



## Wormhole Pirates on Orbis 3

*P.J. Haarsma*

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**Hang on to your transport! Wormhole pirates close in on JT and his friends in part three of the cyber-fueled sci-fi adventure.**

It's not a good sign: before Johnny Turnbull and his fellow knudniks even land on Orbis 3, a band of wormhole pirates invades their shuttle and deliver a cryptic threat to JT. And even though JT and his friends are thrilled to find out that they'll get a reprieve from work this rotation (except for going to school with a bunch of bullying Citizens), JT senses something sinister in the air. Could that be a wormhole pirate he keeps spotting, with an alien skull and crossbones on his arm? Why is Max acting strangely whenever she's around JT? Who is luring JT into a deadly competitive game? And why is his telepathic sister, Ketheria, suddenly getting sick? Prime your neural implant for some nonstop action and intrigue in a new episode starring the first human software.

## Wormhole Pirates on Orbis 3 Details

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Author : P.J. Haarsma

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# From Reader Review Wormhole Pirates on Orbis 3 for online ebook

## Erin says

This third book in "The Softwire" series is comparable to a number of other popular young adult science fiction books: Ender's Game, The Hunger Games, and The MazeRunner. Each of their plots is centered around a game or puzzle that is put in place by a hegemonic adult culture...and those playing the game (primarily children and/or lower-class citizens) must figure out how to beat their opponents--even kill them--to survive. I have to say that in each of these novels, the "game" mentality tends to create a lot of buy-in from readers--especially those who are already avid video-gamers and/or reality TV buffs.

I, too, found Worm Hole Pirates on Orbis 3 quite enjoyable, even if the ending did leave me hanging in wait for the fourth book in the series. I'm not quite sure how I feel about the religious overtones--the coming of the "scion" and all. I'll have to wait until the next novel reveals more about this particular part of the plot before I can draw any real conclusions.

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## KeepOnFlyin says

I have to admit, I enjoyed the first two books from The Softwire series so much that I could hardly wait for this third one to come out and it did not disappoint me! In fact, this was my favorite one from the series so far!

PJ Haarsma's imagination has created yet another exciting world very unique from the first two. I enjoyed visualizing Orbis 3 with its large crystal sculptures and sparkling scenery.

As I read about the continued adventures of JT and his sister and friends I was thrilled at all the intense action that started off right from the very beginning and lasted clear through to the last page.

I felt relief for the children as they seemed to be in a kinder world without having to work as slaves and get to live in the care of their good friend. Yet, they had plenty of opportunities to show their intelligence and bravery as they fight off opponents playing an exciting life-threatening game--a game which amused me as I realized the author was managing to teach us a little about physics along the way.

It was charming to read how JT and Maxine "Max" adjust to adolescent feelings, especially toward each other now that they are getting a little older. I think the story also does a wonderful job of demonstrating how easy it is to become prey to the night life and addictions and the consequences that can occur as experienced by JT's friend Theodore.

Now, I will sit back and try to patiently wait for Orbis 4 (and perhaps even a movie as these stories sure would make a great one)!

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### **Matthew Collins says**

At first I seemed a little disappointed and was afraid that this book wouldn't/ couldn't live up to how much I love the first two books. Yet this was still good enough to read so I kept reading, and within the first few chapters this book managed to kidnap my attention and hold it hostage until the story was over and this had become my favorite book of the three I've read so far. if you start this one off doubting, keep with it because it gets awesome. I can't wait for the fourth one.

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### **Kiki says**

I just finished reading book three in this series and loved it. Each book gets better and better. I think the author is a great writer and creates a fascinating world that is easy to get sucked into. When I finished the book and was glancing through the glossary i was thrilled to see a dedication at the end to the students at Basha High School in Chandler for creating the online wiki which provided the info for the glossary. It made me proud of my home town! <http://community.kidsneedtoread.org/?...>

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### **Michael says**

This book 3 sequel to The Softwire series is an enjoyable science fiction read that is not only good for adults, but late elementary school to junior high kids will also enjoy. It's unusual (at least for me) to find a book the whole family can enjoy without one set feeling as if it is too "dumbed down" for the younger set to understand and annoy the parents, nor too detailed or technical that the younger set will get frustrated.

