



The Emperor Expects

Gav Thorpe

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Book 3 of The Beast Arises

The Imperial Navy cuts through the chaos on Terra and strikes back against the ork invaders, in a daring plan that could turn the tide of war against the greenskins.

As ork ships lay waste to world after world, heading inexorably towards Terra, Imperial citizens despair. The High Lords become desperate to prove that victory is possible, no matter the cost. A massive Navy fleet is assembled – their mission to make a definitive strike against the orks at Port Sanctus, an area of enemy-held space. But when the Imperial armada arrives, they find themselves outclassed and outmanoeuvred – can human courage and faith possibly prevail against such terrible odds?

It's the first attempt by the Imperium to make a definitive strike against the orks, and it creates a novel full of naval action, coupled with Inquisitorial action as a cadre of agents arrive on Terra to bring the High Lords into line...

The Emperor Expects Details

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ElGoblinVolador says

Tercer libro de la saga de la Bestia y en esta ocasión me ha costado bastante más que los dos anteriores, pero es algo que me suele pasar con Gav Thorpe.

El libro tiene un ritmo bastante pesado, en especial al principio, siendo lo único importante las tramas de Terra (magnifico Vangorich, como siempre)

Es a partir de los últimos 5 capítulos en los que el libro vuelve a coger un buen ritmo haciendo que lo devores, y gracias a esto se lleva 3estrellas y no 2.

Como los anteriores el final solo hace que desees ler el siguiente libro de la saga

Dylan Murphy says

By the gods what a book! Mr. Gav Thorpe wields the Imperial Navy better than any Lord High Admiral and plays politics on Terra with the best of the Grand Masters and Inquisitors. What a treat to read! The Emperor Expects was a fantastic installment in Black Library's newest Narrative Event "The Beast Arises" and it does NOT disappoint.

While there are something that I definitely would have liked to see a little more of, namely our Space Marines we were introduced to in "Predator, Prey", The Emperor Expects made leaps and bounds as far as the actual plot of the overall story and did it damn well! It has been quite some time since we got to see some Imperial Navy close up or in any great length, and I think that made it all the better here. The Imperial Navy was awesome in TEE, though it wasn't just the colossal void warfare that made it a page-turner. The politics involved in the Imperial Navy was extremely well done, and was just as enjoyable to read as the Imperium's super weapons bring brought to bear on the greenskins (if not more so!). I think I would have liked a few extra pages for a small plot line involving the fighter/bombers that the 'Colossus' was carrying, as that would have been a really nice touch, but I can't fault Gav for wanting to keep it more personal with the smaller named crew.

The politics on Terra were absolutely riveting, and had quite a few twists and turns by the end that I did NOT expect. I really can't wait to see where Lansung, Vangoriach, Wienand, and the newcomers go. Though I think Vangoriach and Beast Krul have a special interest, as I understand that there is something pretty big going on with the Officio Assassinorum at this point in the 40k timeline! And I guess I'll finish with the fact(yes, a fact), that The Emperor Expects has possibly the best cliffhanger ending I've seen in any Black Library fiction. Really can't wait to dive in on The Last Wall!

Thanks for the read Mr. Thorpe!

And sorry for any name misspellings, I am terrible at remembering the spelling of names!

Abhinav says

You can read the full review over at my blog:

<https://shadowhawkshade.wordpress.co...>

The first two novels in the Beast Arises series proved themselves to be a good introduction to an Imperium that is drawn into a massive galactic conflict against the resurgent Ork threat some 1500 years after the Heresy and after the Emperor broke the Orks in the Ullanor Crusade. With Dan Abnett's *I Am Slaughter* we met a lot of the early players and with Rob Sanders' *Predator, Prey* we saw their narratives develop even as more characters were added and the story increased vastly in scope.

Gav Thorpe's novel *The Emperor Expects* is the third in the series and definitely the best novel so far. Both Dan and Rob are very good at depicting big battle scenes, but Gav takes things up a few notches in this novel, not to mention that he also gives us a fantastic naval battle to read about as the Imperial Navy finally take the battle the Orks. Even outside of the set-piece action we have some extremely well-written narratives for all the characters as the politicking on Terra deepens and the Space Marines of various Chapters prepare to respond as well.

Note: Some spoilers from the previous novels and this novel are mentioned here.

