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My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

3

My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord is the second in a series featuring Luke and his friends, who live in the world's most exciting place...Bromley. We learned in the series' first novel that Luke's brother is a super hero. This is extremely unfair, as Luke is much more qualified. He knows all there is to know about comic books, from Flash Gordon's occupation to the true identity of Arm-Fall-Off Boy. He even has a Deadpool rucksack and a Green Lantern alarm clock!

In his desperation to realise his true destiny, Luke tries to convince his brother, Star-Lad, that he needs a support team. Unimpressed, Star-Lad leaves Luke to battle imaginary alien invaders on his Xbox instead. However, as we learned in *My Brother is a Superhero*, real alien invaders are never far away from Bromley and, this time, Star-Lad can't save the day - he has a cold.

The chapters of *My Gym Teacher is an Alien Overlord* fly by at warp speed, each featuring slightly more danger and excitement than the last, like the levels of a classic computer game. In fact, the entire story is a tribute to the world of cult fiction, comic books and arcade games. The roller coaster narrative is full of references to science fiction classics, which are described with a nudge and a wink to older readers but, sadly, will go largely unnoticed by the younger, target audience. There are, however, lots of jokes for children to enjoy, too.

Solomons understands that it is not easy to find and keep friends when you are young and the close relationship that Luke enjoys with his charming, Gallic pal, Serge, as well as the intolerable bullying he suffers at the hands of Josh Kahn, is well described. Luke and Serge show great determination and resilience but it takes more than two kids to stop an intergalactic invasion force. Unfortunately, each time Luke feels he has secured an ally, he encounters another devilish double cross or unexpected plot twist. These moments deliver some excitement but are quite relentless and will test some readers' patience and stamina by the end. With more twists and turns inevitably to follow in further sequels, some children may long for the more simple enjoyment that was provided by *My Brother is a Superhero*.

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