



Batalla por el Abismo, N.º 8

Ben Counter , Juan Pascual Martínez Fernández (Translator)

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La traición de Horus ya es conocida por todos, y ha llegado el momento de que todos sean puestos a prueba. Cuando el Señor de la Guerra despliega abiertamente sus fuerzas, llega a conocimiento de los Astartes leales que los Portadores de la Palabra han enviado una flota contra Ultramar, el hogar de los Ultramarines. A menos que logren interceptarla y destruirla, es muy posible que los Ultramarines sufran un daño del que jamás sean capaces de recuperarse.

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From Reader Review *Batalla por el Abismo*, N.º 8 for online ebook

Riley Feldmann says

As I progressed through Ben Counter's *Battle for the Abyss*, I realized something to my horror: Dan Abnett has ruined me when it comes to Warhammer novels. This is doubly so in the rich time period revolving around the Horus Heresy, a climactic event in human history that sets the stage for the strife and suffering of humanity 10,000 years in the future. While Counter does a good job narrating a relative side-story in the grand scheme of things, he fails to really set the stage in a meaningful way for future books in the series.

We follow the path of a group of Ultramarines led by Cestus, a disciplined yet caring Captain who is forced to rally a hodgepodge group of Ultramarines, World Eaters, and Space Wolves in an attempt to save his Legion's homeworld of Macaggre. The threat is the Word Bearers Legion, whose heresy is still yet unknown to the Imperium. Word Bearers are religiously zealous in the extreme; this obviously conflicts with the imposed atheism of the Emperor of Mankind, and in their pursuit of an idol to worship, the Legion falls pray to the Chaos Gods.

In order to reap the rewards of heresy, however, the Word Bearers and other traitor legions must eviscerate the legions presumed to be loyal to the Emperor. With the help of elements within the Adeptus Mechanicus, the Bearers launch the Furious Abyss, a warship of unimaginable size and power, as the main spear to pierce the heart of the Ultramarines. All that stands between them and success are a small Imperial fleet backed by a select few Space Marines led by Cestus.

The setting is interesting in its own right, but the way the story is written, you spend much of your read time flipping pages as an outgunned and ineffective force simply follows an unstoppable foe through the Warp for hundreds of pages. When there is action, it is well written and compelling, but there is too little of it to be worthwhile. Counter makes up for this by exploring the always interesting perils of the Warp and the forces of Chaos, but again, it isn't enough for my tastes to make up for a largely neutral plot.

I grant this book a 3/5 stars for just such reasons. His characters are likable enough (though sometimes forgettable), the few "regular" humans involved have interesting storylines of their own, and we get to see a great clash between a psyker Space Marine and a daemon of Chaos. What more could you ask for!!?

Neil says

OK HH novel. Ultramarines are so dull though.

Profundus Librum says

A könyv alaptörténete kicsit erőtlen. A négy légió alkalmi szövetsége még csak-csak hihető – a rendházuktól épp távol lévő alakulatok tagjai honnan is tudnának arról, hogy géntestvéreik és primarchájuk már nagyban a káosz útját követik? –, ám a szereplők megformálása... hát... nem sikerült túl jól. Nem vártam semmi különösét e téren, de a szerzőnek sikerült alulmúlni még ezt is. Az Ultragárdista kapitány kifejezetten semmilyen lett, nulla egyéniséggel – a négy főszereplőn kívül a többi szereplőt megemlíteni sem

érdemes, hiszen tipikusan csak golyófogónak kellett, hogy legyen egy tömegbázis, aki elhullhat, miel?tt rátérhetünk a fontosabb szerepl?k végórájára is –, a Világfalóktól érkező „berzerker” hiteltelen (jelenleg úgy t?nik, az egész rendházával együtt), az Ezer Fiak leereszked? „egyiptomi mágusa” és az ?rfarkasok italozó, folyton vereked? „viking barbárja” pedig a legklisésebb karakterek lettek, amikbe belefuthatunk hasonló zsánerkönyvekben. Náluk álmából felkeltve bármelyik írópalánta izgalmasabb személyiségeket tudott volna kreálni. Hopp! Majdnem elfelejtettem, ott van még a giga-hajón utazó Igehirdet? gonosztev? banda is! Na, ?k fanatikusak voltak. Ennyi. Éljen az Ige – de azért veszejtsük el a sajátjaink közül is azokat, akik túl ígéretesnek mutatkoznak az Ige szolgálatában –, a hatalom és a küldetés, miközben meg a legapróbb problémán sem tudnak felülkerekedni soha, hiába van Megírva, hogy minden akadályt legy?znek. Igazán szerencsétlen banda. Szinte rossz volt nézni, mint szerencsétlenkedik magukat keresztül a könyvön. Bár lehet, hogy csak az Ultragárdisták voltak túl kemény ellenfeleik...

