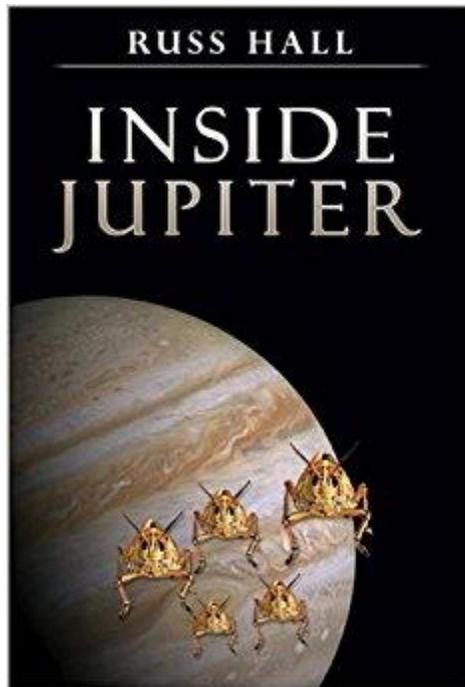


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Inside Jupiter

Russ Hall

Introduction

Russ Hall is the author of multiple books including the *Bones of the Rain* and several other thriller, young adult, and mystery novels. Russ Hall has also received awards for several of his writings and books. The book *Inside Jupiter* was published by Rival Media Publishing.

About the Book

Siblings Walt and Mindy lived on a spaceship their whole lives. Never had they been on a planet to see real nature and animals, that is until they crash land inside Jupiter. No one survives the crash except Walt and Mindy, who are alone on the strange planet and must quickly learn to survive in a hostile unknown world. A short day-night cycle due to the artificial sun and giant insects that are far from ordinary make life inside their spaceship seem peaceful and perfect. While exploring, Walt and Mindy encounter giant butterflies that wield swords and just when things turn for the worse, a group of strange boys wearing glass armor and holding spears save them. The boys decide to bring Walt and his sister to their home, a barely surviving colony that is run by children. Walt and Mindy quickly realize that the insects inside Jupiter are not your everyday type but are giant beasts the size of cars that won't hesitate to eat them. Walt becomes friends with the boys, Marik, Devon, Moe and Kip, that saved them. After barely surviving an encounter with a praying mantis that leaves Kip wounded, Walt, Mindy, and the boys reach the colony. Food is scarce and the children work day and night to keep the colony safe from insects. Things are looking up for Walt, he finally has friends and might just survive on this strange world. But things quickly become worse when Walt is brought before the Queen Mother, an 18-year-old girl that rules the colony, and he refuses to tell her vital information. Walt is treated like a prisoner and thrown into a locked room. After some incidents, Walt escapes and makes his way out of the colony and attempts to find his spaceship. Walt not only has to learn to survive on an alien planet, he must fend off giant weapon wielding grasshoppers and ferocious hungry spiders. While Walt is gone, Mindy must help protect the colony from an army of insects that are bent on overtaking the only habitable place the colonists know of. But the insects outside aren't the only danger, mole crickets attempt to tunnel under the colony, creating even more havoc. Giant

weapon wielding insects aside, the children of the colony are far from normal, especially the Queen Mother and a young girl named Sybil. As the story unfolds Mindy and Walt find a much darker side to the colony than they ever would have guessed. Suddenly being stuck on a spaceship didn't seem so bad, at least there they didn't have to worry about being eaten by hungry insects! Walt and Mindy are set for a grand adventure full of trials that will push them to their limits, and they must persevere to save their friends and the colony from a massive insect army before it is too late.

Discussion Guide

1. What insect is the top predator inside Jupiter? What are some other predators? What are some plant feeding insects inside Jupiter? Do you think it was wise for the colonists to release predators? What role do spiders play inside Jupiter?
2. How did Walt and Mindy learn when they were on the spaceship? Do you think the way they learned was effective? Why or why not? Do you think their schooling prepared them for what they faced inside Jupiter?
3. Were the insects portrayed accurately in the book? How were the insects able to wield and create weapons? How were the grasshoppers and dragonflies able to assemble into large armies? Can you think of an example in real life of insects amassing into large groups?
4. If Walt and Mindy and the children of the colony got along better do you think their situation would have been improved? How could they have avoided some of the difficulties that occurred?
5. Mindy wants to belong and have friends. She quickly makes friends with Becca and Ranish. Do her new friends treat her nicely? How does Anne treat her? After the accident with Sybil how

do her friends see her? Is Mindy a dynamic character that develops throughout the story? When they lock Mindy up could she have escaped? Why didn't she try to escape? Does this show Mindy is growing as a character? Why or why not?

6. Do insects walk in a tripod like gait? Would Walt's tactic of attacking legs on one side to imbalance the insects work? Observe an insect walking such as a cricket or grasshopper to determine how insects walk and if this would work. Can insects walk in more than one way?

7. Throughout the book Walt never tries to take command of the patrols or the colony children even though he could have. Instead, he leaves it to Marik. Do you think this was a wise decision? How does Walt develop as a character by doing this? Why did he let Marik take command instead of telling everyone what to do himself?

8. When Walt is under attack on all sides by spiders and giant pill bugs (pages 83-84) what does he do to defend himself? Do you think this would work? What kind of behavior are the pill bugs demonstrating?

9. Near the end of the book Mindy calls giant rhino beetles to aid Walt and the group of colony children. Do you think it is possible to ride on beetles? Beetles have two sets of wings, the hard outer wings called elytra and the inner thin membranous wings. Which type of wings did the beetles use to fly?

10. Did you enjoy reading the book? Was the ending satisfying? What did you learn from the book? What did you learn about insects? What do you think will happen to the children next? Do you foresee problems in their dealing with Anne?