



Halo: Contact Harvest

Joseph Staten

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This is how it began...

It is the year 2524. Harvest is a peaceful, prosperous farming colony on the very edge of human-controlled space. But we have trespassed on holy ground--strayed into the path of an aggressive alien empire known as the Covenant. What begins as a chance encounter between an alien privateer and a human freighter catapults mankind into a struggle for its very existence.

But humanity is also locked in a bitter civil war known as the Insurrection. So the survival of Harvest's citizens falls to a squad of battle-weary UNSC Marines and their inexperienced colonial militia trainees. In this unlikely group of heroes, one stands above the rest...a young Marine staff sergeant named Avery Johnson.

Halo: Contact Harvest Details

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From Reader Review Halo: Contact Harvest for online ebook

Felipe Guerrero says

Vaya pues este libro a sido un viaje bastante divertido.

La historia es entretenida y al desarrollarse desde el punto de vista de ambos bandos le da un sentido interesante. Tiene momentos tristes y momentos de acción bien escrita.

La relación entre SIF y MACK (dos inteligencias artificiales que trabajan de manera conjunta en el planeta Harvest) fue de lo mejor de este libro.

Recomendable para los fans de la saga Halo y para quienes gusten del SCI-FI militar.

Brandon J. says

He has been through every kind of engagement imaginable against rebels to the U.N.S.C. An alcoholic spec-ops solider with no family and a bad attitude named Staff Sargent Avery, Johnson, has been assigned to stop pirates in the outer rim. Along with him his partner Nolan Byrne have been sent to raise a militia to stop the rebels. When Johnson finds out that the rebels are actually a deadly alien covenant that wants to destroy mankind. The Covenant are invading Harvest an outer edge farming colony and the U.N.S.C. has made their first contact and Johnson is against impossible odds to evacuate the planet and save the civilians. Halo: Contact Harvest promises readers that if you like Johnson you are going to learn more about him and you are going to like him more. I couldn't agree with that anymore the book started in a different atmosphere not usually associated with Johnson. He was not hooah and bullets he was depressed from mourning his aunt who had passed away and it really helps you appreciate his character more. A theme that commonly reoccurred to me was "When you are down you have to get up and help because there are people who depend on you." I found this to be one of my favorites in the Halo saga that if you want an easy read that is rewarding then this is the book for you. If sci-fi is not your piece of cake or just war books in general then you should just avoid this book because it has of both and plenty.

Jared Shilts says

The book by Joseph Staten, "Halo: Contact Harvest", depicts the first contact between humanity and the alien races of the Covenant. The story tells the third/first person perspectives of multiple characters throughout the book. It is the year 2524, and humanity has crossed into unknown star systems for colonization, but we are not alone. After fighting the Insurrection for years, The U.N.S.C have not made much progress. Once Sergeant Avery Johnson gets sidetracked from an Insurrectionist attack, he goes to visit his only family left, just to find them dead. Thinking he could have done more, Johnson goes back into service and trains militia men on the planet Harvest. Meanwhile, aboard the alien ship, Minor Transgression, a group of pirating Covenant plan to start a galaxy wide war. I recommend this book to any fan of Halo literature or science fiction in general. Note: this is the fifth book in the original Halo novel series

Pam Vass says

This book is about colonies that manages the food production for humans and are forced to do battle with an enemy that chooses to revolt against them. Avery Johnson is a part of the Marines group that responds to the attack and the battle begins. Avery is the protagonist in this particular book that is a part of the Halo series. The antagonist is a group named "Kig-Yar and they want what the Marines are protecting, which is the food supply. The book is part of the science fantasy and the style of the words is definitely for an older teenager who does not mind all of the military jargon that is used throughout the book. The tone is fairly caustic over the entire story that is centered on combat and protecting territory. I did not like this book because it too closely resembled the military and I had enough of that after twenty plus years of duty myself. It certainly would appeal to a young man that glorifies the military and finds anything connected really exciting.

Will Johnson says

I really shouldn't be surprised but then again, I always set myself up for these things. Halo: Contact Harvest is less a book but a series/video game bible/layout that, I imagine, was thrown aside when better ideas came along. I don't want to say the book is written poorly because writer Joseph Staten is actually quite talented. His universe building skills, as shown in the second Halo game, for example, are excellent.

