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An Unwelcome Quest: Magic 2.0, Book 3



Synopsis

Ever since Martin Banks and his fellow computer geeks discovered that reality is just a computer program to be happily hacked, they've been jaunting back and forth through time, posing as medieval wizards and having the epic adventures that other nerds can only dream of having. But even in their wildest fantasies, they never expected to end up at the mercy of the former apprentice whom they sent to prison for gross misuse of magic and all-around evil behavior. Who knew that the vengeful Todd would escape, then conjure a computer game packed with wolves, wenches, wastelands, and assorted harrowing hazards - and trap his hapless former friends inside it? Stripped of their magic powers, the would-be wizards must brave terrifying dangers, technical glitches, and one another's company if they want to see Medieval England - and their favorite sci-fi movies on VHS - ever again. Can our heroes survive this magical mystery torture? Or will it only lead them and their pointy hats into more peril?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I split the read between Audible and the Kindle version. The narrator is very good and probably earned the story an extra star. This was a fun, humorous, engaging romp through some places many of us have been... terrible games you just have to get through, for some reason. There are books that I read that have amazing world-building and plot, but poor characters. This is the opposite of that. The characters are well defined (with just a couple of exceptions) and their response to external stimuli always fits nicely with what we've come to learn about them over the

previous 2 books. They seem like versions of people I know. I think if some of my friends found "The File", this is truly how they would behave. My fault with the book is that it didn't really do anything new. The character Jimmy mentions how they never really used time travel to do anything other than get from A to B, and it's true. There's no subtlety or surprises in how the amazing powers are used. The first book introduced the abilities these guys have and why they have them, and the second showed how other groups of people in other times/places have done similar but different things. Here, I had hoped to see some deeper diving on that. It started out that way, with the antagonist using what are basically pointers (if you are a software guy) in the file to redirect characters to somewhere outside of "reality". Ooooh the potential! But.. that's about as far as it goes. I understand the author's hesitancy to spend too much time on the techy geeky parts and in so doing lose the fun of it all. I hope the series isn't over, though, and we can do more with this world. I'd like more on how changing past doesn't affect the future. I'd like to see more fun clever things done with reality. Maybe we can even touch on the nature of the file itself and its origins. Overall, a fun, endearing effort that I very much enjoyed and would recommend to my friends. A particular subset of them. You know the ones I mean.

Shakes head. Oh, Scott. I was hoping for at least one or two more books in this series before you broke my heart. The only reason I'm giving this book three stars is because I technically liked it. However, that's like being the like of someone in a relationship who wakes up one day and suddenly finds that their partner, who they use to view with love and adoration, is a sweaty, hairy man where there was once a female long-legged, tan swimsuit model. There's still a voice, still a body, but it's not as desirable. You can go on a date, but you get snide comments and stares as you pass. And when you get down to the nitty-gritty, you have to take it up the rear. Good points:- Roy had some decent character development. He regressed back and forth a bit through the book, but overall he seemed to progress as a character.- Martin and Gwen progressed their relationship, though this was just randomly tossed in at the very end. But it's good to know they're finally past dating. Bad points:- First thing in the prologue, the very first thing I read, Scott's rewriting multiple character's histories that do not coincide with what was in the other books. I know, because I re-read the first two before I let myself open this one. Gary didn't train Todd, he was trained by Mitchell that Martin meets at his dinner before his Trials. Jimmy was alerted within a week or two of an issue when Mitchell witnesses Todd experimenting on animals and ordered Todd's trials. Todd didn't stick around for a month. The dialogue heavily hints that Jeff and Tyler weren't trained by Gary, even though it says it in the first book.- I actually had to question

if Scott wrote this book. The writing style is not nearly as clean and thought-out as the first book, even before the the second edition. Even the second book, which was not as cohesive as the first still kept me engaged and not checking how much I had left to be done.- This book dragged needlessly. This should have been a 60 page Novella between books 2 and 3. I got the impression that Scott had a good concept for a brief adventure with Todd and decided to stretch it out into a full book. A good editor would have gutted most of the dialogue and a few plot points because it would have a more cohesive feel simply because there is so much redundancy. There's quite a bit more I was dissatisfied with, but I really never got over the first point. It kept nagging at me as I read. You'd think an author would have re-read their first book at least once. Todd was a major punch line in it, which I assumed why he was the focus of this book. Astute readers, which are the ones that recommend a book, would pick up on these points. Scott, I truly hope you continue writing this series. I hope you redeem my faith in it in a way that you couldn't seem to allow Jimmy to be reconciled with by the other characters. I picked up the first book because it was witty, humorous, and unique. This entire book was filled with constant teenage angst and complaints. The entire point of the second book was having characters grow up a bit. If there isn't solid character development in the next book and a strong, witty plot, I don't think I can continue to spend money on the series.

The final (for now?) chapter in the Magic 2.0 series comes to an end and I gotta say I'm glad. It is not that the book isn't funny (it is) or that it is a "bad book" (it isn't)... it's just, I believe, a sort of forced book. So, what are the good parts? Well, the humor is really good and consistent with the rest of the series. The characters are funny and the premise is silly but entertaining. Now for the bad... IMHO, the tone of the book should be funny, but sometimes (I won't spoil anything) it tries to be serious or deals with dark/serious themes all of a sudden, without the (expected) change of tone. The characters are also "watered down" from their previous appearances. The "adventurers" are just a couple of interchangeable people, they don't feel excited or nervous for their quest: they feel bored. And that is why I think Mr. Meyer was also bored when he (had to?) wrote this. It feels like he is the one going through a tedious chore, so he puts his protagonists into another tedious chore, and extensively, also his readers. I won't spoil anything, but I'm sure fellow readers will agree that the ending is also a promise from the author to write a "better adventure" for us next time.

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