



Ant Clancy: Games Detective

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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In this new adventure story, Ant Clancy takes gaming to new levels, when he is forced to confront a huge global corporation, with only the help of the local school bully and a talking dolphin.

Much of this story takes place in the virtual reality of a new computer game that has everyone hooked. Well, everyone except Ant, who still prefers his ancient Kismet Cosmos game, where he and his dragon, Pradhal, have the whole universe to explore as everybody else has moved on to more modern games. Ray-Chay is the latest venture by world famous, genius, billionaire games designer Kody Crunch, and he promises that it will change the future of gaming forever.

Ant suspects that Kody's real intentions are less than wholesome, when players of the game begin freezing in real life, and this sets up a dangerous race-against-time hunt to uncover Kody's plot. Though the games are virtual, the stakes are very much real, which makes for an exciting climax.

You do not have to be a gamer to enjoy this story, as the virtual worlds are merely innovative settings for a generic thriller. Ruth Morgan portrays the lives of gamers in a sympathetic and understanding manner and fills her story with positive role models. Ant is not beholden to his hobby and his father (who clearly understands the dangers of addiction) sets firm boundaries, which Ant respects. Moreover, the fun of gaming is not reserved for teenagers and children; their parents are hooked on Ray-Chay too.

Despite these honourable messages, the book slightly lacks the tension and engagement to sustain the interest of the computer game fans whose attention it courts. It is set in the near future and the technologies it describes are easy to imagine, but rather simply described. Similarly, characters are somewhat underdeveloped, perhaps because each has his or her own avatar's personality as well as their own.

The concept of a games detective who polices the virtual world is original and will interest many, but some further development and upgrades may be necessary before Ant Clancy's next release.

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