



See You in the Cosmos

Jack Cheng

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“I haven't read anything that has moved me this much since *Wonder*.” —Jennifer Niven, author of *All the Bright Places*

A space-obsessed boy and his dog, Carl Sagan, take a journey toward family, love, hope, and awe in this funny and moving novel for fans of *Counting by 7s*, *Walk Two Moons*, and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*.

11-year-old Alex Petroski loves space and rockets, his mom, his brother, and his dog Carl Sagan—named for his hero, the real-life astronomer. All he wants is to launch his golden iPod into space the way Carl Sagan (the man, not the dog) launched his Golden Record on the Voyager spacecraft in 1977. From Colorado to New Mexico, Las Vegas to L.A., Alex records a journey on his iPod to show other lifeforms what life on earth, *his* earth, is like. But his destination keeps changing. And the funny, lost, remarkable people he meets along the way can only partially prepare him for the secrets he'll uncover—from the truth about his long-dead dad to the fact that, for a kid with a troubled mom and a mostly not-around brother, he has way more family than he ever knew.

Jack Cheng's debut is full of joy, optimism, determination, and unbelievable heart. To read the first page is to fall in love with Alex and his view of our big, beautiful, complicated world. To read the last is to know he and his story will stay with you a long, long time.

"Stellar." —*Entertainment Weekly*

“Life-embracing.” —*The Wall Street Journal*

“The best I've read in a long, long time.” —Holly Goldberg Sloan, author of *Counting by 7s*

“Riveting, inspiring, and sometimes hilarious.” —*Kirkus*, starred review

“A propulsive stream-of-conscious dive.” —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

“A gift—a miracle.” —Paul Griffin, author *When Friendship Followed Me Home*

“Exuberant.” —*Booklist*

"Full of the real kind of magic." —Ally Condie, author of *Matched*

“Incredible.” —*BookRiot*

"Full of innocence and unwavering optimism." —*SLC*

"Inspiring." —*Time for Kids*

“Powerfully affirms our human capacity for grace and love and understanding.” —Gary D. Schmidt, author of *Okay for Now*

See You in the Cosmos Details

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From Reader Review See You in the Cosmos for online ebook

Ilenia Zodiaco says

Parecchio adorabile. Renderebbe mille volte di più come audiolibro visto che si tratta di una serie di registrazioni vocali create da Alex, bambino appassionato di astronomia e scienze, il cui mito è Carl Sagan (tanto da aver assegnato il nome del grande divulgatore scientifico al suo cane) e la cui famiglia versa in condizioni disastrose. Un classico viaggio on the road di formazione lo porterà a scoprire verità spiacevoli (ma anche sorprendenti) sulla sua identità e sul caotico rimestare della vita. Davvero, davvero carino.

Caroline says

VIDEO REVIEW HERE FOR Y'ALL - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3sKH9...>

SIGH File this one under 'disappointing reads of 2017'. I first heard about this book at a Penguin Teen event I went to in January and thought it sounded super cute so when it came out I picked it up. The story follows our eleven year-old main character who is space obsessed and wants to launch a golden ipod into space (Carl Sagan and Nasa once sent a Golden record). He ends up going on this BIIGG journey and meeting a bunch of people and 'discovering himself' and stuff but I just didn't particularly enjoy this.

So here's a rundown of things I didn't like:

- **THE FORMATTING EUGH.** Okay so the entire book is told in the 'voice recordings' on his ipod so that when he sends it into space the aliens can know about his life. It's a cute concept but reading it is really frustrating and by about the 50 page mark it was driving me crazy. It read like this "*so I said let's go to the shops because then we can get ice cream and Joe said that's not a good idea because it's only an hour before dinner and I said that's no fun do you guys have ice cream on your planet if you don't it's this really cold stuff that comes in all different flavours and my favourite flavour is rainbow which Mikey from school says is for girls but I don't agree.*" It just keeps going like that!! There's no quotation marks to indicate speech and it's just this running commentary from a young character which got really annoying especially because he repeats himself so much. I'm sure a lot of people would find it charming but I did not!
- This book used a trope that I hate... **the absent family trope!** Normally this is only seen in YA books so teens can go out partying and their parents never protest. In this book an 11 year old kid goes on a road trip and his mum doesn't object and his brother (who lives interstate) doesn't call to check how things are going or anything! It really bothered me especially when it turned into a longer trip I was like ??? **why aren't people concerned about you?** The family thing does kind of get explained near the end but it was still not great in my opinion.
- Also all the adults he met on his trip were completely cool with the fact that an UNESCORTED CHILD was wandering around. No one called the police or anything! People even helped him. I WAS SO CONFUSED! Like yeah he's mature for his age but **HE IS STILL ONLY 11!!**
- **Mental illness (specifically schizophrenia)** is introduced to the story pretty late and I felt like it was kind of just thrown in there randomly **as an excuse for a character being absent in the story** which I didn't like. I don't think it was handled particularly well but others might not agree so I don't know.
- The supporting characters were all pretty meh. I found them to be a little flat. I also found it to be SUPER WEIRD that these adults **dropped their lives to help some random child on his quest.** Like... isn't that kind of weird? Shouldn't you be more concerned about why he isn't with his family? Am I the only one that thinks this haha?