Ezen – kétségtelenül komoly – hibán kívül különösebb kivetnivalót nem találtam a könyvben. A harci leírások izgalmasak voltak, lüktet?k, néhol vérrel komolyan meglocsoltak, a hipertérr?l szóló részek leírása kifejezetten érdekes és jól sikerült részei a könyvnek, ahogy az ?rület határán táncoló látomásos részek szintén remekek voltak.

B?vebben a blogon:

<http://profunduslibrum.blogspot.hu/20...>

David says

This is the first book in the series which I really found lacking. Very little happened in terms of plot to justify 400 pages. It just kept plodding along, aimlessly this way and that. Hopefully the next one won't be so dull.

Veronica Anrathi says

This one turned out to be a nope for me. Not the worst idea behind the story, but the narrative is rather blurry and plain. Loyalists are not horrible, yet they lack character development. Word Bearers are my main problem here, they are portrayed as a total chiche. Zero depth, they are nothing more than mustache twirling villains who only want to do evil shit. Also they are ZEALOTS. I swear I haven't heard the word zealot (and it's variables) as many times in my entire life as the author uses it in this book. Synonyms, dude! Use some synonyms! The story is not important to the main plot of the series, I would not say it completely terrible, but rather just unnecessary. Gained nothing from reading it.

Sean Seger says

This is the 8th book in the Horus Heresy Series, so my thoughts assume you have read the previous books or are familiar with the overall Warhammer 40,000 mythological arc and most of the events of the Heresy. Battle for the Abyss follows the desperate attempts of a small brotherhood of Astartes and other Imperials to avert the destruction of the Ultramarine Chapter by the traitorous Word Bearers.

I have never really had much interest in the Ultramarine chapter of the Space Marines, until I read this book. Cestus, Antiges and the rest of the Ultramarines really did a lot to make them more than just the face of

Games Workshop. Add to that the antagonism between the Space Wolves and Thousand Sons and I'm suddenly very interested in those later books. Finally, it was nice to see members of some of the fallen Chapters have heroic moments, it was a nice reminder that they were once Astartes, The Emperor's Angels of Death.

Sud666 says

Another exceptional addition to the Horus Heresy series.

The Horus Heresy has begun. But few Loyalists realize it. The Word Bearers have created a monstrous new battleship called the Furious Abyss. Now they are leading a fleet to Calth to destroy it while the main Ultramarines Legion has been deployed away by Horus and it is open to invasion.

Captain Cestus of the Ultramarines and Brynngar of the Space Wolves band their forces together, accompanied by a Loyalist World Eater, Skraal, and a Loyalist Thousand Son, Mhotep. Their mission is to try to warn Calth and to try to stop the Furious Abyss. More than that I will not spoil.

This was an excellent story as we see directly into the events occurring after Istvaan. The fact that the World Eater and the Thousand Son remain loyal shows how destructive the Heresy truly was. At no point, till near the end, do the Marines realize the extent of the perversion of the Word Bearer's acts. The fact that they go into this localized conflict against their fellow Astartes was the entire Horus Heresy in a microcosm. The Loyalists lack of knowledge about the Warp, daemons and their lack of psykers (due to the Council of Nikkeia Edicts) has severe consequences in this story. The strain that is put on the ties of brotherhood is clearly shown in all the bitter feelings as a result of the Word Bearer's treason and the conflicts amongst the different legions is fascinating. As is the look into how each legion does have its own way of doing things. A Space Wolf and World Eater have more in common than say a Ultramarine and a Thousand Son. Also interesting to see and hear about loyal members of those two Legions. Both Skraal and Mhotep are excellent characters.

An excellent addition to the Horus Heresy and one I truly enjoyed reading.

Emil Söderman says

This one was a dud for me. Not a fan. It's not that it's a bad book per se, featuring as it does a small ship chasing a much bigger ship to stop them from doing Terrible Things (TM).