His problem: the universe he's built is boring and as confusing as shit. I remember really liking Halo 2 at first. I felt the writers really expanded a universe that was mostly a rip off of Aliens in the first place. But then I started getting a bit confused and realized that SHOWING me a universe is one thing but hearing/reading about it is another. Halo 2, while an underrated game story-wise (the Covenant sections are interesting though not compelling), was definitely a mess. They lost track of their hero and focused on aspects that were made so utterly confusing and deep that, well, it wasn't fun. And let's not get started on Halo 3, in which they had to a)continue this craziness established in Halo 2 and b)erase all the terrible mistakes from Halo 2 in some exposition-heavy way to make Halo 3 a bit more accessible to newbies of the XBox 360 and to the now critically mixed franchise. I always ignored the books because I always found myself more frustrated with Halo's mythology as opposed to drawn to it. Also, I was shocked that despite the Halo franchise being one of my all-time favorites in the video game world, I was very unattached to it emotionally. I liked Master Chief but he is a very thin hero. . .not much depth there. He's cool but is he lovable. There was Cortana. . .and who knows what the fuck happened to her at the end of Halo 2. I know Halo 3 told me but. . .I still don't really know. And then there was the tricky Arbiter, who, himself, is a mythological symbol that makes you want to tear your eyeballs out. He was cool and I liked his missions in Halo 2 but. . .yeah. . .not much there either EXCEPT Keith David's awesome voice. The main three characters were really devoid of anything other than COOL moments. And the Halo games outside the Master Chief vein were pretty unbearable. A lot of people seemed to like ODST but, frankly, I had no interest in exploring the Halo world any further WITHOUT at least someone COOL since emotion was too hard to ask. I didn't even finish Halo Wars and I will probably skip Halo: Reach since it is a prequel and prequels, especially loaded with anti-climaxes, dense mythologies, and, once again, none of the original characters, just sounds like crap on a stick. So I think I just explained why I skipped the Halo books! I don't want to read about this universe that is confusing and dense and has no emotion behind it. . .especially when I can't fire weapons that blow shit up! But, somehow, I bought two Halo books. I bought one called The Ghost of Onyx, and this book, Contact Harvest. I initially bought Contact Harvest because it had Sgt. Avery Johnson on the cover. Now this was interesting to me for two reasons. One, I was GOING to name my first child Avery (and my last name is Johnson) so that would have been weird. . .and it had nothing to do with

Halo. Second, Johnson seemed to be the only genuinely fun NPC in the whole Halo universe. You cared for him when he was there. . .which wasn't enough, frankly. And, naturally, they fucking killed him at the end of Halo 3. Figures the first main character, of sorts, to die would be black! But in the video game, Johnson was an Apone-rip-off who was kind of fun. But as I started to read his story in Contact Harvest, which is a prequel by the way, I instantly regretted it. Some people, who are rip-offs of other caricatures in the first place, can't be made three dimensional. Johnson is a drill sgt who says witty things and shoots stuff. . .yet in Contact Harvest he has a tragic past and a way with the laaaadies. It's all kind of sad really. And now that I've read Johnson in all kinds of different situations outside of mindlessly shooting elites. . .I don't like him anymore. Once again, the creators behind Halo have OVERDONE the mythology. Sgt. Johnson is no longer interesting to me now because he is OVER written now. Ugh. The rest of the book doesn't help much considering half of it is about Covenant politics. And the writer fails to let the story flow. . .he insists on writing a sentence and then writing eighteen paragraphs on Covenant society that led to that one sentence. It's really distracting and annoying. It is not exaggeration when I say this book really could have been 100 pages shorter. But pesky Joseph Staten can't let us turn the page without knowing how the Elites had a war once or how Sgt. Johnson masturbated once when he was 14! Plus there is this inane subplot involving an Unggoy (the little creatures for the Covenant) and a flying creature called a Huragok and their friendship even though both, to facilitate the narrative of future games, must die. And then there are the AIs (like Cortana) that kind of Moonlighting/love-hate each other. Really bad. There is no one to root for in this book, nothing physical or emotional to grab on to, and the story, what little there is (something to do with Covenant/UNSC first contact out on the frontier of human space), is underwhelmed by the oppressive back story. I am seriously questioning reading the second Halo book I bought. . .I'd advise to ignore this one if possible.

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Josh Morrey says

A good story, even though it's about Sgt. Johnson rather than the Master Chief. The writing is very well done, excellently descriptive and very entertaining. My only complaint about the book is the unwarranted and absolutely unnecessary gratuitous sex scene at the end of the story, in the epilogue of all places. The tale was over, and it was a good one. There was no need whatsoever to tack this filthy scene onto the end of. It served no purpose, didn't add any sort of closure at all as there was none needed, and didn't lead into anything else. It was completely pointless, except maybe for Joseph Staten to try his hand at romance writing. If you read the book, which I do recommend, do not read the epilogue. It will only waste your time.

