



Maelstrom

Taylor Anderson

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The final thrilling chapter in the “gripping and riveting” *Destroyermen* Trilogy.

Lieutenant Commander Matthew Reddy, along with the men and women of the U.S.S. *Walker*, are once again at war. Having sided with the peaceful Lemurians against the savage, reptilian Grik, they now find themselves scrambling to prepare for the attack that is sure to come, searching for resources to support their forces—even as they look for allies to join their struggle.

Amagi, also trapped in this strange world, is under Grik control—with her fanatical commander approaching madness. And soon they will have amassed a force that no amount of firepower and technology will be able to stop.

“Anderson has brought a fresh new perspective to the tale of crosstime shipwreck.” —S.M. Stirling

Maelstrom Details

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Author : Taylor Anderson

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From Reader Review Maelstrom for online ebook

Sharon Michael says

Third of the series and perhaps the best so far. This is one series that gets better with each book instead of slowly tapering off. Also the author manages to bring in more 'civilizations' and people without confusing the reader ... something else not all authors manage well with so many people/species/civilizations to keep track of.

Neil says

Thoroughly enjoyed this book! Had a hard time putting it down for more important stuff [like dishes and laundry and yard work] that needed to be done. It had more chapters than the previous book, so that was also nice! :)

Third book in the series about two destroyers swept into an alternate reality by an odd squall during an epic battle in WWII. The humans try to find more allies while bringing their current Lemurian allies up to speed in terms of 'modern battle tactics' [as of WWII]; attempts are made to rescue the survivors from the epic battle in the 2nd book; there is exploration, danger, intrigue, and a humorous safari as well as new discoveries to be made!

The author could have ended the series with this book; it just would have been a totally different book had he done so! This book introduces more variables that [I assume, as I have not read them yet] will be explored further in his future novels, yet are still somewhat-important in this novel. Some of the new threads are not so important, but had they not been introduced would not necessarily have changed the tone of the book [except for possibly some character development]. Kinda made me wonder if he decided he had more he wanted to write about and decided to continue writing after this novel OR if his 'bosses' asked him to continue writing due to the popularity of the first two novels.

The epic battle at the end of the book was crazy! It reminded me, in some ways, of John Ringo's Aldenata books in terms of how crazy and voracious the Grik are. But it also has strong elements of the 'lost regiment' series that I also enjoyed, about how a less-advanced civilization is forced to modernize or die. The showdown between the Amagi and the two destroyers Walker and the Mahan was worth the reading!

I think, though, I most enjoyed the safari where Silva and Bradford went looking for the super-lizard that killed one of the crew members at their oil well. I did not expect the hunt to go the way it did; I also liked the description of the Lemurian Hunter who aided them on their quest. He was a hoot! Silva wanted revenge and to kill the creature that killed his friend; Bradford wanted to see a super-lizard up close and personal before it died. Both got their wish, but not in the way they probably intended! The safari consisted of more than three individuals, and it took the entire group to kill the beast. But what a 'battle'! Perhaps because it focused on two important members of the crew, but this section of the book seemed more intense than the battle for survival at the end of the book.

(view spoiler)

I am looking forward to discovering what other vessels have been introduced to this 'new world' because of the strange squalls in the Pacific Ocean. I am certain there must be more 'modern' vessels that have made it to this alternate reality, and it will be 'fun' to see how well those crews handle the new situations as well as how they handle meeting the Walker and her crew (view spoiler).

I have enjoyed the character development throughout the series, especially as men who have never had responsibility or have shied away from it are forced to take up the mantle and learn to grow. I also liked how the characters of the Mice have grown in the series; I do like them despite their oddness when compared with the rest of the crew. Some men are able to handle the mantle of responsibility; some are not. The author does a fine job of not making all of the Americans [or Lemurians] 'supermen' and incapable of making mistakes [although some of these mistakes do have severe consequences, as they do in 'real life']. I am looking forward to reading the 4th book in the series!

Gordon says

Maelstrom marks then end of the original Destroyermen Trilogy, and what an end it is; but its also a beginning, marking the end of the main plot and the start of a new one.

