



Saga

Conor Kostick

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The breathtaking sequel to the multistarred *Epic*!

Ghost is part of a street hacker airboard gang who lives to break rules. When they realize that their world—Saga—is being periodically invaded by strange human beings, they don't know what to do. That is, until they learn the complicated truth: Saga is not just their world. It is a sentient computer game, the replacement to *Epic* on New Earth, and it's addictive. The Dark Queen who controls Saga is trying to enslave both its people and the people of New Earth. And she'll succeed unless Ghost and her friends—and Erik, from *Epic*, and *his* friends—figure out what to do.

Saga Details

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From Reader Review Saga for online ebook

George Yu says

Saga has a similar idea to its prequel, Epic. Humans from New Earth think that Saga is just a game and is only for entertainment, but everyone except Erik soon realizes that the entities from the world of Saga are not just mindless AI, but beings who can all think for themselves. You get to meet the main characters from Epic again and also familiarize yourself with the new characters from the world of Saga.

The main antagonist in this story, the Dark Queen, knows that the world of Saga can be changed by a human who rewrites the code. She tries to get Erik to rewrite the code of Saga in exchange for releasing several millions of people from the poison she inserted into their bodies. The poison gets the humans addicted to the game and will die if they don't continuously play.

Erik meets one of the new characters, Ghost, from Saga and immediately makes friends with her. Ghost is a girl who has lost all her memories before the age of six. Later in the story, Erik and Ghost plan to kill the Dark Queen. In the end, they do and Ghost becomes the new Dark queen because she is the one who finished the previous one off.

I think that this book has a great idea with good characters with a variety of personalities. The story is well written and had lots of detail.

Amanda P says

Wasn't as big of a fan of this book as I was the first in the series. It has a completely different story line and is a little confusing at first. I also feel like this book did not grab me as quickly as Epic did. Took me a long time to finish because I didn't feel like I was invested in it, but it was good enough for me to finish.

78sunny says

Meine Meinung:

Also erst einmal habe ich mich tierisch geärgert, das nirgendwo draufstand, dass es ein 2. Teil ist. Der erste Teil heißt „Epic“ und dieser hier baut darauf auf. Somit war gerade der Anfang unheimlich anstrengend und verwirrend. Grundsätzlich war die Grundhandlung über ein Computerspiel, das irgendwann autonom geworden ist, ganz interessant, obwohl es aus meiner Sicht zu utopisch und verwirrend war. Computer-begeisterte Jugendliche könnten das anders sehen und ich denke das dieses Hörspiel auch nur für diese geeignet ist. Ich will gar nicht all zu viel zur Handlung sagen, außer das es modern futuristisch war und doch auch einige Fantasy/Rollenspielelemente enthielt aufgrund des Vorgängerbandes. Die Welt um die es hier geht, SAGA, hat eine Königin, die alles unter Kontrolle hat und die auch Kontakt mit anderen Welten aufnehmen kann und diese auf bestimmte Art und Weise beeinflussen kann. So kommt es, dass bestimmte Spieler aus anderen Welten nach SAGA kommen, in der Annahme es sei eine virtuelle Welt. Von der Grundidee wirklich nicht schlecht, aber viel zu verwirrend. Vielleicht liegt dies auch nur daran, dass ich den ersten Teil der Reihe nicht kenne, aber ich bezweifle das. Die Handlung ist sehr gesellschaftskritisch, aber auf mich wirkte da ganze wie Zeigefingerpädagogik mit dem Holzhammer vermittelt. Wie viel von dieser

Gesellschaftskritik, die angepeilte Lesergruppe (Jugendliche) mit bekommt, weiß ich nicht. Auf mich als Erwachsenen wirkte es auf jeden Fall zu deutlich.

Es handelt sich hier um ein szenische Lesung. Mir persönlich liegt so etwas grundsätzlich nicht und ich fand es hier auch ziemlich übertrieben jugendlich hipp umgesetzt. Es wirkte auf mich eher wie etwas, das in den 90er aufgezeichnet wurde. Alles war so extrem cool, futuristisch und abgefahren. Ich fühlte mich auf negative Art und Weise in meine Jugend zurückversetzt, obwohl es hier um die Zukunft geht. Es ist wirklich schwer zu erklären.

