



Warrior Brood

C.S. Goto

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First in a series of Deathwatch titles. When the Deathwatch Space Marines are sent to investigate a vital outpost on a lonely planet, they find they have been betrayed. Can they escape the ravaging hordes of giant bug like monsters called Tyranids and find the traitor who lurks in the heart of the Imperial forces?

Warrior Brood Details

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Author : C.S. Goto

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From Reader Review Warrior Brood for online ebook

Michael T Bradley says

Others have lambasted this book in great detail for the things it gets wrong. I'll simply say that the worst part of this book, for me, is that the basic plot structure (Deathwatch investigates creepy lost outpost & finds something worse than they bargained for) is so friggin good (not ... amazingly original, but damn I enjoy it) that it's frustrating the book was so terrible. Eminently readable, however.

Oathofoblivion says

Pretty good novel that gives an insight into how a deathwatch space marine team operates. Unfortunately it is more oriented towards the politics between members of the inquisition rather than the fight against the tyrannids, which i personally think would be more interesting.

Michael says

Terrible opening, terrible ending, clumsy writing, unsympathetic characters. The only reason I finished this is because it was so short - I'll be steering clear of Mr. Goto in the future, though.

Diana H. says

My son tells me that if I want a happy ending these are not the books to read.

He's 100% correct!

No matter which Warhammer 40K book I read, a character I like dies (or worse, is the bad guy at the end of the story). This is such an anathema to most stories (except Nicolas Sparks' books) that it takes some adjusting of the reader mindset. After finishing a book, it usually takes me days to start reading the next title because I know the end will not be all "butterflies and unicorns."

If these books went so well-written and downright exciting, I probably wouldn't keep going back for more.

Another really good read!

Kjirsten says

Death, destruction and blood.

Callum Shephard says

There's always something important when it comes to writing for fictional universes: Research. No matter what it is, whether it be Marvel comics or a tv series which has just started you always take a look at the structure behind the events. You study the basic principles of the universe, the laws and the histories behind the characters to minimise your unfamiliarity contradicting something major. The longer something had been running the more time you spend looking into it.

C.S. Goto takes that rule and proceeds to not only throw it out the window, but feed it to his dog, soak the remains in petrol and set it on fire first. The only things he tends to get right are the names of some units, and often not even that.

Now, his other more infamous work on the Dawn of War novelisations could be considered worse. It certainly ran for far longer and managed to find entirely new ways to break the canon which if Matt Ward read he would have been furious he'd not thought of them first. Warrior Brood however, is where everything began to really fall apart and was the cause of his nickname "C.S. multilaser". This is a novel so bad that this review will not cover the whole thing. Trying to comment upon every failure as it comes would likely make this review longer than the novel itself. Instead we're just going to look in detail into the first chapter, and believe me it's clear to see where things start to unravel.

The book opens up on the astartes of the Mantis Warriors chapter engaging a tyranid swarm. There's no listed reason to why they're there, no comment upon their motivations, no introduction, nothing to flesh out or give substance to the conflict, it's just BOOM! BUG WAR!!!

The Mantis Warriors themselves were one of the book's biggest selling points, a chapter with a dark history, dwindling in numbers and was based upon the White Scars geneseed; something not often seen in 40K. They were a point of genuine interest, a good focus to be fleshed out and a reason for many to pick up the book. To those people: you have my sympathies.

It quickly becomes clear that the author had little to no idea of what he was writing about. While there are some details which were gotten right, there were vast numbers which were either gotten hilariously wrong or acts of such stupidity that I'm surprised none of the marines stopped and announced "you have to be fething kidding me!"

Take for example a few minor details like this: The battlefield is described as "nothing but arachnid forms, barbed scales, dripping claws and the glint of sharp teeth." With the Mantis Warriors themselves being clad in "adamantite armour", their entire company loosing endless streams of hellfire rounds in support from veteran devastators who were "discharging volleys of laserfire from their multilasers."

To save you a long winded rant: The author has given the marines en mass specialist equipment, guns their armoury doesn't stock, armour of a non-existent material and made the world devouring alien horde a race of spiders. Even though there is little to nothing the tyranids have which has eight legs and on the same page winged gargoyles are mentioned flying around. And all this is told with the same narrative skill which produced these lines: "Theirs were the last human feet on Herodian IV, and theirs were barely human." "[...] like glorious green and gold avenging angels."

Within five pages this is beginning to make Mass Effect Deception look like genuinely good storytelling. There are a total of twenty-nine pages in this first chapter.

