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Space Marine (Warhammer 40,000) Details

Date : Published January 29th 1993 by Boxtree Ltd

ISBN : 9781852838409

Author : Ian Watson

Format : Paperback

Genre : Science Fiction, 40k, Fiction, Fantasy, Games, Role Playing Games

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From Reader Review Space Marine (Warhammer 40,000) for online ebook

Gareth Pengelly says

My favourite science-fiction book of all time.

Some of the later WH40k novels (I'm looking at you, Horus Heresy...) may be grander in scope and scale, with more characters, more fleshed out and more up-to-date as regards the current background fluff of the Warhammer universe. But Space Marine has a simple brutal honesty, as well as one key difference that separates it from the books which followed.

In the Horus Heresy series, our heroes are already Space Marines, the Adeptus Astartes; superhuman warriors, almost unkillable and as far above normal man as we are above the ants. We never see them as mortals, for they are not; from the moment we meet them, they are planet-striding colossi, demi-gods that crush all before them and live only for war.

Yet, when we meet our heroes in Space Marine, they are yet mortal, simply youths, with real flaws and weaknesses. Take Lexandro D'Arbequs, a wealthy, upper-hab dweller who used to go out hunting peasants with his well-to-do comrades.

All this changes when he is drafted into the Imperial Fists chapter of the Adeptus Astartes. From being used to having everything his own way, he is now thrown into a harsh and brutal regime of obedience and training, where he must prove his faith and courage at every step or die trying. Only should he prove his spirit willing, will he be granted the genetic and surgical modifications needed to elevate him from man to superman.

This process, this journey, is what makes this book, for me, such an enteraining read. Unlike any of the later WH40k books, this one delves right, right into the nitty-gritty of what it means to become a Space Marine. The inhumanity entailed in transcending humanity. One particular scene springs to mind; the second stomach is implanted, allowing a Marine to gain sustenance from absolutely anything that they eat.

They celebrate the implantation by having a feast of offal and excrement. I'm gagging just thinking about it, but that's the reality of the Astartes. They are not human, not any more.

But another thing I like about this book is love/hate relationship between the three youths drafted from the hive-world of Necromunda. Lex, Yeremi and Biff hate each other to begin with, but through their training - and the fact that they are the only links to each other's past - they form a grudging, yet steadfast, bond.

This book diverges from current WH40k canon at several points, as it was written back in the early days of the gaming system, when the universe and its inhabitants had yet to be finalised. In its pages you'll find Squats (now retconned from the WH40k Universe), Zoats (ditto). The Marines themselves make use of implanted organs and special abilities never mentioned in the current books.

But these differences should be celebrated, rather than put you off. This book is a real snapshot into the foundations of Warhammer 40,000. It is less righteous, less wholesome, than the books which followed.

A superb science-fiction novel, that can be read as an interesting account into the early days of WH40k, or

simply enjoyed as a stand-alone book on its own merit.

Andrew says

Fantastic story and writing, before GW employed 12 year olds to write their books.

Ian says

Has a 40k novel ever made you think? Likely not. This one will.

This will ruin all other 40k novels for you. This doesn't just have fun with the over-the-top setting, it dives full-on into the crazy, wallows in it, and then smiles at you with entrails sticking out between its teeth.

If you think about it, the 40k space marines are messed up. Basically, they abduct children, pump them full of drugs and turn them into masochistic, religious child soldiers. They charge into battle yelling "TO KILL IS TO PRAY". While they all come from males, they have their sexuality removed (due to the gene treatments). However, all the battle scenes are described in oddly sexual tones, with las-beams "piercing" hulls and exploding in glorious excitement.

It's a hard book to get through because at every turn you want to say "that's messed up!", while the novel goes about its business as if nothing strange happened. This is 40K before it was literally written for 14-year-olds. This is a war novel that doesn't dress up the fact that in the future, war is even less fun than it has ever been before.

Mel says

So awhile ago they did a Warhammer 40k roleplaying game and as much as I love Warhammer fantasy I thought it'd be fun to see the space version. I'm not one for miniture wargaming but I do love dark bleak scifi. My friend offered to loan me some of his books and suggested I read this first. While the book definitely had some flaws, there were no women, the prose was kinda klunky and the author had a rather Marquise de Sade unfortunate fondness for poo, it was still a fun read. The book made starship troopers look like a holiday camp. It was all about how horrible the good guys were, how terrible society is, and how many more even worse things there are out there. It did a brilliant job of setting out what a very bad place the warhammer 40k universe is. Building up each layer from the human society, to the demons, to the alien invaders. Unsurprisingly there wasn't much characterisation. The plot followed three different boys going through their space marine training and fighting, one from each class in society. The smart scumnik was my favourite. I liked that the lowest class was the smartest. The upper society boy got a bit too masochistic and the middle class got a big gay crush on the upper society guy. As I said not much in the way of characterisation but it was interesting to see how they developed. I have borrowed more novels and have already started the inquisition one, which actually has a female main character, yay! I'm hoping reading these will make me want to run the RPG.