Die Sprecher machen ihre Arbeit grundsätzlich gut, aber es wirkt einfach schrecklich lächerlich wenn Erwachsene die 'coole' Sprache der Jugendlichen nachmachen. Vor allem ein Junge, der sich mit Drogen zudröhnt, wurde derart lächerlich dargestellt, dass ich kurz davor stand das Hörspiel abubrechen. Ob das der Zielgruppe gefällt oder ob sie sich eher darüber kaputt lachen? Ich würde einiges auf die letzte Option setzen. Die Soundeffekte waren um einiges besser als in manch anderen Hörspielen. Ich höre ja ziemlich häufig Hörbücher und Hörspiele und wage daher das Urteil das die Soundeffekte äußerst effektiv eingesetzt wurden. Auch die Musikeinlagen passten.

Emotionen kamen bei mir während des Hörens keine auf und ich fühlte weder mit jemandem mit, noch hatte ich das Gefühl irgendeinen der Charaktere näher kennenzulernen.

Die Spannung war moderat und für ein Jugendbuch okay. Den heutigen Ansprüchen würde es wohl eher nicht mehr entsprechen. Mir lag es ganz gut so wie es war. Man wollte wissen, was hinter SAGA und der dunklen Königin steckt und was eigentlich mit der Hauptfigur Ghost los ist. Mit der Auflösung hatte ich nicht gerechnet und kreide das dem Hörbuch mal positiv an. Wenn es ein wenig emotionaler herüber gebracht worden wäre, hätte es auch eine bessere Bewertung bekommen können.

Die Charaktere blieben flach und wie schon beim Thema Emotionen erläutert, ließen sie mich kalt.

Für eine Kurzmeinung ist es nun doch ganz schön lang geworden. Dafür lasse ich mal das Fazit weg. Ich hatte ganz einfach, dass Gefühl ich war nicht die angezielte Leserschaft und trotzdem hat es mich soweit unterhalten, dass ich nicht abschaltete. Herausheben möchte ich auch noch die sehr stabile und hochwertige Pappbox in der die CDs alle noch mal in einer extra Papphülle stecken. Auf der Box befindet sich Bild mit Holografieeffekt.

Meine Wertung:

3 von 5 Sternen

Steve says

This was a relatively easy, quick read, but - at least for me - it didn't capture the magic or maintain the momentum found in the predecessor, *Epic*.

Taking a step back, I'm frequently amazed by how much really good literature - or well-crafted, interesting, and compelling reading - is available for teens and young adults today. Having picked the first one, *Epic*, off my son's bookshelf a while back, I enjoyed it and thought it was a lot better than the far too generic stuff we were fed as kids, but not nearly as good some of the top tier stuff currently on library and bookstore young adult shelves. I felt similarly about this one, but I enjoyed it less. Conversely, I can imagine teen sci-fi and

cyber-punk readers - not yet ready for William Gibson or Neal Stephenson - easily becoming immersed in the story line.

I was just looking back at my review of *Epic*, and I was reminded - in reading this book - that I had the same reaction to both books: "The author periodically struggled to keep the characters' use of language consistent, which was slightly irritating, but, for the most part, it wasn't a terrible distraction." Which leads me to conclude that - with better editing - this had lots of potential.....

Keaton says

The book *Saga*, written by Conor Kostick, was a very good book. It is the sequel to the book *Epic*. In short, Eric is a character in his world, who has a character in their virtual world named Cindella. Cindella meets this girl named Ghost, who has no idea who she is, or why characters such as Cindella are entering and leaving her world. I think that the plot and the characters in the book were good. As previously mentioned, the book was good. However, I think there was only two slight flaws.

The book was slow at first, and it - at least in my opinion - wasn't as good as the previous book, *Epic*. *Epic* was a very captivating book, that had many twists and turns. I feel that *Saga* was just a rewrite of *Epic* in that sense. Don't get my wrong, *Saga* was still a good book. It featured many interesting characters and there was still a few plot twists that would be hard to see coming.

Overall, I rated this book a 4 out of 5. The story itself was good, and the characters were interesting. The biggest reason overall that I didn't give it a perfect score is due to the fact that it follows a very similar plot to its predecessor, *Epic*. I would definitely recommend this book if you are a person who is in to the fantasy genre, but I would also recommend reading *Epic* before you read *Saga*. Conor Kostick does a great job creating a very original series, and this book is a definite read if you are into the fantasy genre.

Sara says

This sequel to *Epic* was everything I could have hoped for. Although Erik ended the game *Epic* in the last book, the Dark Queen has downloaded a new game called *Saga* to the computers on New Earth for humans to "play." The difference is that *Saga* is less a game and more a universe within a universe, as the characters are all evolved entities. Oh yeah, and the Dark Queen is scheming to force the humans to reprogram *Saga* so she can rule both her universe and the outside one for eternity. Plots and subplots abound, with Erik and his game persona, Cindella, mostly working in the background to help Ghost and her friends right all the wrongs the Dark Queen has done.

