Book Report, By Eric Adams

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*The Martian, by Andy Weir*

Science Fiction

This Science fiction book takes place on Mars, where NASA sent a 30 day exploration called ARES 3. During a dust storm Mark Watney, the protagonist, is hit by an antenna pole which ruptures his space suit and sends him flying. His crewmates, who had every reason to think him dead, abandon the mission per orders from NASA, and leave Mars.

After a while of surviving on his own, a NASA satellite imager discovers that he is still alive, and reports to Venkat Kapoor(NASA Something or other). He announces to the press that Mark is still alive, and it quickly becomes an international story. Watney recovers the old Mars rover Pathfinder, and is able to communicate with NASA.

Up to this point, the rest of the crew onboard the Hermes, which is the transport ship for missions to Mars, didn’t know of Marks survival. They are made aware, and a rescue attempt including them sling-shotting Earth is made, but they need to resupply. The Chinese Space Administration steps in with the only booster rocket powerful enough to make it in time. Everything goes smoothly, and the Hermes gets their food, tools, and backup systems.

The only man on Mars embarks on a seventy day Mars rover drive, and reaches the ARES 4 Martian Ascent Vehicle(MAV). With instruction from NASA, he takes out all the spare equipment so he can break the gravitational pull of Mars, and rendezvous with the Hermes.

Watney launches off the surface of Mars, and passes out due to the extreme G forces. The trajectory of the ascent was off by about a kilometer, so the Hermes purposefully ruptures the vehicle docking bay to produce enough thrust to move the ship in time. Everything works according to plan from then on, and Mark Watney is safely recovered from the MAV, and welcomed back on board by his crewmates.

The author of this book, Andy Weir, who was a computer programmer for companies like AOL and Blizzard, based it off a situation that could actually possibly occur. NASA’s current plan has them on Mars around 2030, and this book highlights some of the difficulties that may occur while on the red planet. While telling an interesting story, Weir is able to bring science and technology to the forefront of the book, and provide accurate representations of what might actually happen on Mars.

Reading about how a guy is abandoned on Mars, and keeps fighting to survive even after so many impossibilities, is inspiring. You won’t be able to put this book down, because the suspense in the story just makes you want to keep reading. The only bad part about this book is that when you finish it, you’ll have to go back and read it again.