



Space Boy

Orson Scott Card , Lance Card (Illustrator)

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Is it space travel that children dream of, or merely visiting other worlds? Todd had always set his heart on being an astronaut, but when he meets an alien and travels to another world, he doesn't use a spaceship; he just hangs out in his own back yard.

In *Space Boy*, Orson Scott Card, author of *Ender's Game*, takes listeners into a strange and wonderful future, where people from another world regularly visit Earth, usually without being noticed. And when humans travel to their world, they find themselves dangerously weak and powerless, until Todd finds a way to set both worlds to rights.

By turns funny and painful, *Space Boy* is Card at his best, exploring human nature for the entertainment of readers young and old.

Space Boy Details

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Author : Orson Scott Card , Lance Card (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Space Boy for online ebook

Michael Jones says

I listened to this on audiobook. It's a brief little story that reminds me, in many respects, of the reams of sci-fi short stories I read as a boy and as a young adult, and that I still enjoy from time to time. It's a bit long to be a "short story" and it's a bit short to be a "novel", though; it falls somewhere in between.

To briefly synopsise, the story focuses on a boy named Todd who has two primary driving characteristics: (1) he wants to be an astronaut when he grows up, but is convinced that there is no way he will ever qualify, and (2) his mother disappeared four years before the beginning of the story, and nobody knows what happened to her or where she went. Over the course of the story, we learn that Card has humorously taken the concept of "wormholes" quite literally; the characters must travel through the bodies of actual interstellar worms to reach their destinations. This leads to frequent use of words like "anus" and "poop" which some adult readers seem to find offensive. I see that stuff as part of the mildly scatological juvenile humor of the book; it places it squarely in the realm of fiction written for the tween boy crowd. It's certainly no worse than the potty humor in the Shrek movie series.

This book is not particularly typical of Card's writing; his plots are usually quite complex, and this story is very simple and linear, with very few twists and turns. What *does* show as a Card trademark is the character of Todd, who like Card's other young male protagonists (Ender and Bean from the Ender's Game series, for example) is very self-aware; his inner life is described in a high level of detail. Card's boy protagonists value loved ones extremely highly, and I think this expresses Card's own love for family. And the central plot point for this story is not a worm's anus, and it's not even the imaginative portrayal of what might happen if someone traveled to a universe with different properties of physics than our own (similar to when the children in A Wrinkle in Time travel to a world with only two dimensions and almost suffocate); the central plot point is that a boy loves and misses his mother and will do anything, even risk his life, to get her back. His plan to rescue her requires creativity and courage, and his success would provide any boy with a satisfying catharsis.

This book isn't particularly a representative example of Card's other work; it's too short and simple to be that. But the protagonist and the strong emphasis on family are pure Card.

Lori says

Very good book.

Heidi says

Orson Scott Card is so hit-or-miss for me. This one was a definite miss. I've never been a big fan of his urban fantasy, but I thought this one was science fiction (being called Space Boy and all...) and was hoping for an Ender-esque novelette. But, no.

So there are these interstellar worms, and for some reason they keep their head on one world and their anus

(yes, the anus) on another world. Travel between worlds is possible by entering a worm's mouth and exiting its anus. It's also possible to shove something (especially fluid) up a worm's anus and have it exit the other side.

Two brothers (10 and 7) have to figure out how to travel to the other world after their mother accidentally gets sucked into the worm's mouth and disappears. And they're hindered by an elf, a little man who comes from the other world and wants to keep the boys' mother there for his own unexplained reasons.

Because this book is apparently written for prepubescent boys, all travel through the worm is done naked (elf, mother, boys, etc.). And the words that these kids used...I wanted to wash their mouths out with soap. I'm sure this book will be beloved by boys who love to use bad words and watch things poop.

Emma says

I grabbed this off the shelf at the library when I was picking up an Ender book (all of which I've enjoyed, if not loved) and thought it'd be nice to have a shorter book to read as well.

I'm not exactly sure who this book is aimed at. The protagonist is a teenager, so I'm assuming it's Young Adult, but the jokes seem juvenile (moving the worm's anus is giggled at as "hauling ass") and the whole story seems to talk down to the reader.

All in all, I expected more from this book, and what there was didn't match up with my taste.

Tara says

It was cute.

Very short. I listened to it 2x speed and finished it in a single run. Not much complex at all, but different.