Kathy says

Will totally appeal to video gamers, goths, punks, guys, and other fans of Cory Doctorow's "Little Brother". So what would happen if a virtual world became so sophisticated that the characters gained real consciousness? How real would that world be, and how would the characters feel about it? What if 1 character ruled this world for thousands of years? Lots of fast-paced action, boarding, a big race/shoot 'em up, and an mad, evil queen. I hadn't read the previous book in the series, "*Epic*", but it didn't seem to detract

from my enjoyment of the story.

Nevergreen says

Well this is the first book I have managed to finish in about 2-3 months. I was doing so well with my challenge, then life happened. However, progress in life and a read book!

I really loved the first book in this trilogy – in fact Epic is currently my top new read of the year thus far – so I wanted to read more. I thought I had an idea about where this book was going to go, yet it didn't go there. On one hand this is a good thing as it didn't follow the typical trend of a series. However, this book – a sequel to the previous book – ignored important world consequences that would have happened as a result of the previous book. I would have liked to have learned more about those consequences and the ramifications. In the second book it seemed as though the world lived on like the big things that happened in the previous book did not happen. Thus this book is more of a companion book than a sequel.

I did like the new cast of characters, which was interesting and unique with their own voice. Also Ghost was clearly described as black and this had no bearing on her life, she was just another person, which is fantastic. The ratio of male to female characters in this book is vastly improved over the last book which I appreciated. The writing sometimes struggles at times, but other times it was very beautiful.

The slang of the characters in Saga was interesting but for a world that has had 2000 years to develop, it was stuck in the 90s punk stage, which was very odd. There were hoverboards, I guess as a way to make it feel futuristic, but there were still billboards and card readers and chips for money making it an interesting mash-up for a setting which could be hard to get into. This world also had the typical dystopian faction system, this time card colours dictated how you lived life and what jobs and money you got. Interesting, but nothing revolutionary. There was a distinct lack of world building at certain parts as well, however the consequence certain things occurring that were not really discussed was thoroughly and wonderfully discussed.

Overall, this book did not do what I expected. It was interesting but also kinda 'meh' for me. I wanted more worldbuilding and/or for things to be revealed faster than they ultimately were. However, the idea of silent parties where everyone brings their own music and headphones to listen with and dance around to your own beat sounds so neat but it would be so creepy to see a large group of people dancing with no sound at all.

Full review of this book can be found on my blog (shortly).

Sherwood Smith says

This book, labeled Epic #2, is no retread of the first. It's about a teen-age punk airboarder with no memories, who lives with a bunch of outcast kids. Ranged against them are the forces of oppression, but Kostick doesn't settle for cliché even though this is a novel for kids. Then, just as you're figuring out the setup, the borderland between worlds opens up. It's great reading—if I were a teen now, it would have blown me away.

Karin says

In this exciting and inventive follow-up to EPIC, you'll meet Ghost and her band of anarcho-punk friends. They live in Saga, a virtual world - only they don't know it is virtual. The Dark Queen and her assassin are the only two with the true knowledge of how their world came to be.

The inhabitants of Saga live in a rigid class system based on the color of the card you hold. The majority of the citizens hold red cards, the card that represents the lowest class, and live a dreary existence.

Ghost and her loyal group set out to shake things up with help from Erik, a.k.a Cindella, and B.E. from Epic. They attempt to take on The Dark Queen and squash her evilness forever.

SAGA is a good bet for science fiction buffs. Fans of EPIC will enjoy the brief appearances of the characters that were so important in the book that started it all.

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Jennifer Rummel for TeensReadToo.com

Eric and his new girlfriend are vacationing when a new computer game infiltrates the system of EPIC. Everything except Cindella disappears, and a new game is left in its place. The new game of Saga has similarities to the old game; it revolves around class and trying to improve one's standard of living.

However, Cindella begins to realize that this new game - is not really a game. She also learns that the mastermind behind the game put a little something extra into it that seeps out into New Earth, infecting the players so they become addicted to the game. Cindella could kill the Queen of Saga, but in doing so would have to kill two million of her people simultaneously.

With the help of Ghost, a girl who doesn't know her own power, Eric must find a way out of this disaster.

The twists and turns of life on Saga make this science fiction novel a quick and enjoyable read, especially for those who play video games.

Cindy Mitchell *Kiss the Book* says

Kostick, Conor Saga, 367 p. Viking (Penguin), 2008.

