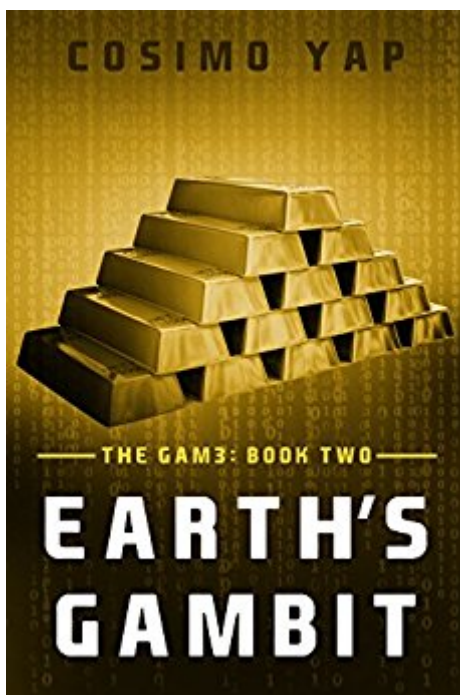


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Earth's Gambit (The Gam3 Book 2)



Synopsis

The Earth has changed. War is now fought in an alien virtual realityâthe Gameâwhere many of the players are anything but human. Now part of the Black Rose guild, Alan heads to the Academy to level up and get stronger. He hopes to make allies and learn skills to win the battles to come. But with everyone pursuing their own agendas, what can one gamer do in a universe he still doesnât fully understand?

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Customer Reviews

Thereâs a nice summary at the beginning of the novel about the events of book 1. Great way to help the reader recall whatâs happening. Once the recap is finished it jumps right back into the story, picking up where the end of book 1 stopped. Alan, having joined the Black Rose Guild, is on his way to the Academy. A high-end facility that trains players using a unique system of instruction. The first 20% of the novel is Alan and his A.I. Eve at the Academy training various skills and abilities. I loved it. Iâm a fan of skill training, especially for this character since he has such a neat class. About 23-58%, things start to feel a little rushed. I think this is where the author got a little stuck while writing and the transition into the next arc of the story feels awkward. Not bad.

But you can tell the author's struggling a little to figure out how to get the MC the skills he needs and transition into the war on earth. -There's some really great training here and I truly enjoyed the how hacking in the game is described like an RTS game. (Slight Spoilers ahead) At about the 58% mark, Alan is forced to choose sides in the War on Earth between the United World Government and the Legion of Man. He then travels back to earth, in game, and uses his new hacking skills to try and help his side win. There are some really good action scenes in this last half of the novel and it didn't end in a predictable manner. Overall, I had a great time reading the novel and am just glad that it finally came out. I look forward to reading book 3. Score: 8 out of 10.

I have good news to report on this series. While I found the first book to be a major irritant with some of the writing tools used, specifically the use of "um" to show the MC being inexperienced, indecisive, and generally making some over-the-top stupid mistakes (the author still uses it lightly in book two and unfortunately the over use in book one causes even these few instances to make me grit my teeth). He has greatly improved in the second book. |Spoilers Follow: For those that found the MC irritating, he has improved, but he still has some significant issues. He doesn't focus nor prioritize, it's like he is a teenager, not a college student | this will lead to more reader frustration and I am not sure if this is the author not planning out the direction the MC should take, or by design. However, either way, I think the hero/MC should learn to focus soon as too much hand holding will destroy the series imo. Also, it would be nice if in the next book the MC can start cleaning up his docket of quests by having the admin sell the soulsteel knife, use the proceeds to charge the void crystal and he can complete the gamma quest with the prison warden (collect second soulsteel knife, other reward, second Machine Lord ability and Admin faction for taking a headache off their full plates). He should also stand up to the guild | they put him in a crap position, gipped him on his academy schooling (which he paid for, screw their platinum marks), and cost him faction loss with the people he told them he wanted to support (and seem to be letting them (Earth) crap on his name in the media after the fact). He should threaten to leave or even log out of the game and make them rethink their position. He is a huge asset; he needs them to realize this | MC should forget about the small fry and focus on the real "players" like, Revenant, Predecessor, Aleph, and/or Admins. He needs to focus on unlocking the big picture, which is what these factions seem to have. He should also deny his services to earth and humanity indefinitely. They made their choice which he has to live with (the unearned vilification, extortion/bully tactics, and mudslinging after the war). He needs to show them that it goes both ways when earth encounters enemy Machine Lords or sophisticated cyber-attacks

from other races that will start ripping them a new one. Let them reap the fruits of their betrayal. I can't stand it in other books when the MC does the "return the other cheek" garbage and all of a sudden the amoral people are buddy-buddy and have ethics (Hello!!! Leopard spots they don't change). Any improvements on these items would show a development that I hope we will see other than just stats and ability growth. Strength of character and sense of self-worth are even more important in character development for a good book than ability and stat growth. I might start actually respecting the MC (and I really want to). In conclusion, I believe the author is heading in one (or more) of the above directions as Lambda (the MC's second AI) seems to foreshadow the author's direction by some of its exasperated statements to/about the MC at least I hope so.

The good: Probably the best RPG portion of any litrpg out there. Makes you literally want to play the game. Efficient world building where a lot of depth is created without sacrificing plot or character development. The bad: The MC is a whiny immature boob. The AI plays the game for him, he is unable to do ANYTHING on his own and is ungrateful despite all of his difficulties stemming from instances where he disregards AI instructions. All the MC does is provide a goal to help drive the plot. And that goal (get strong, have fun in game) isn't very interesting. Pretty sure the AIs are more well developed. In the end this book represents a world and plot so engaging that even the annoying MC can't really drag it down.

Good sequel in the same style as part 1. The setting has me curious about what is going on. Who is the real enemy? What is the true purpose of the Game? The protagonist is not always particularly likable, rather blunt and awkward in social interaction, but that seems to change a bit later on through a within the story believable way. I just find Icewolves reaction/offer near the end odd for somebody who supposedly understands at least the basics of the Game. His actions close off an avenue for humanity with no gain at all, quite the opposite actually. Either he more of a fool than I thought or more is going on than meets the eye...

I read book one when it came out, I think book 2 is as good or better. With a name like Cosimo Yap you can hardly go wrong.... okay, that maybe the wine talking. In my opinion it's not a true litrpg but it's a fun read with a twisting plot. The mc is strong and likable. There is quite a bit of humor that is actually funny and not just groan worthy attempts. All around solid story line. The ending leaves it wide open for a book 3 and I look forward to it.

Worth the wait. It was nice to see some discussion about Alan relying too heavily on his AI; I thought that was an obvious "single point of failure" and likely to retard his progress overall. It'll be interesting to see where that goes in the future. Looking forward to the next entry, hopefully a bit faster this time. :-)

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