

Two-Headed Aliens and Bar Buddies

By Elizabeth Kim

“Don’t panic.”

The universe is large. It’s a never ending blanket that stretches far beyond what we can even imagine, black and completely mysterious. Galaxy’s frequently dot the surface of this dark expanse of possibilities; stars shine bright and nebulas shine even brighter. Now inside these galaxies, we have planets and moons, asteroids, comets, and other beautiful galactic bodies. So amongst all of this, there *has* to be some sort of life form, right? *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* by Douglas Adams explores these potentialities in a rich and comical way.

There are only a handful of characters in this novel, making it even more brilliant and easy to follow. Arthur Dent, a middle-aged man who lives in England, is the main protagonist. He lives a very systematic life in a small house off the coast of Cottingham, England, frequently visiting the bar with his friends, namely Ford Prefect. Ford Prefect, on the other hand, is a man who claims to have been in Guildford all of his life, when in reality he is from the moon, Betelguese. He ends up saving Arthur from doomed destruction, yet in the process, causes the two to become stuck in a very, very undesirable situation.

The story continues to follow Arthur and Ford, along with a manically depressed robot named Marvin, a quirky computer called Eddit, a two-headed alien named Zaphod Beeblebrox and his girlfriend Trillian (otherwise known as Tracy MacMillion). These six float through space to understand the answer to life, the universe and everything, while aimlessly exchanging peculiar stories about the Earth’s previous origin.

One of the things that struck me the most about this book was how beautifully unique it is. There are no required conclusions to be drawn from the pages; no moral is painstakingly fed into your brain. This allows readers to be completely drawn into the contents of the book, reading it for the story, not for the lessons. It’s a novel that is filled with events so extraordinarily bizarre, you have to reread the same passage to make sure you’ve comprehended correctly.

Though if there was something to take away from the novel, it would simply be that life is absolutely worth living, no matter how small and insignificant the Earth seems compared to the totality of our universe. Because ultimately, there is no grand answer to life, the universe and everything.

It’s what you make it out to be.