The behemoth Amagi; the Japanese Battle cruiser that chased of Walker and Mahan to begin with has followed them through the squall that brought them here. While the American's encountered the Lemurians, the Jap's met the Grik and while they initially were able to hold their own against them, the Grik saw worthy prey and made the offer to the Japanese commander to join the hunt - a decision his crew will forever regret. Now working side by side, the Grik and Amagi are coming for Walker and the Lemurian's.

Maelstrom is non stop action told both from the point of view of the crews on the ships and the troops on the ground during some of the most intense and bloody battles of the war so far. Some of the character progression in Maelstrom is slow and surprisingly limited compared to the other books but by this point most of the principal characters have already progressed quite far from their origins in Into The Storm and Taylor Anderson allows some of the supporting characters and now the new Japanese characters to really shine. To get this kind of insight into a world and the events surrounding it from the supporting characters rather than the principal characters is a nice change of pace and it really highlights just how much depth he has been able to create in this world.

As I've said this book is non stop action from the get go and you won't believe how it ends.

Book 4 anyone?

Mr. Matt says

The author, I think, is ingeniously lazy. In a way it is brilliant. The premise of the Destroyermen series is that

a mysterious vortex has pulled a decrepit WWII era destroyer, the USS Walker, into an alternative world where evolution has taken a different path.

The Americans are plopped into the midst of an existential conflict between the voracious, raptor-like, carnivorous Grik (bad guys) and the peaceful, mammalian Lemurians. Captain Reddy and the crew of the Walker, of course, side with the furry Lemurians and, thanks to their powerful ship, they turn the tide of war against the Grik. So far so good.

But what is an author to do? If the Walker remains unchallenged, the series will wrap up pretty quickly! The Grik's wooden hulled ships and primitive weapons (crossbows, etc) can't stand up to the powerful Walker and her explosive shells, her machine guns, and her crew armed with Browning Automatic Rifles, Thomson guns and other fire arms. The solution to this terrible author's problem is simple: have the vortex bring in someone new.

And there is the problem. The mysterious vortex is the gift that keeps on giving. Every time the author wants to do something or shake up the story line, the solution is "oh yeah, the vortex brought this too!" Case in point: the Catalina, the Japanese Battlecruiser, the American Sub. I bet that throughout the series the author continues to use this mechanism to shake up the story. I can't wait to discover that another vortex also somehow brought in an aircraft carrier!

I'm being overly harsh, but this strikes me as being fundamentally lazy. The author has free reign to willy-nilly pull in whatever he wants in order to strike whatever line he needs to. I much prefer books of this vein where the door swings open only once (see Harry Turtledove's Videssos series for an example). Much better, I think is to build your world, admit some new people once and then you are done. No more transfers. Yes, I know that technically the PBY, the submarine, and the Japanese ship came through in that one transfer, but the author keeps doling out that information. Every book I learn that someone else came through.

Layered on top of this is the extraordinary industrialization of the Lemurians. They went from basically semi-civilized tree people to smelting cannons in what feels like a blink of an eye. And some of the Lemurians adapt so quickly to this new world that they more or less become Americans. Too much. Too fast. I can't buy it.

Still, author laziness aside and super-fast development aside, the book is still fun. The battles between the Grik and the Lemurians/Americans are fun. You just have to wade through a host of eye-rolling moments to get to the good stuff.

Two and a half stars rounded down to two. After reflection I just can't give this three stars. But here is the odd things. I can see myself reading that fourth book down the road somewhere. I kind of want to know what happens next; however, I have other books to read before I get there.

David says

I really enjoy the *Destroyermen* series, but man is Taylor Anderson milking this or what?

In book one, the USS Walker, an obsolete coal-burning destroyer dragged to an alternate Earth from 1942, along with her Japanese battlecruiser adversary, allied with a race of peaceful lemur-people against the

reptilian Grik. In book two, the war against the Grik continued, with a few chapters told from the POV of the crazy Japanese captain and the evil Grik.

