



An Unwelcome Quest

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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?

An Unwelcome Quest Details

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From Reader Review An Unwelcome Quest for online ebook

Celeste says

Full review now posted!

Literally made me laugh out loud multiple times.

This third installment of Magic 2.0 was by far the funniest. At least, it was to me. If you've ever played old quest games from the 80s and 90s, you'll recognize and laugh at so many tropes. I'm not much of a gamer; I have less than stellar hand-eye coordination, which makes gaming incredibly frustrating. However, even I dabbled in *Myst* back in the day, and I've watched my brother play countless questing adventure games, so I'm familiar with the tropes. Even if you've never played a video game in your life, this book would still be hilarious for you.

Philip, Tyler, Jeff, Gary, and Jimmy are sucked into an unwelcome quest (as the title states) by someone they burned in the past. This person has been plotting his revenge for years, and has created a simulation world just to drop them inside and torture them with a shoddily plotted quest. The reluctant adventures embark on the quest because their "powers" have been stripped from them, and cooperating with their captor is their only hope of going home. Little do they or their abductor know that Martin, Gwen, Roy, and Brit the Younger are hot on their trail, and have followed their friends into the game. Both groups have to complete dangerous tasks, endure the cold, and trek through various landscapes populated by tree wolves, river wolves, cliff wolves, and various other breeds that are basically all the comprised of the same exact wolf, just replicated and re-spawned. A whole lot of hilarity ensues.

The shining star of this story was Tyler. He might not be the best-selling novelist of all time, but he is a writer, and the laziness of the story they've been placed in drives him insane. Of course, he loudly voices those criticisms every chance he gets, resulting in amused friends and a very disgruntled game developer. I know I'm terrible about picking apart movies or books that cut corners or haven't been properly researched, so I loved watching a fictional character losing his mind over the same exact things that drive me crazy. Also, there's this scene with zombie sirens that was one of the funniest things I've ever read.

If you like your fantasy and sci-fi mixed together and sidesplittingly funny, you can't do any better than the Magic 2.0 series as a whole or this book in particular.

Original review can be found at Booknest.

Matthew says

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 "like" is 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.

Greg says

Literally Repetitive in more than once sense.

Single dimensional characters with completely predictable responses to a predictable plot.

A book on rails with no thrills, laughs, or fun.

Even the characters are tired of this book's plot.

The stereo-tropes are so strong in this book it's actually disgusting.

The Adorkable protagonist, the abhorrent admirer, constant compliment backfire, the bumbling smart guy, a bad guy who is too dumb to fool, the perfect and condescending PC feminist who is too hot to have anyone

in her harem of fanboy admirers call her on her shit. Garbage.

One last note: Removing the 'magic' from a magic 2.0 book was really a terrible idea.

1/10.

Cristi-Lael says

The second book let me down a bit for the first third or so, so I was not quite sure how I would feel about the start of this third book. I figured even if it was a bit of a slow starter, it would redeem itself in the end, as the second book had. However, I really enjoyed it throughout. It was great fun, and renewed my love for the series. I'm really looking forward to reading the fourth book, but I think I will wait until the physical version comes out because you all know how much I enjoy being able to follow along with the book. :o)

Kristina Horner says

Not as good as the first two, definitely. Still fun for the most part.

terpkristin says

Sword Art Online or .hack come right to mind, though this certainly takes itself less seriously. That's not really a bad thing, though. Light and entertaining, just like the first two books in the series. Overall I had fun in the world and with the ideas of humanity as a giant database.

Rob says

Executive Summary: This series is a lot of fun, and this book might be the best yet. I really hope we'll get a 4th book.

Audio book: What more can I say about Luke Daniels? I said he'd be good at reading the phone book, and he obliged me. I bet he'd even do a good job of the Begats. He brings this book to life. It may as well be a radio play. Do yourselves a favor and do this book in audio.

Full Review

I sort of fell into this series by accident last year. It's not going to be winning any awards or anything, but if you want a fun and light series, look no further.

I thought that while the second book addressed my complaints about the lack of women from the first book, the plot and the humor were weaker. This book seems the most polished yet. While probably not as funny as the first book, it's definitely the best written. The characters are more developed, the plot is tighter, and in

general I was always excited to start listening again.

If you've ever played buggy video games, or written buggy code, I think you'll especially find a lot to like here. I like how some of the supporting characters from Off to Be the Wizard that mostly took a backseat in Spell or High Water were not only more heavily featured, but really had a chance to shine. I especially enjoyed Tyler's running commentary throughout the book.