- **The dog that is on the cover is missing for half of the story so THIS BOOK IS FALSE ADVERTISING!**

- Finally I think Alex (the child main character) is written as WAY older than 11. There were some moments where he would say annoyingly profound things and adults would be all 'wow ur so smrt' but I'm over here like **no child would ever say that** so I don't know it just felt very obvious that this was an adult trying to write as a child ya feel?

As a positive though I liked that the story was about space and that the main character was so passionate about it. I enjoy characters who love being educated. Despite all my complaints about this, I was still compelled enough by the story to keep reading! I wanted to know how things would wrap-up. Although I didn't enjoy this book, a lot of people probably would so if you're interested then definitely check it out.

Taylor Knight says

This was such a fun read. I wasn't sure what to expect but I really enjoyed this book a lot.

I really loved the narrative and Alex is such a cool character. His family life is so sad but it was heartbreaking how he didn't seem to notice how anything was off with his family. He was such a happy kid with his cute dog. I really appreciated how it mentioned within the first few pages that Alex is a POC.

The characters are all amazing and I loved them. Jack Cheng wrote such a fun cast of characters and I think that's the best part of See You in the Cosmos.

Overall, this was an awesome read and even though it's Middle Grade, I think everyone can enjoy this book. I definitely recommend this book if you're looking for an original, fun read with great characters.

Lola says

The moment I started SEE YOU IN THE COSMOS, I knew I would be reading something different. Something original.

I don't know about you, but I haven't read a thousand books that make space for rockets in their plot, let alone mention them. I'm not what you would call a science geek, but I welcome variety.

Alex, however, adores rockets. He's only eleven years old, yet he already built his own rocket he strongly hopes will make him win the Southwest High-Altitude Rocket Festival or SHARF.

Sadly, he has to go alone, because his mother won't take him and his older brother is mostly absent.

I wasn't too keen on the idea of Alex traveling with strangers, especially adult strangers, but he did it anyway. Kids don't listen to me. I'm not adamant enough in my speeches, I guess.

I was surprised to see him take such reckless decisions, because to me he seemed like an intelligent eleven-year-old boy who understands more than the average eleven-year-old boy would. And I thought it was imbedded in everyone's minds that strangers should not be trusted so easily. But okay.

Though despite the every-parent's-nightmare situation, I enjoyed most of this novel. I probably would have enjoyed it more had I cared even a little about rockets, but unfortunately I do not.

There's a lovely atmosphere in the story. I may not be one for looking at miniature space ships fly in the air, but I am one for animals, so I loved dear Carl Sagan (not the scientist, ha-ha!).

I also thought Alex's recordings were interesting. Instead of chapters, we have "recordings." By that I mean Alex is recording himself talking about his love of science and his adventures. He very much likes to record sounds, too – and not the voice type! For instance, he wishes to record the heartbeat of a man in love. How adorable is that? Quite random, but sweet.

Not a perfect book, but Alex is a kid worth meeting with a quest as strange as it is admirable.

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I a i n e y says

Audiobook rating: 5 stars

Story rating: 3 stars

Such pleasure to be on this journey with Alex and Carl Sagan. ? Tons more enjoyable than I expected!

Since the story was told by Alex, an 11 year-old boy with responsibility level of at least a 13 year-old, we were limited in knowing several stuff ex: the older kid from the train (what happened to him there??) or with Terra and Steve. And we didn't delve into Seth's vow of silence early on either.

But the 'diary' format suited the audiobook perfectly. Each chapter was recorded with background sound and everything. The narrator for our lovely Alex was absolutely incredible! Such adorable voice and the emotions were spot on throughout the whole book.

