

# Crossing the drake passage to antarctica

People



To my surprise the book was pretty accurate on its information. While the science itself wasn't as detailed as a peer review research article, it was detailed and descriptive enough to give the reader a good mental picture as to what Antarctica looks like from the eyes of someone witnessing it.

Some examples that helped paint the mental picture for reader were scientific information regarding the Drake Passage, how Bee describes the water, land, and sky of Antarctica, as well as the description she gives of species that she encounters during her trip. The book doesn't need to further explain any science. If it did it would just be talking the reader away from the main plot or themes of the book and instead make the book more about scientific information.

Science adds to the character's traits. For example, the book makes it clear that Bee is a gifted student, but rather than the book just stating it plainly the author shows it. For example, when Bee talks about what she has researched or found out about Antarctica it shows just how she is able to take the information and explain it very well, showing to the reader that she is gifted, but also passionate about learning.

The scientific facts about Antarctica also give the reader an understanding as to how difficult the journey was for Bee and Elgin Branch. Finding their mother can be difficult, but in an environment that can be considered "no man's land" makes it even harder. This is shown throughout Bee and Elgin's Journey. As Bee tries to solve the mystery, but suffers from massive sea sickness, and how both needed to prepare themselves before heading out to the open.

While the science did make the reader more informed and allowed the reader to clearly visualize the environment the characters were in, it did not help with the theme or lesson to the story. One important theme that is mentioned throughout the book is how if you don't conform or do as what is considered normal in a specific environment then you are considered a "menace to society". It is shown throughout the book that when Bernadette is doing something abnormal or something she is supposed to do and she isn't doing it, then there tends to be a negative reaction.

The character Bernadette and the detail description of Antarctica impacted me the most as I was reading the book. The way Maria Semple crafted Bernadette leads me to believe that many who read this book feel sympathy towards Bernadette. The book tells the past of Bernadette, an aspiring young architect who is known for her creation of the "20 Mile house" and her winning the MacArthur Grant.

Unfortunately, her creation was destroyed, she suffered four miscarriages, and her anxiety disorder known as Agoraphobia informs the audience that she isn't what she once was and has changed, but for the worst. The book makes it hard for people not to sympathize for her. Even if the reader has never experienced a tragedy like Bernadette has the reader is well aware that it can be difficult for anyone to deal with what she has endured. As I was reading this book I felt a small amount of anger towards the destruction of her creation because she has added so much time and passion into it and for it to be destroyed by someone who doesn't care was a factor in what changed Bernadette for the worst.

I would recommend this book to my brother. The book does a good job of adding comedy at the right moments, and my brother is usually in a mood for a good laugh. The book also does well in keeping the reading hooked. The author doesn't just plainly state this is where Bernadette went or this is how she escaped, but instead rewards the reader who kept reading the book to eventually find out when pieces of information are connected together like a puzzle. For me not knowing how Bernadette escaped or not knowing just where she went made me read the book more as I waited for the book to "spill the beans" as to how all of this unraveled.