Book three, *Maelstrom*, is basically the next chapter, and it's literally just another chapter in the story, albeit a 400-page chapter. The Americans and their Lemurian allies continue to prepare for the massive Grik invasion, the captain of the Amagi continues to chew scenery as a megalomaniacal psychopath, and the Grik continue to chortle and salivate at the thought of eating all their enemies.

There was a little bit of extra characterization, as it's hinted that the Grik are actually capable of learning and evolving. And the Walker meets more wayward visitors from Earth, and descendants of even earlier ones. Which is cool except it seems likely to be a recurring shtick - whenever the author needs to add a twist, hey, let's discover another ship or lost civilization that got yanked to this world from the old one.

Despite my griping, I still really enjoyed this book. It's full of sea battles, dashing heroism, mustache-twirling villainy, and all the stuff a fan of military SF should enjoy. You could make this a typical space opera just by moving it to space and making the Grik and the Lemurians aliens instead of products of an alternate evolutionary history on Earth. The *Destroyermen* series is almost in the planetary romance genre, except for all the emphasis on military tactics and nautical terminology.

It's great fun, but I'm looking at the six or more books ahead of me in the series and wondering if we will be plodding through this same war with the same adversaries for all of them.

The Pirate Ghost (Formerly known as the Curmudgeon) says

I am loving this series. *Maelstrom*, the third installment in the *Destroyermen* series started slower than the others, but maintained that ever building sense of dread growing like a slow burn. When the real battle finally eruptsoh... my.... God!

I've loved the war and battle scenes in this wonderful story, and this is the best one yet. An archeologist, historian and, believe it or not, a ballistics expert Anderson has threaded the needle between realistic warfare that matches reports from the logs of Lord Admiral Thomas Chocrone and Admiral Banbridge on the USS Constitution. The desperate fight has never been more desperate.

And, wrapped up in the fight were the ghosts of Joshua Lawrence on Little Round top in Gettysburg, Hannibal at Canea and Jim Bouie with Davey Crockett at the battle of the Alamo. Over the roars of cannon, and the clash of shield spear and sword the images of Midway and Iwo Jima, the hammering of cannon and starshells over Fort McHenry, Hammering of destruction in London as the brave few pilots in their spitfires struggle to save the city as the Luffwafe batter it again and again.

I'm certain that not all Historians and Archeologists have the wonderful talent at storytelling that Taylor Anderson has. It is a gift, and, this is a wonderful story of courage, heroism, sacrifice, death, sadness and honor. His characters are wonderful, warm and, even the cats, are very Human. You'll want to cheer for them, weep for them and pray with them as they battle the impossible odds of the coming invasion. He also manages to work in the issues and questions we all wrestle with today, and that have plagued mankind from our earliest days, things like racism, equality, who belongs in our midst and who does not, what an enemy is and the danger of judging a person too quickly. This is wonderful reading and I highly recommend it to anyone. This is surely a series I'm going to preserve for my son (and daughter) when they are old enough to

dare venture through the strange storms to lands never before seen, and battles nobody had ever foreseen.

And when the smoke clears and the book is done you'll have just one question....

"What the hell is going to happen in the next book?" As you rush to the bookstore.

I'll also add that, I may have heard better narrators, but the narrator here does a more than passable job and though he's limited in having different voices for the many characters, his Silva-voice has grown on me.

Neb says

The writing has really evolved in this third book. Nice Hitchcockian use of suspense, holding us on the edges of our seats until we just about can't stand it! It will be interesting to see where we go with the new cultures and developments in established ones. Yes, the technological achievements seem a bit accelerated at times, what with the limitations present, but this is science-fiction, so I'm willing to cut some slack in the name of moving things along using the core characters, which is far more appealing than having to continue with their descendants.

Also: love the shorter chapters! Still plenty long, but I can put the book down once in awhile.

Donna says

This is the 3rd book in the Destroyermen series by Taylor Anderson. I stumbled on to this series last year and I have been surprised that I have enjoyed this so much because the first book was one of those books that was completely outside of my comfy box. And now I am ready to read the 4th one.