Compared to the previous two novels, *The Emperor Expects* is an incredibly-focused novel with three main narratives. The first is the Imperial Navy's response to the Ork incursions all over the Segmentum Solar which results in a massive counter-attack at the Port Sanctus shipyards, a key location in the conflict to deny the Ork advance. The second is Captain Koorland, the last of the Imperial Fists, calling together all the successor chapters of the Imperial Fists Legion to hash out their own response to the Orks. And the third deals with the politicking at Terra as matters heat up for both Inquisitor Wienand and for the Master of the Assassins, Drakan Vangorich. And I loved that. There are almost no distractions from these plots, and the story moves at a rapid pace, which was something that was sorely needed since the previous novels tended to take many a detour along the way.

Gav Thorpe is no stranger to fleet action, having written some short stories and brief scenes in various novels before. With *The Emperor Expects* however, I feel that he delivered a rousing narrative that really does its best to impress and amaze. We start off being introduced to elements of one of the patrol fleets of Segmentum Solar, represented by Captain Kulik of the Colossus and then onwards to Admiral Acharya who commands one of the senior fleets that patrols close to the Terran Sector. There is clear rivalry between the two fleets and Gav lets it all unfold in a really nice way. There are no abrupt turns anywhere, but you do get lots of tension and excitement, especially once the two fleets have to work together to retake the Port Sanctus shipyards which have been invaded by a significant Ork force led by one of their new terrifying attack moons.

Daniel O'Brien says

A step up from the second book in the series. Some story threads are starting to come together and some characters are hanging around long enough to actually develop an opinion about them. Still a bit wooden, superficial, and scatter shot. And there remain too many stories being told at once for the brevity of each

entry.

Thus far the series is entertaining and I'll continue to read it, but it's far from compelling and several leagues below the likes of Gaunt's Ghosts and the Honorverse, let alone the likes of Dresden Files.

Tomas says

This one delves into more of the Imperium's continuing drama and showcases the Imperial Navy, which we don't often get to see. I like the dynamics at work between the admirals and captains serving under them, although I wish there had been a little more battle action during the book. We do get to see some very interesting Inquisition-related and Assassin-related things going on though, which I am a huge fan of since Vangorich is my favorite character so far.

Taddow says

Kudos to Gav Thorpe! This book was a breath of fresh air to this series. Not that the first two books were bad (and I mean no offense to their authors, Dan Abnett and Rob Sanders, who I think are talented authors whose works I enjoy) but they lacked something to make their stories epic and amazing as the event they were describing. I think that the naval battles, the upping the ante with the various political intrigues going on on Terra and the portrayal of Koorland's actions to invoke his Primarch's final contingency plan capture and relay the epic event shaking the Imperium and humanity's survival. I hope the rest of the books in the series build and continue on this momentum.

Darkcharade says

The third book in the series is one of the best so far. The majority of which deals with the imperial Navy's first major fight with the Ork incursion and the ongoing political intrigue on Terra. Gav has done an amazing job fleshing out characters previously introduced as well as bringing in his own. The space battles are well explained and exciting. This is the type of novel I was looking for in this series.

Andrey Nalyotov says

I would have never believed it, but if someone would have told me that I gonna totally immerse into the 'Beast Arises' cycle from BL, after the disappointing start with first book from Abnett and third book being written by Gav Thorpe (very talented fella - but with him it is hit or miss) - I would have laughed about the total impossibility of that. Especially comparing to the interest in Horus Heresy.

But guys, I don't know how, I don't know what happened - but the third book in the new 'The 'Beast Arises' cycle from BL **is totally and unprecedentedly amazing!**

I take my hat off to Gav. He has done what I thought was impossible - now, in the best traditions of quality TV shows, I will wait for the new book with baited breath. And March can't come soon enough...

But let's get to it point by point. I will start with epic preface:

Echoes of future fates... Metamorphosis is the most powerful adaptation the universe possesses. As a response to threat, metamorphosis allows prey to become predator... Those that cannot lift themselves above their past are doomed to be swallowed by it - don't know who made the research on create this preamble - Gav or other authors from the team, but it is great and truly work with the tone of this novel.

Which leads to me praising Thorpe for the epic scale of research and cooperation that he has done to write that book.

Next we have a very magnificent view on Imperial Navy at that era and the stuff I love the most - **SHIPS!** . Description of 'Colossus' a true Oberon class rarity is impressive and breathtaking at the same time. Same with the other classes, after all that's an Imperial Navy novel.

It is definitely as author said himself - that he had a thing for the Age of Sail since he was a teenager, and as his author's dedication in *The Emperor Expects* attests, the *Hornblower* and *Ramage* books were frequent, influential reading for him. And he done his stuff outstandingly. I can't wait for his Imperial Navy cycle - about some unlucky crew in the service of his Imperial Majesty God Emperor of Mankind.

But the most formidable novel become then it gets to the characters and storyline. I never thought that the incomprehensive first book would be so masterfully led to great and interesting events. Which left you wanting for more.....