Tepintzin says

This was the first of the many novels of the Adepts Astartes...and it is on some serious crack. The book is a fun enough read, an episodic story of three boys from the same hive world who are recruited to the Imperial Fists. There is scatology galore along with lots of sadomasochistic rituals and plenty of rites where Fists undergo naked. This is far, far less sexy than it sounds. There are also tyranids, daemons, and Chaos-worshiping Squats. I enjoyed the book, but feel the need to retreat to "Horus Rising" again as a tonic.

Martin Parker says

This is the first space marine book I ever picked up and I go back to it time and again. It gives some idea of what it takes to become a space marine and charts the training of three recruits from very different walks of life and turns them into superhuman warrior's.

A great story well written.

Eileen says

This book is full of weird shit. **Literally**.

Carl Barlow says

Gloriously bonkers. I'm pretty sure that Watson is taking the piss with this, but he does it gleefully and in a never less than an entertaining manner. He delights in dirty schoolboy humour, borders on the homoerotic, pushes boundaries of horror (especially where the fourteen year old target audience is concerned). Still, thinking about it, perhaps Watson's approach is really the only honest way to depict the grimdark galaxy of the 40th millennium: how could anybody maintain their sanity in such a universe? Even the Adeptus Astartes must succumb in one way or another - there are only degrees of *insanity*. Not canon any more (squats abound!), but still this should be read by any 40k fan willing to look toward the true dark side of this most stygian of settings, and because nobody else would dare write about Space Marines like Watson did.

Zare says

Imperial Fists are one of the mightiest Space Marines Chapters of the First Founding era.

In this very interesting book we follow three young boys (from three very different social classes from hive city of Necromunda) as they advance through the ranks of the Imperial Fists from Scout units to full Battle Brothers. They will each find and follow their own way (religious zealotry and combat pragmatism) and soon animosity caused both by their origins and by the interactions before joining Imperial Fists will be replaced by bond that will keep them together in the direst of circumstances.

Watson portrays the world of Warhammer 40000 in the grimdest possible light - there is truly no hope here, man is only one among untold billions and future of the race is at stake and dangerous he encounters are truly overwhelming.

Great novel (according to long-time W40000 fans description and story differs from current game rules so bear that in mind you purists :)).

Highly recommended.

Daniel says

Mracna knjiga smestena u daleku buducnost gde je covecanstvo stalno u ratu sa svima. Gde nije problem da se zrtvuje par hljada ili par miliona radi boljeg napretka. Di geneski inzenjering od dece stvara gromade koje skoro nemaju veze ljudima ali su zato savrsene ubilacke masine.

Sama prica prati tri klinca koji postanu regruti za taj vecni rat i njihova transformacija kako fizicka tako i mentalna.

Brutalno, sirovo a opet puno neke morbidne logike... i ako gledamo kakav je danasnji svet nesto ka cemo hrlimo.

Preporuka.

Michael Dodd says

Originally published in 1993, before Black Library even existed as a publishing house, Ian Watson's Space Marine was his second 40k novel and went on to be something of a seminal work, influencing countless stories to follow. These days it's really not 'canon' but there's no doubt about its story credentials. The tale of three Necromundan youths raised to become Imperial Fists from wildly differing backgrounds, it follows Biff, Lexandro and Yeremi as they progress through the trials required to become a Space Marine, and then various missions as first Scouts and then full battle brothers.

There's no doubt about it, this is a weird read for fans of modern-day 40k, even those who have been there throughout the setting's 30-year growth. Put aside all the weird not-quite-40k elements, though, and you're left with a startlingly original – if very strange – book that's both an impressive standalone story and something of a time machine allowing us to look back on the early stages of something decades in the making. The best way to read this is to try and forget that it's even 40k at all, and just enjoy it for the weird characters and bonkers action.

Read the full review at [https://www.trackofwords.com/2017/07/...](https://www.trackofwords.com/2017/07/)

Geoff Scott says

I have read this book about 4 times and will read it again

Ed says

I first read this when I was 10 or 11 and I'm pleased to say it remains a strange, delirious, hallucinatory SF novel, as weirdly haunting and evocative as Ian Watson's non-licensed work. If you enjoyed this, I would also recommend the Inquisitor trilogy, which in fact crosses over with this short novel at certain points.

CrumbleMcLumble says

Fucking gonzo semi erotic licensed sci fi with a lot of butt stuff

nooker says

When the publisher, Black Library, says: "Believe us when we tell you that Space Marine is quite unlike any other Warhammer 40,000 novel you've ever read." They really aren't kidding. This was written at the time when GW was still in its infancy in space. They really had just taken their fantasy line and dropped it in space and it shows.

The book itself is kinda split into 3 books within it. It starts on Necromunda at the time that the Confrontation rules were being developed (and man were those complicated!!). This is what drew me to the book as I am a huge Necromunda fan. You get a glimpse of how Necromunda was envisioned at the time and that's awesome. It quickly goes to the recruitment of 3 gangers which shows how the Imperial Fists increased their ranks. This was probably the most interesting part of the book, being given an initiate look at the recruitment and training process of a Chapter.

The second and third books see our heros (anti-heros?) chasing down an arch-heretic across multiple theaters of battle. There is an epic Titan battle that the characters take a direct part in. Tunnel fighting with Ambull riding squats. Even a run in with Chaos (and I'm very glad that GW went the sexual path for Slaneesh instead of how it depicted in these books!).

Well worth the read, even it is really odd.
