

Earth and Beyond

Anthony Sailer

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This sci-fi escapade is a multidimensional experience propelled by high-speed action and colorful, descriptive detail.

Imaginative extraterrestrial worlds are enriched with fascinating and frightening phenomena in Anthony Sailer's *Earth & Beyond*. Explorer Todd and his stepbrother have discovered the secret to time travel. This concept, a familiar one in the genre, is the catalyst for adventures into the fourth dimension and beyond, where they are attacked by a malicious species that has the ability to destroy life on Earth—until a serious threat to existence forces cooperation.

Sempron, the alien leader, warns of a cataclysmic outcome to a phenomenon that will obliterate everything, describing this threat in a step-by-step, structural breakdown, a stylistic technique used throughout this novel: “We have not been able to find a solution to repair the tear in the space-time continuum, and if this tear cannot be repaired it will cause the dimensions in this universe to eventually collapse. We will ultimately cease to exist and eventually the tear could become large enough to threaten your universe. The continued unstableness will eventually spread throughout the galaxies until everything throughout space will be swept into oblivion.”

Exploration and war amid unpredictable conditions create the danger needed to sustain Sailer's short jaunt into the cosmos. A powerful concept, yet lacking in character development, this light-speed chase through the stars would be well suited to visual media. With definite promise as a screenplay, or perhaps even a graphic novel, the story's intense, blow-by-blow sequences seem more like movie scenes: “With weapons drawn, we each entered a tunnel. The tunnel I entered was narrow and again the solid ice was so smooth it was like sky blue glass ... I slowed my pace while frequently looking over my shoulder. I began to think that maybe I was coming to a dead end. I continued onward toward the approaching darkness.”

Immersion in this innovative tale triggers mind-blowing imagery rather than a deep understanding of the protagonist's personality. The humorous supporting characters present the opportunity for lighthearted banter in life-threatening scenes as they encounter unusual beings, such as the ice warriors, and terrifying situations in bizarre settings.

With a good editor, or a change in format, this marketable idea could reach a wider audience. Adequate packaging, with its eye-catching view of a planet in shades of blue, black, and white, will draw science-fiction enthusiasts with its understated simplicity, even though the design appears more appropriate for a nonfiction title.

Sailer incorporates realistic depictions into his science-fiction realm, infusing his dialogue with a natural intonation. *Earth and Beyond* is his fiction debut.

A solid foundation for what appears to be a series in the works, clearly inspired by *Star Trek*, the book's outstanding quality is in its potential for future installments. Limitless possibilities exist for this familiar, yet popular, plot concept and structure.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (February 20, 2014)

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