



Life On Mars

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

‘Everybody thinks I’m crazy. Nobody believes there is life on Mars.’ But there’s a little astronaut who does and he’s determined to find it as he leaves his rocket, carrying nothing but a box of chocolate cupcakes intended as a gift.

As he wanders the planet’s surface searching for signs of life, he notes its cold and dusty dreariness and his optimism begins to wane.

What he fails to notice however is that all the while behind our narrator, following and closely observing him, is a very large pointy-eared Martian.

After what seems like miles of traversing the rocks and dirt, so *aptly* depicted in shades of grey and brown tinged with pink, the explorer concludes ‘Everybody was right. There is no life on Mars.’ He places his gift on the ground and starts to make his way back to his spaceship.

But where is it? The little astronaut suddenly spies something amazing; evidence after all, of life, in the form of a single bright yellow flower. Hurrah! ? mission accomplished. He cannot resist picking the flower to take back as proof. (Not his finest hour in my opinion.)

His box is there too, so with both hands full the astronaut resumes his spaceship search with a spot of mountain climbing (actually the creature’s body) and at last, there it is. Once on board it’s time to celebrate by breaking open the beribboned box that’s come so far ?

It’s the mismatch between what we see in Agee’s illustrations and the running commentary provided by the little protagonist that makes this such a satisfying read. Out of this world tragi-comedy done to perfection is what is served up here and I can almost hear the cries of ‘again!’ from listeners who will relish its splendid incongruity.

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