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# Space Cowboy

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

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Travis McClure, now 16, has spent five years with his parents on the 'harsh planet, desolate and arid' known as Aletha Three. They are part of a group of colonising 'terraformers', Travis's specific role being that of cattle drover. It is a dull enough existence ? but all that changes when he discovers, to his consternation, that 'something unnatural' has taken up residence in the dark wastelands of his environment. The process of tracking down and confronting this avian creature and the subsequent revelation of its origins provides Stanchfield with the opportunity to devise a story in which science fiction and western genres very entertainingly come together. He manages ? most of the time ? to avoid the more usual clichés of both and is particularly good at depicting the tensions and rivalries of a small community thrown together: his descriptions of the Alethan landscape, usually in a sparse prose which reflects its aridity, are also very impressive, as is his gentle indication of the first, tentative signs of young romance. But best of all is the portrayal of the relationship between Travis and his father: 'So don't blame me for sticking to something,' as the boy says, 'because that's the way you raised me.'

Running Order:

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