Andrew says

Halo Contact Harvest was a decent book. I would not go as far as saying it was great nor horrible. It had lots of details packed into it. This could be good or bad depending on how you look at it. In some parts you get lost in details and in others there are no details at all. Another problem was transitions. They were out of nowhere and since the story switches between two characters, Avery Johnson and Deacon Dadab, it was very confusing at first.

The story had some random moments that didn't contribute to the story. The first one was Johnson's aunt's death. It was a brief moment of the story but it was still pretty much meaningless. The two story's are Johnson was assigned to go to harvest while Dadab is an Ungoy solider who found a lost ship and got where it's coordinates were set. Eventually they meet and fight.

The ending was pretty good too. The A.I. conversations in the terminal was interesting. At the end when they use this feature is very cool. It is very different than how other war books end in a huge battle. Both endings are good in their own way but the A.I. conversations was new and a good way to go. So in conclusion I would not recommend this book to someone. I disliked the transitions and I felt there were too many details that took away from the story and experience and also add that with random side details and it is not that great.

Rambdenb says

In the book A man named Avery Johnson is part of the U.N.S.C. (United Nations Space Command) and he discovers a group of aliens on the planet Harvest. The aliens are known as the Covenant, a religious war faction who forcefully convert or kill those who do not believe in the same god. The UNSC do not know that planet Harvest is sacred ground to the Covenant and they are trespassing. They get locked in a battle of life and death where Sgt. Avery Johnson and a handful of recruits help fight off the Covenant.

Jarno VA says

Halo always had a special place in my heart.

It all started when my father bought the xbox360 for the release of Halo 3. Of course I got to play too, and my 9 year old self was immediatly sold. It might've been the weapons, it might've been the thrill to "explore" the new world, anyway I sticked to it through my entire child- and teenhood. It has accompanied me many days, playing every game on legendary over and over again, cursing at the online matchmaking and wasting precious time as my parents would say.

After a couple of years, I reach my 18th birthday and I get this trilogy bundle as a present, which contained Contact Harvest, Cole Protocol and Ghosts of Onyx. And I can tell you one thing for sure, it was definitely not a waste of time.

The Halo universe has grown so much on me and I am truly relieved this book is as good as I hoped it would be.

I love the way of storytelling, it creates a wonderful backstory for Avery Johnson, someone who I admired through the games, you get to see the war from the Covenant's side of view, the ascension of the Prophets,

rampancy of A.I. and many more.

It's a book I would highly recommend for anyone who shows interest in the Halo series, especially of you have already played the games.

I'm not a critic, I'm just here to report my experience with the book. And well, it was a damn good one.

Melisa Ramonda says

Sif and Mack are the best of it n.n

Look, I find the Avery Johnson from the games as a great character, still I don't think this book helped me a lot to know more about him. This story was very different from the previous entries, maybe because it was all focused on human and alien characters. The main difference I spotted were the sexual innuendos, the information about alien reproduction and... well, for my taste, a poorly placed scene that maybe it was completely unnecessary at the end of the book. I'm not saying it was a bad idea to bring sexuality to the table, but it was a huge ass change from the previous books, mostly focused in the technically asexual SPARTANS.

But still, Sif and Mack. I love how every author has a different approach on the AIs and how they work and react. Really liked that ^^

Jon Cole says

I've read a nearly embarrassing amount of books set within video game franchises and it's safe to say that this is the best one so far. Like most other Halo books, the weakest element of this novel is the disparate yet loosely connected parallel storylines centered on different characters. Clearly, Staten needed to cover a lot of ground with this prequel to the VG series, but the short sequences with unfamiliar characters detracted from the pacing to some extent.

Aside from that, however, Contact Harvest succeeds on quite a few levels. Staten manages to characterize and humanize Sergeant Avery Johnson, who had only been loosely defined in Halo. He manages to write a story about the series's classic "rampant AI", an aged construct who exhibits human-like tendencies and god complexes. Furthermore, he produces a moment with these AI that is far more emotionally cathartic than any other moment of "robot love".

Ultimately, Contact Harvest proves to be a book that I wouldn't be embarrassed to recommend to friends who are interested in the Halo franchise. Staten's first novel is not only well written, but adds a fair amount of much needed context and infrastructure to the sometimes silly aspects of a video game story.

Pika says

At first I was going to give 4 stars to this book because the first half was pretty boring; pretty much no action. Later, I found out that the beginning was a very important element because it introduced the characters, plot, story, but most importantly, relationships between the character. At the end when friends die, it was emotionally sad. The second half I have to say, is much better than the first because it finally reveals humanity's first contact with the Covenant, which is the main point of the novel. Many fights with vivid

language allowed me to picture everything happening, and I was able to know the alien and human side of the beginning of the war that would soon become known as the Halo universe.