The characters are a strong part of this book. They are truly... - human. Yes, that's exactly it - Gav has created a believable characters who are truly alive on each page. That's not only the grandmasters of the cycle - Vangorich, Wienand and Krule. It's the proud (or not so much) spirit of Imperial Navy - Captain Rafal Kulik, first lieutenant Saul Shaffenbeck, admiral Price. They are so alive and 'human' - that I definitely want to read about them in the follow up novels. Even if some of them made bad decisions. *After all - they have an impossible mission and hard (sometimes too proud and stupid) leadership to dealt with.*

Even High Lords , in this case a High Admiral Lansung have a time to shine. Being a prick doesn't mean he is not a pro in his job. After all - he is a High Admiral! And he get's his position being good at it.

All of that leads us to another great point of '*The Emperor Expects*' - **insufferable state of Imperium government.....** As it was discussed by half of the characters in this and previous novels - where should be a general change. And quickly - especially considering the ending of Gav's novel. Author has created an alarming display of incompetence shown by the major players on Terra.

Another side of the coin - wondrous depiction of internal and external struggle of 'true' imperial heroes (if you could call the, that) - Wienand and Vangorich. This two are and gonna be a real pain in the ass for some of the High Lords in the very near future.

And of course battle scenes - I concur with lot of other fans, that Thorpe depiction of actual struggle between human and inhumans has gone a long way from blank repeatance of his first novels to a very imposing description on that side.

Now, after the 3 novels in the cycle I really want to see a book from the orcs point of view. View from the imperial side works splendidly so far, but it's time to get into the brains of the species that now bring Imperium to the brink of destruction.

Gav Thorpe - you are now an amazing and fan friendly author in my view. And I can't wait for the '*Angels of Caliban*'

Patrick Rauland says

I really enjoyed this book. All sorts of awesome space battles with giant fleets. Reminded me a bit of Battlestar Galactica. I really enjoyed that and yet more political intrigue.

Can't go wrong with Gav Thorpe.

Alexander van der Pol says

Amazing how it got me into the imperial navy and made me respect them a lot more. The inquisition story line could be a little better though, for the Emperor's sake the are his will incarnate.

DarkChaplain says

Review also published here

The Emperor Expects is the first book in the *The Beast Arises* series that I honestly enjoyed without that nagging feeling of something being *off* and somewhat unfulfilling about it. It did not blow me away, truth be told, but it made some solid steps towards progressing the series.

The Emperor Expects had a sense of momentum that its two predecessors lacked. Things are moving more quickly and characters finally make their plays, rather than being stuck preparing. The Imperium is finally starting to move towards countering the Ork threat. Captain Koorland, last survivor of the Imperial Fists, takes an opportunity to convene with the other sons of Dorn. The Inquisition finally moves into focus and provides a different look on Terra's current state and politics.

Meanwhile, the Imperial Navy is gathering to strike back against an ork attack moon, featuring some very likeable characters next to some that deserve some solid shin-kicks.

It is the first real navy-focused book in a very long time, and I am quite alright with that, even though I was never particularly fond of the drawn-out stellar engagements on paper.

Still, Gav Thorpe executed the sense of void warfare as well as I could have hoped, and both his and the Imperium's gambits payed off for me as the reader.

Seeing captain Kulik's relationship with both his second in command Shaffenbeck and his mentor, admiral Price, develop throughout the novel was interesting and at times genuinely funny. The inter-navy rivalries and power plays that clog the system similar to how things have been going on Terra, really contributed to making this short novel enjoyable and relatable beyond what the previous books managed.

Back on Terra, the focus shifts from Drakan Vangorich to Inquisitor Wienand, who represents her order among the High Lords. She has featured in both previous books, albeit more lightly in the second. Following her entanglements with the High Lords' political plays and those of the Inquisition itself was entertaining and captivating. It is the first good look at the inner workings of the Inquisition post-Heresy, before the reformations that will shape them the way we are used to them from Abnett's *Eisenhorn* novels, for example. I honestly liked this plotline and the things that evolved from it. They add to the tension and provide another layer of intrigue.

On the other side, we have Captain Koorland of the Imperial Fists, who was rescued by the Adeptus Mechanicus in the prequel, *Predator, Prey*. Unlike that novel, he actually plays a role here. I found his interactions with the now-restored Magos Biologis Laurentis to be massively enjoyable, no less because it reflects a unique bit of.. friendship between Astartes and Tech Adept. Or probably the closest you can get to

being friends with a hyperlogical machine brain at any rate.

