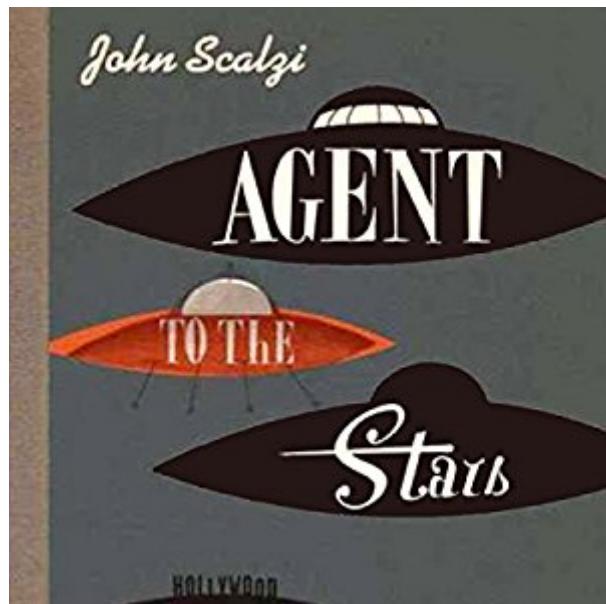


The book was found

Agent To The Stars



Synopsis

The space-faring Yherajk have come to Earth to meet us and to begin humanity's first interstellar friendship. There's just one problem: They're hideously ugly and they smell like rotting fish. So getting humanity's trust is a challenge. The Yherajk need someone who can help them close the deal. Enter Thomas Stein, who knows something about closing deals. He's one of Hollywood's hottest young agents. But although Stein may have just concluded the biggest deal of his career, it's quite another thing to negotiate for an entire alien race. To earn his percentage this time, he's going to need all the smarts, skills, and wits he can muster.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

John Scalzi is such a good writer that probably even his grocery lists glow with effortless wit and narrative flow. Scalzi has already left a sizable imprint in the sci-fi world, and I guess AGENT TO THE STARS sort of falls in that genre. Scalzi demonstrates a terrific sense of humor in all his books, but the humor in this one is decidedly more pronounced. There's the precise skewering of Hollywood and a topsy-turvy of that old sci-fi chestnut: first contact with aliens. It's a really fun read. AGENT TO THE STARS, we learn in the author's foreword, turns out to be Scalzi's "practice novel," the book he wrote to see if he could actually write one. It was first made available for the readers in Scalzi's website and eventually found its way to publication in book format. Except that the guy is so good that it doesn't at all feel like a debut novel. The Yherajk (*not pronounced "earjack" or "earwax"*) are a friendly lot, a highly advanced alien race, and they'd like to get to know

us better. For the past 70 years they've been tapping into Earth's broadcasted signals and have gotten exposed to our television shows. The Yherajk are civilized folks, but they look like gross snotty-looking gunk and they communicate by exchanging seriously foul scents, so they're well aware that humanity's first reaction probably won't be a hug. So what do they do? Do they land in front of the White House? Do they contact Earth's most renowned scientists or the League of Nations? No. They get a Hollywood agent to represent them. Which actually isn't that ridiculous a notion. Who better than a Hollywood agent to convince the masses that \$#!+ don't stink? And that smelly sentient blobs may actually be the good guys? John Scalzi knows how to write sympathetic characters, and when you can make not only a smelly sentient blob but also a Hollywood agent sympathetic, well, then you know you got skills. There's always been a satirical element in Scalzi's humor, and this is never more evident than in this novel. Our central character is glib-talking Tom Stein, a Tinseltown up-and-comer representing a stable of not much. Tom's one A-lister is a 25-year-old starlet who lucked into a B-movie that surprisingly made tons in the box office, and now she thinks she can act. Now she wants the lead in a biopic about an influential Holocaust survivor. The rest of Tom's clientele are no-hopers, but all of them are ambitious dreamers. Then there's that sneaky reporter from a gossip rag who gets a whiff that something big's going on with Tom and starts to hound him. All that aggravation, though, pales to diddly squat once Tom is hired by the living gooey goop. Now Tom has to introduce the Yherajk to Earth in such a way that Earth welcomes them with open arms or at least with open minds. But how? I really dig Scalzi's Old Man's War series, but AGENT TO THE STARS is almost as much fun to read. It's definitely a change of pace. It early on establishes a breezy tone and mostly maintains it, only in the end giving way to a show of nicely-handled sentiment. There may have been a suspicious moistness in the eye or a sniffle or two when I read the last two chapters. Never mind that it played out sort of the way I figured it would. It's a very satisfying read; Scalzi keeps things moving, and the Hollywood dialogue rings true (not that I'm an expert, but Scalzi seems to know what he's talking about). And I think it's pretty neat (and very polite) that the Yherajk would actually phone ahead to announce their presence. Even my mom doesn't do that.

If you enjoy fast paced sci-fi novels with a few plot twists and a well balanced combination of humour and thought provoking, you're gonna love it! Look up other books by John Scalzi, his other novels are equally great.

I found John Scalzi about a month ago and cannot stop reading his work. "Agent to the Stars" is an

enormously entertaining read. I rarely, if ever laugh while reading but this story almost had me in tears on many occasions. John has a masterful way of including humor in his works. I have read the "Old Man's War" series and found that tremendously enjoyable as well. I am fortunate to be old enough that John should outlive me, allowing me to continue to enjoy his craftsmanship for the rest of my life! Keep writing John! You have become my favorite writer of all time. Not bad considering that list includes Isaac Asimov, Stephen King, James Patterson and Nelson Demille, just to name a few.

This was the first John Scalzi book I read, but it definitely won't be the last. If you believe, as I do, that comedy is more difficult to write than drama, then this comedy about humanity's first contact with an alien civilization will amply prove Scalzi's talent as a writer.

Writes well, I mean. Pitch-perfect tone throughout. The story is funny, and still manages to have a real message and substance. Scalzi manages to skewer Hollywood and respect the talents of the people in the industry (for the most part). Great read. I'm glad I found this author.

This is one of the few books that, as an adult, I've read multiple times. Moreover, every time I've read it I can't put it down. I've read every book of Scalzi's and even though this was his first novel I think it's one of his very best. Smart, funny, clever, and emotional character development, plus aliens and dogs? What's not to like?

The plot of this book is simple: what if aliens came to earth, expending an enormous amount of effort to make the journey, with the goal of making nice with the neighbors, but they were aware that they could be considered repulsive, and they wanted the introduction to go just right? Might they hire an agent? Although this subject is treated relatively seriously (i.e. its real science fiction, not Douglas Adams) the story is clearly intended to be light and whimsical, and succeeds. The story is fast-paced, good natured, light/upbeat, whimsical and funny. Its an ideal book for the sci-fi fan to share with a non-fan spouse. I dont think my wife has read a sci-fi book in her life, but she is currently reading this, laughing regularly and enjoying it a lot. I sold it to her as Jerry Maguire with aliens . . . which she thought sounded terrible since "I didnt like Jerry Maguire and I dont like aliens". (Who didnt like Jerry Maguire??) The humor in the book is integrated and flows from the story -- i.e. not arguably forced humor, as in Douglas Adams. While this clearly isnt "serious" sci-fi, there *is* a real sci-fi story, written in an engaging and likable manner that sci-fi fans will have no problem

blazing through. In short, despite the appeal to non-fans, I think fans will enjoy it too. Highly recommended.

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