TempOcean says

This is a story about what happened before Halo: Combat Evolved took place. It is about humanity's first contact with The Covenant on the human colony-world named Harvest. It's a book to die for . . . so read it!

Tina says

Though hardly a psychologically-deep drama, this part of the Halo novel franchise has more personal depth than its predecessors. My biggest complaint with the previous novels was that depth was lacking - no one is really fleshed out. Now, Avery isn't any Jane Eyre or Leopold Bloom in terms of intimate understanding, but, unlike most of the characters in the other novels, he is more than a cardboard cut-out. And one can argue that his rather stoic personality is a result of his past (which, though we are given hints, it is never properly brought to focus, unfortunately) and his military persona. The other characters weren't all that deep though, more often tropes of action sci-fi than realistic people (eg. Byrne, Jenkins) but for this type of novel they were done properly and served their purpose. You don't really read these novels for depth anyway, am I right?

One of my favorite aspects was the Covenant characters. They weren't too humanized (which I was afraid of) so it was great to see their perspective and their mindset. The previous novels had a bit of this, but the fact that there were a couple sympathetic aliens in the novel was the book's strongest aspect. I really cared about Lighter Than Some (so cute!) and I thought the female Kip-Yar's internal thoughts were pretty awesome and insightful to how their culture functioned. It also makes sense to show the aliens' worlds/lives because it adds another dimension to the story, making it more interesting.

I also liked was how "adult" the human characters were. The other books seemed almost censored, as if the authors were afraid of (or encouraged away from by the publishers) putting in too much violence (or even a hint of sexuality) for fear of younger readers (or something), which I think is total bullshit. It's a war novel; it's supposed to be gritty. This novel, while **far** from gritty, at least had some "adult" themes and moments. Let's hope the next ones follow suite.

AND, though it wasn't the best sex scene ever (far from it - though it was a little hilarious), at least this novel HAD one. Yay! The humans are actually human beings and like to get it on! I'm still hoping for a Spartan sex scene...

And, I must say, I loved the little AI love story. It was, to be girly for a second here, utterly adorable. It also served to show the depth of the AI's human emotions, and raises interesting questions about their existence.

Anyways, if you're reading this novel, I'm pretty sure you've read the other 4 or 5, so this review should be considered in the context of the series.

If I just picked this novel up as a stand-alone, I probably wouldn't have rated it as high, but for a Halo novel, I enjoyed it. The last line of the novel was super corny though. Just putting that out there.

Apribbernow says

I read “Contact Harvest” by Joseph Staten. The majority of this book takes place on the planet Harvest, after Avery Johnson fails to follow the order to shoot an insurrectionist because there were too many civilians around, and was sent there to train the police who volunteered to become the only force on the planet to fight the insurrectionists. There are various destinations around Harvest that this book takes place such as the space station orbiting Harvest, the base that the training occurs on and the main hall where all of Harvest's festivities occur. The situation on Harvest is about to get much more dire than even Staff Sergeant Avery would have predicted when the Covenant invade.

The main character that this book follows is Staff Sergeant Avery Johnson who is an African-American man serving in the Marines. Sergeant Johnson deals with many different problems internal and external. Some other important characters in the story are Staff Sergeant Bryne who is one of Johnson's comrades, Jenkins who is a man who has lived on Harvest all his life and is looking to join to militia to protect the planet, and also Mack, Harvest's AI (Artificial Intelligence) who runs everything on the planet Harvest and Al Cygni is a female ONI (Office of Naval Intelligence) officer that runs many of the missions throughout the books. There are also multiple breaks in the book that look at the conflict through the Covenant's so there are also many alien characters that are briefly making appearances in the book.

Most of the story takes place on planet and there is very few things in the time or placing of events that affect the story except the brief skirmish that was in outer space and caught Avery and Brynes off guard because they were not used to shooting a gun in a zero-gee environment and were flung around the ship at first. Otherwise the only thing that would be different would be the technology because this book takes place in the years around 2500 and our technology is much more advanced like the automatic farm equipment that are all run together by the planet's AI and the weaponry and transportation is all much more advanced though with the same ideas as future technology such as helicopters, trains, and cars.

The main idea of this story is to keep fighting even though the odds may say that you are doomed because the people on this planet are constantly fighting against steep odds. The enemy they are fighting outnumber us and are much more technologically advanced than us. The people that are volunteering to fight against the insurrectionists have to look fear in the face everyday in this story because they are actually going to end up fighting a threat that seems impossible to be defeated.

I would recommend this story to any other person that is a fan of the Halo series, like me, or also anyone who enjoys reading science fiction especially if they enjoy a lot of fast paced action with good descriptive words and a rich back story to the Halo story that I have come to love as more than just the video game series but also as the book series.