That said, my favorite character continues to be Phillip. Especially when he's talking to Jimmy. And Jimmy of course is as great as ever.

If you liked the first two books, definitely give this one a try. And if you haven't given this series a try yet, you really should. It's a lot of fun, and I really hope we'll get more of them.

Eamon Ambrose says

I didn't enjoy this as much as the first two books. The narrative seemed a little sluggish and the plot seemed to be going through the motions rather than contributing to the development of the series. It's still a fun read (and Luke Daniels does a wonderful job of the audiobook once again) but I'm not sure of it would entice me to read book 4.

= says

The 3rd book in the Magic 2.0 series was pretty weak. The plot was that the first wizard to be exiled from Leadchurch, Todd, finds a way to get his powers back and take revenge on those who he thinks conspired against him to take away his access to the file and exile him to prison in the present day.

Todd transports five wizards, including Jimmy and Philip to a game-world that he has developed and strips them of their powers. In order to survive, they must complete the quest that they have been forced into. Meanwhile, Martin, who is Philip's good friend, tries to find out what happened to them and how to get them back. He enlists the help of Gwen, Roy and Brit. The four of them teleport to the coordinates that the missing five people went to. They find themselves within the game-world as well as stripped of their powers. They trace the steps of Philip's group and come across the remnants of their passage.

Despite being a good premise, the story was dull and bland. I have lost interest in this series because of this weak entry.

Jose says

Not as good as the previous two books. I felt this story was a bit lazy.

Suzanne says

I enjoyed this more than book 2 in the series, mostly because I liked the focus on a bad video game vs. book two's focus on time travel paradoxes. The pop-culture and gaming references in this book (and the humor)

made it quite enjoyable!

Jain Ferdinand says

I really liked the first book in the series, "Off to Be the Wizard." Scott Meyer took one of my favorite themes - go back in time and be impressive with your future knowledge - and had a lot of fun with it. The second book was amusing but the world in the book didn't interest me. This one is much more in the mode of the first book. This time the "wizards" are trapped without their powers in a computer game quest. They are limited to real-world strengths and skills against virtual dangers. Their real power comes from the fact that they are brave enough and loyal enough to work together through dangers that may (or may not) actually harm them. That, and the knowledge that the villain is actually a really lazy game designer and they are all experienced gamers. As usual the writing is good, the text is free of errors and grammatical mistakes, and the throwaway humor is delightful.

Marco Vaca says

Was Mr. Meyer trying to imply something with the title of his book?

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.

Rolando Gill says

The first book was great, the second less so. This one was hard to finish. Disappointing.

TS Chan says

The third book of Magic 2.0 is more enjoyable than its predecessor, though still not as good as the first; its storyline is succinctly encapsulated by the title of the book, i.e. An Unwelcome Quest.

Ahhh... **quests!!** This brought back wonderful childhood memories of playing PC quest and adventure games, such as the likes of King's Quest and Hero's Quest. The one I remember most fondly will always be King's Quest 1. Typed commands, anyone?

Our fellow time-travelling wizards in medieval England found themselves trapped in a quest game masterminded by Todd, who had an axe to grind with Philip and his friends after they stripped him of access from the file and sent him away as punishment for breaking the rule of abusing its use on another human being.

Hilarious scenes after hilarious scenes ensued when the wizards, who were now removed from their powers, faced the dangers in a buggy computer game filled with lazily programmed wolves and poorly executed and overused cliches that only an idiot like Todd can muster. With the aspiring fantasy author within Philip's group, the argumentative discourse that bubbled forth between a supremely agitated Tyler and an obtusely petulant Todd was comedy gold.

The character that changed the entire dynamics among the wizards, in an interesting way, is Jimmy. As the wild card entry into this reluctant team of questors, he added a flavour of unpredictability which, in my opinion, the plots in these books had so far lacked. As such, the addition of Jimmy back into the fold made the story more compelling.

I did have a minor issue with the narrative when it becomes a bit too repetitive or overly descriptive. These were the times when I found my attention wandering off and I had to rewind to catch what I've missed.

Again, I have to mention that Luke Daniels' narration of this series is absolute perfection. And I strongly believe that I will re-listen to these audiobooks again when I need some witty, whimsical and light-hearted fun.

This review can also be found at Booknest