Andrew says

I got this title the same time as I did the Subterranean Press edition of Sky Horizon by David Brin and I must admit having read one after the other I am feeling a little disappointed by this book - I struggle to see what the audience was for this book and even what the reason for it was. Now without going in to details of the book - to quote evening small parts of it would do it justice and would probably promote even more searching questions than there are already.

I am not sure if the story is fantasy, science fiction, written as a fable, a prophetic warning or if it was fulfilling some deep seated issues with the author- what I do know is that it feels like that Mr Card was approached by the publisher for some special and rare material suitable for Subterranean's limited and numbered production runs - and this was all that was at hand at the time.

I wont say I was disappointed with the book but I was left a little confused - this is certainly a book for the Orson Scott Card completist and fan - it is not going to be another Enders Game - which I think caught me out the most - as I have read a lot of his work (okay so I guess I fit the completist category) and though his work does vary - after all whose does not - I think this is way of his usual mark and that was a surprise.

Merrill says

WARNING - this review is explicit and not for sensitive ears.

Having just finished Ender's Game, I stopped by the library to pick up the sequel but got sidetracked by this incredibly weird novella in the Orson Scott Card section. It should have been titled "The Space Enema." Card really ought to consider a psych eval. No, really.

In essence, what we have here is a story about two interstellar worms (not wormholes, mind you, actual worms) whose mouths are on one planet and anuses are on the other. Going in the mouth and out the anus is the method of travel between planets (I'm not kidding). Well, the young protagonist's mother naturally gets sucked into the mouth of one worm while trying to prove to her young son that there's no monster in his closet. Unable to find the mouth of the other worm to get back to Earth, she is stuck there. But wait! Big brother and Dad hatch a plan to get her back by ... wait for it ... inserting a garden hose into the worm's anus on Earth and turning on the water full force so she can find the worm's other end and return to Earth. When that doesn't work, they also try sticking a garden rake up its butt (and have to push with some force as the worm is resisting the insertion).

OK, let's stop right there for a minute. Yes, I know this is geared toward a male adolescent audience and I'm a 40-something female. Granted. But hey, I can appreciate a good rectal story now and again. This was just too much. Homo-erotic, pedophiliac, creepy and just plain weird. In 95 short pages, Card managed to use the words anus or rectum at least 200 times. Does the giggle factor extend that far for 10 year old boys? I think not. Not to mention that his descriptions of putting the hose and rake up the worm's rear were far from innocent. Feeling resistance? Push a little harder. A gush of liquid escaping from the worm's anus and running down his arm? Eeeew. I'm sorry, but if I had a son in the age category this was meant for, I would not be recommending that he read it.

Mr. Card, please consult with your psychiatrist or just admit that you harbor fantasies of having small children give you enemas. Absolutely Disgusting.

Kimbolimbo says

This book was a big waste of time by the author, the publishers, and the reader. I don't recommend this book to anyone. I cannot figure out who the intended audience is for this book...maybe someone with an anal/rectum fixation. The whole book was about sticking things into the anus of a worm with a lot of potty humor. I am not kidding.

Ashley says

I've always enjoyed the books I've read by Orson Scott Card, until this one. I would have given it 1 star, but I feel like the idea behind the book was good. The book is written as a kids book (I thought), so I wanted to read it and see if I could put it in my classroom library. I can't. It's just too inappropriate. The vocabulary and the need for nudity just don't strike me as something geared towards kids. Maybe I was wrong about the

suggested age range.

Lyn says

Not Card's best work. Sticking things in a space worm's anus. Repeatedly. Right. Read Ender's Game instead.

Kim says

wow was this story really about an interstellar anus? yes, yes it was.

Stephanne Stacey says

Not one of Cards best. Actually this is one of his more forgettable books. Although the worm concept and the density issues is fun to explore, I just think that it could have been done better.

Jim says

A fun YA short story about an interdimensional problem that explains some fantasy, lost socks, & other perennial issues. It had a strong moral point about the importance of family & what truth is, but didn't lose anything by it. Nothing religious. Well worth listening to & read, as usual, by Rudnicke.

Elizabeth Olson says

This slight tale of a boy rescuing his mother from another planet (she was accidentally sucked through a bedroom-closet wormhole) is more reminiscent of a Heinlein "juvenile" than of the masterful storytelling that is Card's hallmark. Not actually terrible, just not up to his usual standards.

Lady Knight says

Incredibly juvenile with a lot of unnecessary potty humour. I usually love Orson Scott Card's novels and short stories, but this one was almost a complete waste of my time. I didn't hate it (hence two stars instead of one), but it is certainly not one I'd recommend.