I think this book was my favorite one so far. First, I love the constant battle between good and evil that the author manages to depict so well. I loved the battle scenes. They completely drew me in. I also like the characters and that they are 'down to earth' and normal. They have time traveled to this alternate world during WWII and are setting up shop so to speak among the friendly inhabitants, which leads them to war against the unfriendly. So far, I have completely enjoyed this series. The author is a great story teller.

D.w. says

I first thought to give this book a little higher rating and then I thought of the things that still gnaw at me about this book and the series.

Density... If you open this book and flip through the pages you will see great swaths of exposition and not a lot to break them up. This is poor writing and a disservice to we readers. One thing is that action does not happen without people speaking. Especially in this environment. That has to be balanced with endless meeting dialogue. Somewhere the author does not know the balance.

Infinite resources. Despite trying to put drama into this, the modern needs of our navy are met.

Inconsistency. Flashies are there to eat up the Grik who fall into the sea, but for Lemurians at night they won't?

Vocal cords. Amazingly more and more of the various leaders can speak without the aid of translators. Sure an American can learn spanish. But has the author ever gone to the zoo? How many OOK's can he make with his voice box and how many words like implacable would you use if you did not use the language it was in on a regular basis.

No one really dies. The author tells about the americans dying out, but there is always another around that can do the same job that the dead one had done. An infinite supply of americans.

No, unlike stories that make sense in this genre, like Forstchen's lost regiment where he had hundreds of skilled men who could start rebuilding a society when they transferred over to their alternate world, here Anderson has too few Americans doing way too much with an ally that is too advanced as well. I can buy that the Lemurians are tool users. I just can't buy that they can adopt and intergrate across the entire species in a year.

Then here is the biggest reason to say to the author, write better. He promised to end this series as a trilogy and suddenly the story doesn't end. It could have, but he didn't. He put too many elements in for the next book which was already being written by the time this was released. If a trilogy, be honest. He could very easily of destroyed the enemy in such a way that never would we need another part of this story again. That is the worst form of telling a story. They do end. This one should have.

Johnny says

The third installment in the *Destroyermen* series, *Maelstrom* is packed with as much action as the two previous books. Captain Matthew Reddy, once relegated to command of a four-stacker, coal-burning WWI vintage destroyer in the Pacific theater of WWII, a ship destined to tow targets or train cadets if it had not been pressed into service as part of an asymmetrical effort against a superior force, has become the Commander-in-Chief of Allied forces in a world that would have impressed Edgar Rice Burroughs, A. Conan Doyle, or Jules Verne in terms of imagination. A freak storm causes them to pass through a dimensional portal and into a world of Brobdingnagian monsters and alternative evolution (some "humans" as Lemurian-evolved and some as bi-pedal alligators. It's a fascinating mix of science-fiction and action-oriented military adventure.

Where the Walker, the four-stacker Reddy commands, was the dominant force in the first novel of the series, the second novel introduces the idea that a more powerful warship had entered the "portal" and recreated the asymmetrical problem the ship had faced during the WWII action. So, the bulk of this book deals with protecting the Walker's new allies and finding some way to redress the balance. Yet, the opening sequences introduce an unwelcome surprise that threatens to make the situation considerably worse. These books are both fascinating in the mix of tactics from WWII and innovative approaches to ancient tactics. They offer a mix of land battles and naval battles so that none of the action seems entirely predictable.

There are also human factors to keep one entranced. Not only is there a rivalry between the below-decks crew and the deck crew (aka "snipes" and "apes"), but there is what is appropriately to the period called the "dame" shortage. Will it eventually be resolved by discoveries of new stragglers in the dimensional warp or will there be concessions with regard to (for want of a better term) "interracial" relationships? For those who

have read the first two novels, it's even more interesting to see minor supporting characters start to "grow," as well as grow on you. But for those who might think a third book would become too formulaic and sentimental, be aware that death and destruction are constant companions. *Maelstrom* is, after all, about war and Taylor Anderson doesn't mince words about the costly sacrifices and heroic, though sometimes seemingly empty, acts of those who transcend themselves by protecting others.

