

NOTES FROM: *Cosmos*, by Carl Sagan

SUMMARY: How can I summarize one of my absolute favorite books of all time? This is **THE** book that got me hooked on learning about space, and Carl Sagan has been my go-to every time I want a triple-shot of wonder, beauty, and awe.

The book was made into a documentary in the 1970s (or was the documentary made into a book?) and the remake was done by Neil DeGrasse Tyson, who was one of Carl Sagan's mentees.

This is an absolutely thrilling book about space exploration, the composition of other planets, our efforts to find out more about the universe we live in, and the possibilities for future space-missions to unlock even more wonder and beauty and awe.

“Every one of us is, in the cosmic perspective, precious. If a human disagrees with you, let him live. In a hundred billion galaxies, you will not find another.”

“Exploration is in our nature. We began as wanderers, and we are wanderers still. We have lingered long enough on the shores of the cosmic ocean. We are ready at last to set sail for the stars.”

“The nitrogen in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth, the iron in our blood, the carbon in our apple pies were made in the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of starstuff.”

“Books permit us to voyage through time, to tap the wisdom of our ancestors. The library connects us with the insight and knowledge, painfully extracted from Nature, of the greatest minds that ever were, with the best teachers, drawn from the entire planet and from all our history, to instruct us without tiring, and to inspire us to make our own contribution to the collective knowledge of the human species. I think the health of our civilization, the depth of our awareness about the underpinnings of our culture and our concern for the future can all be tested by how well we support our libraries.”

“What an astonishing thing a book is. It's a flat object made from a tree with flexible parts on which are imprinted lots of funny dark squiggles. But one glance at it and you're inside the mind of another person, maybe somebody dead for thousands of years. Across the millennia, an author is speaking clearly and silently inside your head, directly to you. Writing is perhaps the greatest of human inventions, binding together people who never knew each other, citizens of distant epochs. Books break the shackles of time. A book is proof that humans are capable of working magic.”

“We are like butterflies who flutter for a day and think it is forever.”

“We are a way for the cosmos to know itself.”

Dedication: "In the vastness of space and the immensity of time, it is my joy to share a planet and an epoch with Annie."