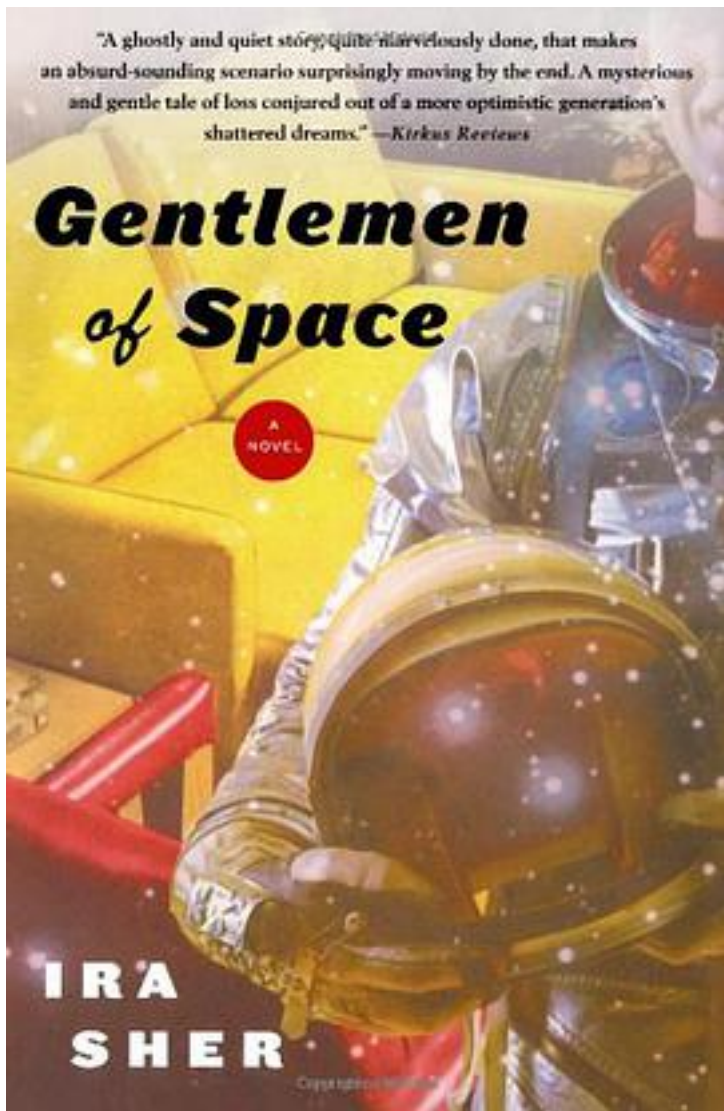


Gentlemen of Space



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Magnolia Court is not the most magical place in Florida, but to Georgie Finch, his suburban development is the center of the universe. In this superbly crafted novel, Georgie tells us the story of how his neighborhood and his family change in 1976 when his father, Jerry, wins a contest to become the first civilian man on the moon. Once Jerry is shot into space, Magnolia Court turns into the worst sort of American media circus, and Georgie finds himself navigating through star-struck admirers and their card tables, Winnebagos, cookouts, and telescopes. When Jerry goes missing, the camp turns into a vigil, punctuated by potluck suppers and banners. Eventually the astronauts return to Earth without Jerry and descend on Magnolia Court -- in their spacesuits -- to pay their respects. All the while Georgie gets phone calls from his father in space, but no one believes him. Should we? Or is Georgie's entire story just that, a story? A feat of literary ventriloquism, *Gentlemen of Space* is surprising, captivating, and astronomically inventive.

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