And *Maelstrom* is, indeed, like a storm with high winds and dangerous waves. Just when one thinks the danger has been diminished in one hot spot, a new threat arises in another. Just when it seems like a character for whom one has empathy has breathed her/his last gasp, a surprising twist offers new, if sometimes transitory, hope. And, it sometime works the other way. Just when one thinks the back of the foe is broken, some unforeseen event or interference means that the protagonists have to become ever more creative. *Maelstrom* is full of surprises and I won't risk revealing them. All I can say is that this series continues to be worth the effort.

Mieczyslaw Kasprzyk says

Here we are, back in that parallel Earth occupied by cute and intelligent Lemurs (who turn out to be quite efficient soldiers) and those murderous, mindless, marauding lizards, the Griks. Our US sailors are doing a grand job defending the right whilst those nasty Japs have, logically, allied themselves with the dark side. All sarcasm aside, this is a very good read... what was initial entertainment-tinged-with-a-little-disbelief has, over the series, turned into engrossing and exciting reading. I thoroughly enjoyed the tension and the build-up that Anderson created; the final battle was genuinely edge-of-seat stuff and left me wanting more.

Carl Alves says

Maelstrom concludes a trilogy that ranks up as one of the best fantasy series I've ever read. Trapped in an alternate dimension, Captain Reddy is now the Supreme Commander of the allied forces made up of American Destroyer Men and various Lemurian nations against the reptilian Grik and the Japanese in their unholy alliance. Reddy and his team recruit more Lemurians to their alliance, and in the process come across human descendants of another ship that landed in this world a couple hundred years ago, along with Grik that aren't as evil as their enemies. All of this leads up to an epic battle to settle the score as they have to deal with the overwhelming numbers among the Grik, who now have armed their ships with cannons, and the more modern and powerful Japanese battle ship.

I always hesitate when I read the final chapter of a series that I really enjoy. I'm always wary that it's not going to live up to the legacy created by the previous books in the series. *Maelstrom*, although not quite as good as the first two novels, certainly finishes the trilogy strong. I liked the introduction of the human descendants of the ship that crashed into this world, even though they didn't play much of a role in the conflict. I liked the buildup to the final battle, and the epic final battle itself, which was well-conceived and well-plotted. The book was a little overly long for my liking, and I thought that it was a little slow in spots, but otherwise I thought it was a fitting conclusion that readers of the series will enjoy.

Carl Alves - author of *Two For Eternity*

I.F. Adams says

Woo, first new book to finish in a while (been re-reading a bunch of old stuff and skimming some history).

Anyways!

Another solid romp in the epic "Destroyermen" Universe. I'm a sucker for complex world building, and this does not disappoint with its clashes of empires. Tack on "uplifting" of a culture with modern-ish technology, another favorite trope of mine, and I'm pretty much hooked. The characters are starting to evolve a little bit and have some extra depth, but still are ultimately pretty two-dimensional. But hey, I'm here for the world building. The juxtaposition of an alternate earth with different intelligent critters (Lemurs vs Velociraptors? Why the hell not!) with world war 2 naval personnel transported via a storm ala "The Final Countdown" continues to entertain.

I also particularly liked that the author doesn't treat a single intelligent species as a monolithic culture/empire, making for a lot more complex and interesting world to observe and explore.

That said, these books frequently move slow, and while I get that it was an epic battle, taking 20% of the book for what's effectively a single battle scene got... tedious.

Anywho, 'nuff of my rambling.

Scott says

Wow now what, can't wait for book IV

Bob Lamothe says

It just keeps getting better. It's clear that Taylor Anderson had an epic in mind when he created this series, here he finishes book three yet it's clear the story has only begun.

This story is insanely good. Taylor's biography tells that he's a history professor which is probably what makes his story so rich. His description of war seems so authentic, both sides trying to achieve an advantage over the other with each advantage seeming at times overwhelming yet at others so fleeting. With the end of book 3 both sides have suffered but neither is out. It's a race between the Grik and their Japanese allies and the Americans and their Lemurian allies as to who will recover first and press the fight forward.

For now I have to put down *Destroyermen* and read my book club choice during which I'll be anxious to start *Distant Thunders*.
