

[PDF] Only You Can Save Mankind (The Johnny Maxwell Trilogy)

Terry Pratchett, Richard Mitchley - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Only You Can Save Mankind (Th

Author: Terry Pratchett, Richard Mit

Released: 1997-10-01

Language:

Pages:

ISBN: 0745173896

ISBN13: 978-0745173894

ASIN: 0745173896



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Description:

From School Library Journal Grade 5-8-Johnny Maxwell, 12, thinks he's a loser. People don't seem to notice him, his parents are threatening to split up, and he's not very good at the shoot-up-the-bad-guys computer games that he and his friends are always playing. But after his hacker buddy, Wobbler, gives him an illegal copy of Only You Can Save Mankind, strange things happen. The captain of the alien fleet that Johnny is supposed to shoot up surrenders to him-unheard of in a computer game-and soon after that all of the aliens from all copies of the game have vanished. Players looking for someone to shoot at sail through light years of empty space and return the game to the store, demanding their money back. Johnny also discovers that he is able to enter the alien ship in dreams and grows convinced that the aliens are somehow real, and are actually dying when

human players shoot at them. And soon the day arrives when the humans can resume their shooting. The story is told against the backdrop of the 1991 Gulf War, in which many of the battles were fought with the help of PC screens, and the antiwar message of the story soon becomes a little too heavy-handed and obvious. Although the storytelling here is not as polished as it is in Pratchett's *The Wee Free Men* (HarperCollins, 2003), the humor is sharp and the story is great fun to read. This is the first in a trilogy published in England; U.S. editions of *Johnny and the Dead* and *Johnny and the Bomb* will soon follow. -*Walter Minkel, New York Public Library*

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From *Starred Review* Gr. 5-8. Johnny Maxwell's life is full of conflict. His parents are going through trying times, and the 1991 Gulf War is raging on his television every night, looking more like his computer war games than a news broadcast. A new game, provided by his hacker friend, Wobbler, is not what he expects. Only You Can Save Mankind is supposed to be an adventure-packed game of killing aliens, but on the first play, the game's newtlike female ScreeWee captain surrenders to Johnny, asking for safe conduct for aliens across the game borders. Now other gamers find only empty spaces when they fire up the game; there's nothing to kill. Johnny's heroic endeavors to save the aliens is a wild ride, full of Pratchett's trademark humor; digs at primitive, low-resolution games such as Space Invaders; and some not-so-subtle philosophy about war and peace. Readers will recognize some of the gamer types--among them, Johnny's sidekick Wobbler, who never plays computer games, preferring instead to crack the codes. There's also Johnny's feisty girl pal, Kirsty (whose dialogue is printed in italics and whose game name is Sigourney). One hopes that when Johnny returns for subsequent adventures, they will be along for the ride. *Cindy Dobrez*
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