I'm so glad I chose to go with the audiobook for this. ? It was one of the most memorable ones I've listened to. ?

Book Riot Community says

I was absolutely mesmerized by this book! Eleven-year-old Alex Petroski wants to launch his golden iPod into space, just like his hero Carl Sagan launched his Golden Record on a spacecraft in the 1970s. Alex spray paints his iPod with gold paint and sets off to capturing the sounds of life, so that extraterrestrial creatures that find his iPod will know what life is like on earth. Alex plans to launch his iPod at a rocket competition in the middle of the desert, and he has made just the right rocket to get it into space. Told entirely through his iPod recordings, we listen as Alex sets off from home with his dog, also named Carl Sagan, and the innovative and often heartbreaking trip he takes on his own and the strangers and family members he meets along the way. Mr. Cheng's incredible storytelling reaffirmed my belief that creativity is still very much alive in children's literature. A wonderful read for middle grade-aged readers and beyond! I already have a list of people I want to give this book to.

— Karina Glaser

from The Best Books We Read In November 2016: <http://bookriot.com/2016/12/01/the-be...>

Daniela Ark's Bookiverse says

there are not enough stars in the cosmos!

This book is just precious, precious, and precious!

5 precious cosmic stars!

It's just this simple people...

EVERY HUMAN IN THE UNIVERSE NEEDS TO READ THIS BOOK. ESPECIALLY KIDS!

I'm so elated now after finishing this book I feel like one of those whimsical red balloons drifting away in the sky.

Before I drift awaaaaaay too far awaaaaaay I'll say it...

I'm not only buying this book for my kids but I'm buying a bunch of books so I can go around handing them over. If I could I'll attach one to a rocket and send it up so the aliens can read it too. And this book will go in the same shelf with the other timeless priceless gems I'm buying: the Little Prince , The Alchemist , Wonder and Harry Potter .

When I'm done buying all these books, this will be my let's-stare-for-hours-and-smile-and-sigh-with-pure-contentment" shelf. :)

People don't make me ask you again. Read this book. You gotta read this book!

I personally just want to read this book forever, until the end of time. It will be my never-ending story, like the cosmos.

This book was so captivating from the super cute cover with the silhouette of a boy and his dog against a blue starry night... Oh I'm so captivated right now I just want to lay back on the beach do some lazy stargazing as I used to do with my dad when I was little and, sigh... and wonder... and sigh.. and wonder...

This book is written from Alex's POV and I fell, irremediably and idiotically, in love with his voice.

It reminded me of Butterfly during our hiking adventures. She holds my hand and takes me for a walk [yup, SHE takes ME for a walk. That's how it is with her] while she chats incessantly about EVERYTHING. EVERY SINGLE TOPIC UNDER THE SUN: the woods, the plants, the flowers, the butterflies flying around the flowers, the birds that chase those butterflies, the sky where those birds fly, the stars above the sky and all the worlds around those stars.

Thoughts giving birth to other thoughts, one after the other like pearls in a necklace of pure, unadulterated

childhood wisdom in a never ending procession of sentences and forgotten in commas and many many “ands”

So Alex is this precious kid that loves Carl Sagan [like me] and The Cosmos [like me] *and* rockets [like me] and Contact, the movie [like me] his soul is magical *and* it gleams in my favorite color which is teal [that doesn't happen in the movie but that is how I felt], *and* he takes care of Carl Sagan [his dog and how precious is that name for a dog???] *and* of his mom [who is like depressed or something else that you'll learn later], *and* he adventures by himself on this road trip to launch his rocket *and* he records all his whimsical thoughts in his iPod which he wants to attach it to a rocket so the aliens know how wonderful earth is *and* I experienced "all the feels" with him the joy of friendship *and* the sadness of a broken family *and* mental illness *and* it was all so magical....

AND I LOVED IT!

AND I LOVE ALEX AND I AM ADOPTING HIM TOO!

[Second character adopted besides Lada, From And I Darken]

I had been reading maniacally for weeks and I had to take a break after this book and wait for its assimilation into my soul to be completed.

My soul and this book were FULLY assimilated. Resistance was futile!

What about you? Do you ever have stream of consciousness like Alex's?

Do you record them in an iPod?

When are you launching your rocket to the universe?

Daniela Ark

Bookworm, book blogger, writer, collector of stories that matter and passionate about diversity and equality [especially feminism!].

email: contactme@danielaark.com

Melody says

This was a cute book, although some of the events were a little unbelievable. It kept my attention and I was rooting for Alex. I listened to the audio version. The audio version had more than just narration. It had other background noises, reminiscent of an old radio program.