The author does a good job of quickly getting you into the story as well as lots of action that has you eagerly waiting to turn the page; there is a neat little twist readers of the first two books of the series will scratch their heads and say "hmmm." Your heart will race a little bit during some of the action scenes, and you get a feeling of actually being a part of the story vs. just someone reading a tale. I enjoyed this one quite a bit as did my children, now I'm off to purchase book 4 in the series.

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### **Jennifer Patterson says**

I'll admit that my speed reading days for books left me in college. Even with my fun books that I read, it can take me a several days to finish one. So when I went through the Softwire Series in roughly a week, you know it's got to be amazing! Oddly enough, I have to thank Nathon Fillion for tweeting a link for a free digital copy of the first book (Virus on Orbis 1).

The brief synopsis from P.J. Haarsma's site really hooked me in too.

Thirteen-year-old Johnny Turnbull has always known there was something different about him, even before he and two hundred other kids landed on the first ring of Orbis. But once their spaceship lands, he is

identified as the first-ever “softwire” — a human with the ability to enter and communicate with computers through his mind — and becomes the focus of intergalactic intrigue. Johnny and the rest of the refugee orphans are put to work in alien factories, and very quickly things go very wrong. When the all-knowing, all-controlling, and technologically “perfect” central computer starts malfunctioning, suspicious eyes turn to Johnny. Is he the one responsible? This action-packed, fast-paced sci-fi novel will keep kids on the edge of their seats.

For this computer geek, the direct interface into a computer hooked me in instantly. Through the first book you’re introduced to this amazing new world, with aliens that have been around forever, a few factions within them. The book takes you on a very fun adventure, and really captures the mystery and adjustment to a world completely different than your own.

But by the end of Book 1, you realize that everything isn’t quite as Utopian as you would like them to be. Through the next 3 books, you’re taken deeper and deeper into the Rings of Orbis, its deep history, and how Johnny (JT) and his sister play into it. You’re also taken into a lot of turmoil and grief that the “knudnicks” on Orbis are subjected to. The entire series does a great job at working through the struggles of class divisions between the elite and the poor.

On top of this is the transformation of JT himself. Starting out as a bright eyed, energetic 15 year old, he’s quickly given a large amount of responsibility because of his talents. He also has the entire universe looking over his shoulder, which causes a lot of struggles. But JT’s struggles go even deeper, dealing with free will vs. fate, sacrifice, and a whole range of emotions. There was so much going on by the fourth installment that I wasn’t sure how Haarsma would resolve it all, and do it in a manner that stuck with the whole of the story. He did it amazingly well. There was even a small amount of romance and tragedy mixed in to the whole story that fit perfectly.

My mind is still racing from all of the tech, adventure, and thought provoking things this book brought out. Softwire is targeted for the 10 and up, but it is written so well that adults (or really big geeky kids like me) will enjoy it thoroughly.

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## **Jarrett Riddle says**

The story of Johnny Turnbull takes a few dark twists and turns in this thrilling third book in the Softwire series. JT, a boy born with an amazing ability to delve into electronic devices with his mind, must overcome his greatest challenges yet. His devotion to his friends Max, Theodore, and Charlie, along with his sister Katheria, are put through constant tests to determine just how loyal JT is to the only ones he can trust on the third ring of Orbis.

For fear of giving anything in this amazing book away, I will only say that the ending leaves you dying to know what happens next, and hoping that everything will turn out alright for everyone in the conclusion on Orbis 4.

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## **Matthew says**

This is the best book in the four book series so far. The next book, Awakening on Orbis 4, isn't out yet. The

plot was much more intricate, the characters much more alive and believable than either of the previous two books. The story was exciting and imaginative. Still, however, Haarsma has a tendency to skip over opportunities to create a truly magical and memorable world and some of his descriptions don't make sense in my mind's eye. But overall, I liked the book and believe that Haarsma is maturing as an author through this series. I have recently logged on to the accompanying on-line video game, Rings of Orbis. I need someone to read the series so we can play together!