The biggest crime of Warrior Brood is its presentation of the space marines. While the Mantis Warriors themselves aren't using tactics they are known for, prolonged attrition tactics through multiple guerrilla strikes, that can be forgiven due to who they are facing. The tyranids would just overrun via sheer numbers

them if they tried it. What can't be forgiven is the fact these just aren't astartes. They also seem to have arrived on the battlefield drunk. There's no skill to their actions, no discipline to their attacks and no strategy. One point specifically notes that the big creatures the tyranids are sending are effectively shrugging off bolter shells, yet the devastator squads armed with tank killing weapons are blasting away at the fragile flapping gargoyles. No, really, they are:

"Gargoyles fell from the sky, where lascannon fire had ruined them or deformed into molten lumps were the squad's multi-meltas had cooked them."

Yes, that typo is actually in the book. Now, this might not be so bad if the focus space marines at least acted like space marines, but they don't. There's no steel to their words, no discipline or hints of them being the crusader styled superhumans of the universe. Worse still, they show less logic and discipline than the average Imperial Guardsman. And in case you missed it earlier the first page contains this gem of insanity: "The Mantis Warriors, captain ducked under the claws of a swooping beast, firing off a volley of bolts into the advancing ground swarm as he did so. As the gargoyle overshot, Audin slashed blindly behind him with his power sword and rent the creature cleanly in two."

This is the sort of unorthodox stunt which would be expected of a trainee at the most. In any normal book if this were seen, it would have the nearest marine slapping him over the head and taking away his weapon until he went through weeks of penance and learned to use it properly. Blindly slashing about with what is effectively a lightsaber, amongst a crowded group of allies at a flying enemy, when you have perfectly good bolters nearby, is an act of such sheer stupidity it is simply amazing it got past the editors. Then again that goes for this whole book. As if this weren't enough, the best hope for humanity apparently can't even remember basic details as we get one noting this:

"he could vaguely recall moments of Audin's briefing before the Mantis Warriors made planet-fall only a day earlier. Something about giant warriors and psychic nodes. Ruinus had not paid a great deal of attention - he had just been eager to get down onto the surface and start devastating some aliens."

There's also a scene in which a hormagaunt successfully pins one marine, causing him enough trouble to require help from others. Ignoring the mechanics of the game, which nerf and enhance the skills of factions to create a general balance between armies, usually anyway, this should be an easy fight. Instead the hundreds of years old power armoured doombringer who can punch through reinforced metal is having trouble with one unassisted cannon fodder the size of a great dane. For the record, this is be like a crocodile taking on a full grown psychotic bull elephant in a fight and winning.

Now, admittedly the tyranids in this book are far more powerful than they should be. They utterly ream the marines with little effort with many units like the zonethropes (called "tyranid sorcerors" argh!) being borderline unstoppable. The most notable part of this is where even the tyranid suicide bombers stop taking the Mantis Warriors as a serious threat and apparently start trying to have fun. A spore mine is fired into the midst of the marines' command squad, a living artillery weapon. Rather than exploding it grabs the standard bearer's leg, then drags him away! Despite being struck by multiple hellfire shells, stabbed and hit repeatedly, it successfully pulls him out of cover and into the swarm. Doing so with enough force to crush his "adamantite" armour.

This is however, quickly overshadowed by the two dumbest actions ever seen in 40K. Winning the Mantis Warriors the much touted "least tactical sense in a science fiction setting" award.

After finally turning their guns on the big monsters, yes there is dialog telling them "Use the lascannon!" and "bring that thing down!", the Devistators turn their attention to the things they should have been shooting at to begin with. For some reason the Devistators can't get a line of sight on it. Instead the devastator squad heroically sprints away from their barely holding defensive lines. Rather than using the large heavy weapons

which could have killed it with some concentrated fire, they charge into the massive tyrannid swarm. Then we learn that they all so heroically died to buy time for their sergeant, who kills one biovore with a bundle of grenades and a chainsword.

This would likely be the dumbest moment in the chapter, for more reasons than can be counted, were it not for what follows it.

A group of Mantis Warriors in tactical dreadnought armour die fighting against a carnifex. This isn't too surprising as even the elite of the first company would have trouble with a twenty meter tall death machine which is the living definition of "the last thing you want to meet in a dark alley". Except, despite both being far better at close combat than they are shooting, they choose to enter a gunbattle with one another, despite only a few pages ago the novel itself mentioning bolters were having no effect on the bigger creatures. Were this not ludicrous enough, the carnifex is initially winning with a barbed strangler. A weapon which wraps around the Terminators, starts to break through their heavy armour and is so strong that matter splitting power weapons cannot cut through it!

Oh, but all this results in heroic sacrifice with the sergeant winning at the last moment. Again. Out of nowhere he produces a cyclone missile launcher and insta-kills the beast. No mention of this, no hint of it, and suddenly he has it. Does he use it when they're fighting anything else? No. Does he use it before his entire squad dies when they're fighting at long range? No. What's more is that this thing has supposedly has the force of a small nuclear weapon:

"Hoenir ducked his head towards the monster and activated the cyclone missile launcher on his back.