Elizabeth says

I LOVED this book. Even when I was only halfway through, I was recommending it to people. So good. It

was fun, it was adventurous, it was even suspenseful at times! I listened to this as an audiobook and the cast was SO good, too. Much like the physical book, the audiobook is set up as recordings on the Golden iPod. I thought that was very interesting. There are times when it's live and in the moment, and times when Alex is relaying something that had just happened or memories from when he was younger that tie into the story.

There are a lot of things that happen in this book, but they fit together so well. From Alex going to New Mexico for the rocket launch to meeting Terra to going to LA to find his brother to going back home and finding his mom is missing. Did I mention there's quite a bit of suspense and adventure?

Also, this could be alternately titled *The Dog Comes Home Near The End*. PHEW. I know, a bit of a spoiler, BUT he gets lost at one point and just in case someone thinks they're going to read a book in which the dog is missing forever or otherwise gone... NOPE. *cheers*

This book is just so special. There are some conversations that seem very big for an 11 year old, but Alex is such an amazing kid.

Themes: SCIENCE!, a parent with a mental disorder, a parent that passed away, second families, the best doggo in the world, bravery

Also, the book doesn't dive too deep into it, but Alex mentions that his mom is of Philippine descent and Ronnie mentions when Lolo and Lola came to visit.

Zyra says

love this book <3

alex = cute, sweet, innocent, genius, honest, intelligent, adorable, responsible.

entire book is in form of recordings. so heartfelt & brave. we get to know about his life, his family, his friends, his passion, his dog, his road trip & so on. entire book is so original, honest & innocent. i loved the writing style so much, totally suitable for alex & his journey.

Hirdesh says

Thanks for Netgalley and respective publishers.

"Hello guys, This is Hirdesh and I was reading *SEE YOU IN THE COSMOS AND I* loved it."
Books have comprised in such way of recording by the leading character.

Book was about a 11 Eleven years old boy Alex who loves 3 things-

*Doing recording.

* CARL SEGAN- his dog.

* Rocket launching- he didnt knew, but he was great leaner in that.

Easy and lovely piece of writing and loved to read it thoroughly.

It was captivating.

Maria (Big City Bookworm) says

Actual rating: 4.5 Stars!

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Wow. What a beautiful and heartbreaking story.

I listened to this one as an audiobook which I think was a fantastic decision considering this story is told through audio recordings that our young protagonist Alex is creating on his iPod so that he can send it into space for aliens to find and learn more about planet Earth. I didn't read the synopsis before starting this one so I was unaware of the format, but it just worked so perfectly as an audiobook. There were multiple voice actors as well as sound effects which made these recordings feel super realistic and believable.

While this book started out quite light, it quickly started to turn into something more complicated and heartbreaking. We start to learn more about Alex's home life and how it may not be what it seems.

This is very much an adventure story from the perspective of a young boy, but with a contemporary feel. He meets a slew of characters along the way and each of them do everything they can to help Alex along the way.

I absolutely adored this story and I think it's one that everyone should check out!

Ivonne Rovira says

It's a cliché to say about a book that you didn't want it to end, but sometimes the cliché is the truth. So it is with this middle-grade book like no other, one that children and adults alike will adore.

Science geek Alex Petroski would be the first to point out that his real age may be 11, but his "responsibility age" would be much, much older. And, readers, you will agree with him. His father died when Alex was 3, his older brother — 24-year-old Ronnie, a college sports star turned sports agent — has moved West, and Alex's mother becomes so incapacitated (probably due to severe depression) that it's Alex who cooks, shops, and cleans. Here's a scene when Alex adopts a stray, naming the dog after his hero, the late Carl Sagan:

Then I took him back to my house and my mom was lying on the sofa watching her shows like she usually does, and I told her I got the groceries but I got a pup also and I'll take good care of him I promise, I'll play with him and feed him and give him a bath and all the stuff you're supposed to say.

And she said, You're in the way! So I got out of the way. My best friend Benji's mom would freak if he brought home a pup, but my mom, she doesn't care as long as I make us dinner and don't bother her when she's watching her shows. She's a pretty cool mom.

So you see how it is. Brother Ronnie moved to Los Angeles and, while he pays the bills for his mother and little brother, Ronnie hasn't visited in more than a year; Alex has pretty much been on his own.