Not just that, Koorland (also known as 'Slaughter') begins preparations for a conclave of Chapter Masters. He invites the successors of the Imperial Fists Legion to convene to discuss the Ork threat and stand in defense of the Segmentum Solar.

The previously introduced Black Templars and Fists Exemplar are in attendance, and joined by the Crimson Fists and Excoriators, both of which had previously been given the spotlight in the *Space Marine Battles* series. I am afraid to say that I have neglected both *Rynn's World* and *Legion of the Damned* in my reading, so I might not catch all the nuances between M32 and M41 versions of the Chapters in future novels. For now, though, that did not pose any problems whatsoever.

Introducing these Chapters was a logical step in my opinion, and just provides another angle to make *The Beast Arises* both familiar and alien in tone and theme.

As for the orks, I am happy to say that I finally felt they were a genuine threat here. There were some melee boarding engagements, but most of the waaagh for Port Sanctus was down to naval actions. The orks finally got the opportunity to show off their cunning against proper admirals and fleet commanders, resulting in more than just "they are so big and green" moments. The staggered realizations of the orks' strategical behavior were well executed and believable.

At the end of the book, though, I felt like there should have been a bit more on various points. I was surprised to see Koorland's plotline end so early in the book, and Vangorich, while having pretty good scenes, was a little underused. Not that this could really be helped, considering we know his destination and he will not reach it before the final two novels. Strong focus on him cannot be maintained on the same level without his arc being dragged out and repetitive, I think.

I would have liked to see some more AdMech scenes, as they only appeared early on in Koorland's plotline by necessity.

But then, those are nitpicks that did not drag the novel down much. I still enjoyed it a heck more than the previous two, and think that the series is finally rolling on, after the previous setup installments. *The Emperor Expects* is a genuinely good showing by Gav Thorpe, and continues the upwards tendency of the series so far.

Dylan says

Dang, i got a little behind in doing reviews. I blame the Expanse series. (so good)

I really enjoyed this book. I wasn't sure what to expect, since the second volume was a little bit of a mixed bag... but this one had a whole lot more of the political intrigue and plotting that i really really enjoyed about Abnett's first volume.

And, did Gav Thorpe just acknowledge the first openly gay female inquisitor to the warhammer 40k universe? damn. well done sir! i wish it hadn't taken so long!

A real stand out book among Thorpe's work. This was a very quick read for me.

Blitzwitch says

6/10

Will Pollard says

The Emperor Expects is the third book in The Beast Arises series and maintains the level of quality set in the first two entries in the series. I will say up front though, that the page count is still an issue for me; at two hundred and twenty two pages, it's even shorter than the previous book.

The narrative moves between three different story threads. The Adeptus Mechanicus and the survivors of the events of book one, Vangorich and the continuing political machinations on Terra and Captain Kulik, commanding officer of the Imperial navy vessel Colossus.

There was no part of the book that felt like a chore to read but there were some chapters that I looked forward to more than others, with my favourites being any featuring Kulik and the Imperial navy arc of the story.

Again, the action and the intrigue is equally well written but I think what really helped me along with this book, is that I'm a fan of Gav Thorpe's style of writing. I feel he handles character development and action equally well and seeing that he's written a book is often a good enough reason for me to pick it up.

Jean-Luc says

This is the 3rd book in the year-long event known as The Beast Arises. The Orks are kicking the Imperium's ass across the galaxy, and Drakan Vangorich, master of the Officio Assassinorum, manipulates Admiral Lansung into *finally* leading a fleet to relieve Port Sanctus, an Imperial shipyard under threat by the Orks.

The ironies are starting to get to me. We've got The Beast itself, and also Beast Krule. The Beast announces itself with "I am Slaughter!", and Koorland's wall name is Slaughter. What else? I'm sure there are others I'm missing. And yes, Koorland is alive! He survived! Against all odds, he's alive! The very last Imperial Fist who can trace his lineage directly to Rogal Dorn, *the* Imperial Fist, but he is alive, and he is reaching out to the Imperial Fists successor chapters!

There's also the sideplot of Vangorich dealing w/ the Inquisition, but that's not as important as the other parts.

What exactly does The Emperor expect? Right before the Imperial Navy engages the Ork fleet defending a deff star, I expected an inspirational speech to rival Bill Pullman from Independence Day. That is very much *not* what we got... but it was handled so friggin well that I was knocked off my ass.

Although I have read many, many stories by Gav Thorpe (Warhammer Fantasy stuff in Hammer and Bolter, Avenging Sons in Space Marines: The Omnibus), this is the first time reading a full book by him. Yes, it's a novella, but it's still a full book. And it is excellent!