In a flurry of power, the missiles seared over his head, punching deeply into the flesh of the carnifex. They burrowed their way deep inside, like giant maggots, before detonating. With an immense convulsion, the massive creature exploded outwards, sending chunks of sizzling flesh raining into the swarm. A huge fire ball erupted from the heart of the beast, blasting outwards in a wide radius, incinerating dozens of broods of tyrannids and reducing the barbed tendrils to ashes, cleansing the dead bodies of the Terminators."

And no, there's been no hint of it ever being this powerful in any other material.

Admittedly the stupidity doesn't get any worse than that in the first chapter's final moments. We get lasers, apparently of the multi kind, mounted on a Thunderhawk gunship, some bad dialog, forced exposition and a visibly forecasted plot hook but nothing that quite exceeds those two moments. Bear in mind however, this is only the first chapter and that things get progressively worse as you read further into the book.

One small spoiler of an example of just how bad things get: Why the great devourer is so seemingly unstoppable in this? Because of a chair made of tyrannids.

So is it really as bad as fans think? Yes! It really is!

Avoid anything with Goto's name on it at all costs. Having been reading Warhammer fluff and the Black Library for over a decade I can safely say C.S. Goto is definitely the worst person to have written a novel for the 40K universe. Worst writer overall? Perhaps not, unlike the other defiler of fluff he at least didn't write codexes and his stuff could be ignored.

Between his other canon screw-ups such as of eldar tech apparently being accepted and deemed "safe" by the imperium, Terminators backflipping into combat, Land Raiders transforming into Razorbacks and Eldar Prophecy; it's fairly clear to understand why he is so hated by the fandom. Why Lexicanum allows him to be cited as a source for pages, not so much.

William says

Deathwatch Space Marines vs. tyrannids on Herodian IV.

A cautionary tale on the consequences of not having someone watch the watchers.

The high point of the story is when a rogue inquisitor gets fragged.

Bryan Schmidt says

lackluster opening gives way to an increasingly better story but it remained only partially realized and thus not a full success.

William says

CS Goto again delivers a mediocre novel with a rather bland take on the massive 40k universe. It is good to know that "Universal Cannon" terminology is lost on him, to anyone not familiar with the Grim Darkness of the far future, it is an okay book. To experienced neck-beards, either don't waste your money or look for it in the bargain bins.

Johnny says

Just prior to reading *Saturn Rukh*, I found myself reading the antithesis of that fine novel's blend of plausible characterization and intriguing science. *Warrior Brood* is the first novel in the *Deathwatch* series of adventures set in the *Warhammer 40K* universe. I've always been fascinated by the level of detail and chrome (albeit, often twisted and deteriorating chrome) in the Games Workshop universe, but I've never quite immersed myself sufficiently in either the lore of *Warhammer Fantasy* or *Warhammer 40K*, the latter being the rather dystopic vision of humanity hanging on through a mixture of lost technology, superstition, psychic power, and rigid cultural enforcement of discipline and mores.

I'm reading the *Deathwatch* series because I'm currently playing in a *Deathwatch* role-playing campaign. I've always wanted to understand the *Warhammer 40K* universe better (remembering with fondness the SSI versions for the PC where *Rites of War* (*Panzer General Warhammer 40K*) and *Final Liberation* (real-time *Warhammer 40K*) were both colorful (the latter almost cartoon-like at times) and challenging to win) and I figured that getting involved in the company's latest RPG was the place to start. When I did start playing, I realized that the beautifully bound and illustrated player's handbook for *Deathwatch* (published by Fantasy Flight Games in the US) leaves a lot of gaps where knowledge of the GW lore is basically assumed. I wanted to fill some of those gaps and chose this series of novels.

But these novels are much like an unsatisfying action film. The editorial staff obviously wants non-stop action and there is little, if any, room for character development. Plenty of characters die, but I personally didn't feel diminished because I didn't really have any motivation to care for them other than that they were from some colorful unit. Worse, I don't understand the villains in the book. The motivation for this heavy-

duty risk taking is not clear at all. Perhaps, it is assumed in some archives of GW lore, but it just doesn't make sense to me that an individual can be so committed to an unwise course of action without becoming so tainted (at least in *Warhammer 40K* terms) that any "librarian" (psychic character) or "inquisitor" (powerful psychic being) around him couldn't tell. Maybe there is some groundwork in *Dawn of War* (a novel based on yet another video game in the universe) that I missed, but I can only hope that there is more character exposition in the next episode.

