Authored Books, and Books with Strong Women Characters (All Genres) lists readers check religiously, metadata love that lifts rankings the way a spaceship flies through open space, cinematic trailers with laser bolts and laser gun smoke and one young female starship captain flying straight into readers' hearts, quote cards so powerful people pin them above their desks, gentle personal outreach to the science fiction book clubs, sci-fi reading circles, and women-in-literature groups that would adopt Neruda tomorrow... whatever would feel authentic and proud for you and for her.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving us Neruda, who embodies an idealized form of cultural revival on space exploration. You've already made one reader fall completely, irrevocably in love today. Hearing from you would genuinely light up my entire world. With the deepest admiration and a heart full of hope.

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