Welcome back to the world of Epic. The game has been shut down on Erik's world, but a new game has taken its place. What Erik and his friends don't know, however, is that this new gaming world is populated by self-actualized electronic intelligences, controlled by a Dark Queen who is determined to enslave a world of fleshy bodies to do her bidding. To her surprise, however, the character Cindella, left over from Epic, is more than happy to thwart her plans.

Most of the point of view is from the computerized characters' perspective, especially Ghost, a young street punk who survives by breaking rules. She and her gang of friends are key to the solution of Saga. You can

tell that Kostick knows video games, especially role-playing games, whether medieval or modern. Gaming fans will have a great time, but so will others.

MS, HS – ADVISABLE. Reviewer: Cindy, Library-Teacher.

<https://kisssthebook.blogspot.com/2008...>

Bibliotropic says

After rereading the first book of the series, *Epic* to prepare myself for *Saga*, I still was unprepared for the dramatic shift in tone and setting between the two different novels. Where *Epic* took place primarily in a fantasy MMORPG crossed with a developing hardscrabble world, *Saga* takes place in a cyberpunk game that blurs the boundaries between real and virtual, and explores the concepts of artificial intelligence and self-awareness.

Not a bad idea, but it certainly wasn't what I was expecting after *Epic*.

Within the gameworld of *Saga*, inhabitants are unaware that their world was created as a game for humans. There are a few who are aware of this fact, but most go about their lives believing that their world is the only world. Until they meet players from the outside, the same players who used to make use of *Epic*, as *Saga* has been forcibly put on all of New Earth's computers after the deletion of *Epic* at the end of the previous book. The result is a mental expansion for all involved, as the players realize that the NPCs of *Saga* are as developed and diverse as they themselves are, and the NPCs come to grips with the origin of their existence and what it means to be self-aware in a programmed world.

Definitely interesting concepts to tackle, and I have no problem with how it was done. Fascinating philosophical concepts, and it was interesting to see how they were handled.

But I don't think it was done particularly well within the context of the story. Erik and BE and a couple of other characters from New Earth make cameos, and Erik – still playing Cindella, due to the fact that when *Saga* took over her old character file was unable to be deleted – is the catalyst for major change in the world, but for the most part, the world and people of New Earth are relatively unimportant to the tale and the more interesting parts of the story's concept. Sadly, this doesn't come across very well, as it's established that *Saga*'s ruler has planted addicted in the minds of millions of New Earth players, as a bargaining chip for getting parts of *Saga* reprogrammed to her satisfaction. A major even like that shouldn't have come across like the afterthought that it felt like, especially when it was the motivation for Erik to start an overthrow of *Saga*'s government. Cindella played a big role without playing a big role, if you follow, and it didn't make for the best reading. I was far more interested in Ghost and her gang within the virtual world, and happily more than half the story was devoted to them, but for all they did and for all the important events that revolved around them, it felt like the author was still trying to get the story to ride on Cindella's shoulders.

It didn't work out that way. Often, it felt as though Kostick threw Erik and BE in the story simply for a way to connect to the previous novel, to ride on its successes instead of having *Saga* work as a standalone novel. In my opinion, it would have worked far better as a standalone, and things would have worked far more smoothly that way. It could be notable as a standalone. Here it's just an okay follow-up.

I'm hoping that this was just a case of Second Book Syndrome, an aberration, so that the third book will be far more entertaining and make more sense in context. I will read it, but I can't help but feel really let down

after this one, which has made me feel like I need a real break from the trilogy before I take on the final book.

Justus Schmidt says

This is the second in the Avatar Chronicles, the sequel to Epic. Whereas in the first book the setting was a medieval-inspired MMORPG, we're now in a futuristic metropolis. It's clear from fairly early on that this is also a virtual world (although the inhabitants of the world don't realise this), and the connection to the characters from the first book doesn't seem forced. However, their real world story takes a back seat this time, and we follow the 'virtual' protagonists for the most part.

The protagonist this time is part of an anarchopunk movement, which I credit the author as displaying in a way that makes their cause relatable even to a 13-year-old me to whom this was a very foreign concept. It might also be that I'm getting FF7 vibes from the small group of rebels hiding in desolate buildings from the government.... It's also serving some of the other tropes you'd expect from a book of this setting, but that didn't really detract me. I felt like the writing had definitely improved from Epic, including multiple POVs and some more abstract writing than in the first volume. All said, another very solid book; and I'm looking forward to reading the third volume for the very first time now!

David Medford says

I thought that it was weird and confusing, but was still an interesting idea. I did not enjoy it as much as I thought I would.