In spite of the weakness in characterization, the plot did have some worthy moments. I liked the parts where disgraced Space Marines were allowed to redeem themselves in the eyes of other Space Marines and I loved the way the *Deathwatch* characters worked with each other in spite of their differences. It was very informative for our campaign in that way. I liked the way one character was "hoist" by that character's own "petard." I liked the fact that there was no nice, clean ending. Everything pointed to an ominous future for those involved.

In one sense, this series does what Games Workshop needs it to do. It continues to fan the flames for Games Workshop products. Unfortunately, unlike the best of genre fiction, it doesn't appear that these are good novels on their own. These novels need the game far worse than the game needs the novels.

Joshua Cope says

A bit overly descriptive on certain characters' thoughts and the general lore about the Deathwatch, Inquisition and the Mantis Warriors where it wasn't necessary or didn't really add to the story.

As a result it could have been 50-70pages shorter. I also felt the ending just 'happened' and not really explained.

Overall, readable but too descriptive for my liking, even during some fight scenes, and too many main characters that were similar (meaning a slow reader like me loses the plot a bit).

El-jorro says

Bookworm Speaks!

Warhammer 40,000

Warrior Brood

by C.S. Goto

The Story: The world of Herodian IV is doomed when the nightmarish tyranid hive fleets descend from the depths of space, intent on devouring every living thing on the planet. In the vital hours before the planet is lost, Inquisitor Kalypsia and a team of Deathwatch Space Marines are sent on a mission to investigate a vital research outpost. The terrible secret they uncover could spell a fate worse than death for Kalypsia and her warriors - maybe even for the whole of humanity, but can they escape to safety before they are torn apart by

the ravenous alien hordes?

This book has a lot going for it. It is a tale of Space Marines and not just any Space Marines...the Deathwatch! The elite of the Adeptus Astartes. There are also tyranids which so far, never seem to get boring. Finally, we have the deception and intrigue of the Inquisition. All the while they try to save a doomed world while pursuing a weapon which could turn the tide.

The Mantis Warriors have a very interesting backstory that adds to the motivation of the various characters. Basically, the Mantis Warriors were deceived into fighting on the wrong side of a brief civil conflict between loyal Imperium forces and heretic insurrectionists. While the Mantis Warriors eventually came around and were granted mercy, their punishment would be that they could no longer take new recruits to replenish their ranks for one hundred years. Thusly, they are outcast by the wider Imperium and desperately seek redemption.

Sounds great right?

Well...

What makes the Deathwatch so interesting is seeing how all the Battle Brothers from different chapters bounce off one another. We don't get a lot of bouncing in this book, almost all of the Deathwatch members are the typical stoic Space Marines.

Being that the Deathwatch is present, there is of course the Inquisition but that is also handled poorly. While there is the standard intrigue, ultimately there is too much of it. Parts of it feel tacked on and several characters feel superfluous.

The saving grace of this novel is again, the Mantis Warriors. In a library that's dominated by Ultramarines, Space Wolves, and Blood Angels, one of the more obscure chapters being updated and expanded is a real treat. Bookworm really likes that of any fandom. The edges of the map being filled in and the small entries in the encyclopedias being extrapolated. The Mantis Warriors a successor chapter of the White Scars and they are a remote Chapter, far away from the main thoroughfares of the Imperium and are shunned for their crimes. In spite of that they keep fighting the good fight and eagerly seize any chance for redemption in the eyes of their fellows. The reader cannot help but root for them and feel genuine sympathy for them. They have been excluded for so long and that speaks to a lot of people in all walks of life.

In the end, this book does do what Warhammer does best...that being a nonstop, gunpowder fueled, adrenaline rush. That is all well and good, but what makes Warhammer so good, was that it goes much deeper than what it appears to be on the surface. Its not just a male power fantasy, its a story about honor and courage. We get that in this book but its not really enough. The text gets bogged down in too much teeth gnashing, assassinations, and tough talk. It tried too much and ended up with not enough. The editor must have liked the author too much.

Final Verdict: If you are interested in exploring as much as the 41st millennium as you can (Like Bookworm) then this book is a welcome distraction. If you are looking for an excellent book, you might want to look elsewhere. Its good, but not great. It is the junk food of Warhammer 40k: tasty, comes in a fancy wrapping but little in the way of nutrition.

Three out of Five Stars

Héctor says

This is a good bad book. The characters are one dimensional, the battle are flimsy and vague, the enemy is uninteresting and the plot predictable. Yet it is set in the 40K universe which is one of the most interesting and fun fiction universes there is.

We follow the deeds of a couple of Space Marines Armies as they fight the Tyrannid, while learning a lot about their customs, traditions and way of life. We follow them through the invasion of a fringe world, while they desperately try to recover *something*, by Inquisitorial orders.

Short quick gung-ho read. Not much else for it