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### **Greg McClay says**

In the same way Harry Potter aged in his series JT ages in this one, however fewer books means a quicker pace and the intimate behavior of certain characters caught me off guard a bit. A higher level of violence as well, even a bit extreme in one scene. The games seemed too demanding and unlikely that human children would fair better than some of the alien species described but I suppose Ender's Game gives us a precedent. Not bad overall, plotlines move forward but the same complaint as the previous two, the books could be a little longer to flesh out some of the smaller stories.

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### **Andrew Marr says**

In the third volume of four, a really good series got even better! Social, ethical, and spiritual values were developed in the first two books but all three have deepened considerably here. The ever-more penetrating look at the social injustices perpetrated on Orbis give us the opportunity to reflect on the systemic violence of our own society, which is what good science fiction tends to do. The main characters also are deepened as they mature and struggle with their burgeoning maturity, especially JT & his sister Ketheria.

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### **Sonja says**

#### **More intense**

This book is more intense than the others. Things are moving faster than JT can cope with and no one will give him answers.

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### **Libby says**

3.5 - Breezing through this fun and adventuresome series. This may be my favorite so far - it had some nice plot twists.

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### **Denae Christine says**

This turned out better than I thought. I started it thinking it would just be another rotation on another orbis ring...and I especially started losing a bit of interest when JT talked about the Quest-Nest game, which was

interesting but complicated and unrelateable. I felt like I could nearly predict events: JT will break a rule. He'll get in trouble. He and Max will have a fight. JT will end up playing Chancellor's Challenge. Yet, there were things I couldn't predict, like Ceasar's ID and the worm parasites and addiction to scoping. The whole Tonat and Scion thing ended the book neatly and appropriately, but not satisfactorily. UGH! Now I must wait to find out what happens!!

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## **Michael says**

I have really tried and wanted to like this series, but the lack of clear descriptions, overly simplistic writing and characters we have seen elsewhere have all combined to just make me not care what happens to these children. Sad, because I think there is promise. I think it's the editor who failed by not making the author step it up. Setting this series in the first person was just wrong, it just really bothered me. You can still have a point of view that is close to the main character and still keep the mystery mysterious in the third person. And being in the third person would have allowed the author to be more descriptive, because the action wouldn't have to be seen through the eyes of a child who was raised by spaceship computer with no context to place things. Just describing an alien as having thin skin doesn't help us imagine the alien, nor does not naming what species it is help us to distinguish characters and aliens apart. The author still does not give us any clear sense of scale or place. How big are these rings? How are they oriented to each other? Is there even a sun in the sky? I have no idea, because I was never given enough description to imagine it.

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## **Laura says**

One of the ways I judge series books is by how difficult it is to jump into the action in a later book; never having read the previous two *Softwire* books, I found this one to be relatively easy to grasp.

A "softwire" is someone that can self-link into a computer, rather than use the neural port that apparently we've been given (no idea how far in the future this book is set, but Orbis is not Earth, it's some other planet in the Universe). JT is a softwire, and at the start of the book he (and his friends, who appear to be slaves) are on a transport ship to Orbis 3, having had adventures on Orbis 2 and possibly 1. The ship is invaded by worm hole pirates (pirates who use a worm hole to hide before attacking), and they become a theme in the book - who are they? what do they want (besides the obvious)? how do they function?

JT and his friends are given to a newly-minted Citizen, Charlie, who will act as their Guarantor (which is roughly equivalent to a slave owner). They knew Charlie earlier and don't understand how he suddenly became a Citizen, much less a wealthy one who only wants them to go to school and learn rather than forcing them to work. At school, they are teased by other Citizen children and accused of cheating when they do well on the placement tests. Riis, an alien girl, semi-befriends JT, which has repercussions later.

Outside the questions about Charlie and the pirates, there's also a game, played in a holographic labyrinth, that is supposed to be unique to Orbis 3 but was taught to JT and the others by "Mother" on their first ship out of Earth (I think). This game, something like Survivor mixed with Caged Death Match, forms the real backbone of the book.

I think the series will be more interesting to MS-aged boys than older boys or girls; the world Haarsma has created is just foreign enough to feel different but not so confusing that it overwhelms what is ultimately an

adventure series.

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