Alex wants to emulate Dr. Sagan and the Golden Record he launched into space in 1977 in the hopes of announcing our human presence to any alien life. Alex gets a donated iPod, spray-paints it gold, transfers the information from Sagan's Golden Record onto it and adds additional entries in which he makes observations on the human condition for the aliens' edification. When Alex decides to make the journey from Rockview, Colorado, to the Southwest High-Altitude Rocket Festival (SHARF) in Albuquerque so as to launch his Golden iPod into space aboard Voyager 3, there's no adult who's going to dissuade him. Along the way to Albuquerque (and beyond), Alex fortuitously for him finds himself relying on the kindness of quite a few strangers — and, fortuitously for us, he captures his adventures in a series of daily recordings along the way.

Author Jack Cheng hooked me from the very first ~~transmission~~ chapter with this heart-warming tale of a boy who reaches for the stars and finds more than he ever imagined. Highly, highly, *highly* recommended.

In the interest of full disclosure, I received this book from NetGalley, Penguin Young Readers Group and Dial Books in exchange for an honest review.

Emer says

This was a very sweet story aimed at the middle grade market.

The main character Alex is an eleven year old boy (but with a responsibility age of 13!) who is passionate about all things space and rocket related. His hero is the astronomer Carl Sagan after whom he names his pet dog. The inspiration for the format of this book comes from the Voyager Golden Records. These were recordings chosen by Carl Sagan and an expert panel to be representative of life on Earth and sent into space on board the Voyager spacecraft in 1977 as an introduction to human civilisation to any extraterrestrial sapient life forms. In this book, Alex creates his own recordings using a golden iPod with the intention of sending them into space onboard a homemade rocket and each chapter is a transcript of these recordings.

Alex is a brilliant main character. He is so full of wise questions and amazing knowledge and yet is still so beautifully innocent and naïve. It is this innocence and naïvety that leads him to take off on the adventure of a lifetime with his trusted canine companion alongside without regard for consequence or safety. This adventure leads him to among other things an amateur rocket launch; it leads him to discovering more about his deceased father, and brings his quiet home life into the spotlight and reveals just how much this young boy has been dealing with at home with a mentally ill mother. The cast of characters Alex meets along the way are also incredibly beautifully written with how we really only see them through the eyes of this special eleven year old boy. This is a story that is tinged with bittersweetness but ultimately is a triumph of Alex's indomitable hope and optimism. He truly is a very special main character who at times can feel wise beyond his years and others, perfectly unmarred by the harshness of life.

I am very sure that I would have loved this book as a 10 year old because of how it views the world and in particular the curious behaviour of adults through the eyes of a wonderful young boy. The adult version of me fell head over heels in love with the canine Carl Sagan and I can 100% guarantee that my younger self would have been equally bonkers! The book is also filled with a wonderful sense of humour that would endear itself to any child and indeed any adult who is still a child at heart.

A charming story for children
three and a half stars rounded up to four

A copy of this book was kindly provided to me by the publisher, Penguin Random House UK: Children's, via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Dannii Elle says

I received this in exchange for an honest review from NetGalley. Thank you to the author, Jack Cheng, and the publisher, Dial Books, for this opportunity.

This follows the journey of 11-year-old space-obsessed Alex Petroski, and his dog Carl Sagan, as they travel to a space camp to launch their home-made rocket. There Alex attempts to emulate his hero, the real-life astronomer Carl Sagan, and launch his golden iPod, containing all his recorded musings about life on Earth, into space.

The journey he undertakes proves a far more complicated one than just his geographical travel. Along the way the reader learns more about Alex and the world he inhabits. This understanding is broadened by the meeting of other lost souls, who prove that age and happiness are not synonymous and that love can take many forms.

I enjoyed seeing the world through the eyes of one so young. In some instances this reminded me somewhat of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, where the emphasis was on reading between the gaps of this young understanding. Alex did not always tell all the reader ended up learning from this story.

This is dually also what caused my discontent, whilst reading this. I found Alex quite a difficult character to penetrate. I felt such sadness for him and yet, also, found him to be quite annoying. I felt so horrible for feeling this way for one so young and so lost in the world! I could not help but feel too old to properly appreciate his perspective on the world. His constant questioning and running monologue was true to his age but sometimes ended up boring me and, thus, ended in a loss of affinity towards his character.

Alex's inner-musings was what made up much of the story, and as I could not enjoy them, I could not enjoy this read. There is a beautiful message buried in here, but this just wasn't the book for me.