It's just that well, it's not that interesting or well-written, not to mention that it feels much more like a M41 story than a M31: In other words it fails to a large degree to take advantage of the setting (IE: The Horus Heresy) both the Ultramarines and their antagonists largely act as they would ten thousand years later. (not entirely mind, there are a few nods) but it just feels like a gross neglect of the setting.

Now, it is possible I am judging the book too harshly: I read many of these books after each other and was kinda getting burned out at this point. Still, it lacks the interesting bits of most of the other Horus Heresy books.

Shelby says

4 Stars

I was recommended this book by one of my goodreads friends and I did not know what to expect because I never read any of Ben Counter books before and while reading this book I thought it was really good. I finally realized after reading this book that I should maybe read more books by him since I liked this book. I would read this book maybe one more time. I would recommend this book to anyone.

Raistlin Online says

This is my first review, but since this book seems to be getting some negative buzz i just felt i had to speak up. Needless to say i absolutely loved this book. It's the classic tale of David vs. Goliath in which a small imperial ship needs to stop an enormous traitor ship bound for the Ultramarines homeworld.

The cast of characters is wonderfull. What's great about it is that there are two heroes from The Thousand Sons legion and World Eaters. Unique because both these chapters eventually turn traitor during the Horus Heresey. The book has some great action scenes and had my attention from beginning to end. A well deserved give stars:~)!

Steve says

As expected, I think Ben Counter does a better job writing his own characters than he did writing characters that other authors created (see my review of *Galaxy in Flames* for that). Spoilers ahead.

I think this novel could have been condensed a great deal. Suspension of disbelief gets pretty strained, partially because the massive gunship allows enemies to pursue for... almost no reason. If they'd cut out that chase and just had the boarding action earlier, it would have made *more* sense, though still would have strained that suspension of disbelief. Small bands of heroes going up against insurmountable odds and succeeding is pretty standard fare in SF/Fantasy, but it feels rather out of place in such a grimdark setting. You could argue that everybody dying in the end (good guys, bad guys, neutral guys, pretty much everybody) balances it back out, but I'm not entirely convinced.

Kaminska is probably the best female character we've had in the series so far, though (and just a pretty cool character in general), so bonus points there! In general the "good" guys (again, calling the Imperium "good" is a stretch, but that's a whole other discussion) are pretty interesting, but the villains come across as bland. After books like *Fulgrim* where we get to see interesting portrayals of characters descending into madness, having such a by-the-book (Word Bearers pun, anyone?) portrayal of the baddies is a little underwhelming.

Christopher Napier says

By-the-numbers Black Library outing and fundamentally one of the least interesting of the Horus Heresy books I've read so far, lacking any real insight into the legions at play or adding to the broad-scope canon

most 40K fans are aware of.

The most interesting characters Skrall & Mhotep are underused and the potential to tell an interesting story is largely overlooked in favour of a series of banal set plays culminating in the least impressive appearance of a greater daemon I can ever recall.

Andrew Ziegler says

I have been waiting for this novel patiently. Finally the story would veer back to the time line of the heresy set forth from book 1 into the Fulgrim. Although Descent and Legion were cool books, Legion much better than Descent, they were not in the time line of the heresy. Battle for the Abyss was a cool tale finally introducing Ultramarine characters and Space Wolves. Although it is as the title implies the Battle for the Abyss, the Battle for Maccrague and Ultramar are not decided in this book. I fear Mechanicum will not cover it either. I want to get back to the story and pace set forth by the first 3 novels with characters I can follow and get to know like Loken and Tarvitz. Cestus was awesome but he is gone now...making this almost another stand alone novel. I enjoyed the story, and the book, the battles and the characters, I just want to get back into an time line with continuity like the first three novels. I can only hope that is coming.

Robert says

For a book which charts a chase across space and dimensions, this is a distinctly pedestrian affair and dumps us right back onto the downward spiral which had briefly been interrupted by the 7th book.

One can't help but feel that the critical success of 'Flight Of The Eisenstein' made the dark lords of The Black Library decide that another space-race was in order. Sadly, unlike that book, 'Battle For The Abyss' is low on interesting characters and sky-high on cliché and stereotypes.

Plotwise, the story revolves around the treachery of The Word Bearers legion and their commissioning of a gigantic starship named The Furious Abyss which they intend to use against the planet Ultramar, striking a dolorous blow against the loyalists. Ultramarine Captain Cestus gives chase in his own ship, The Wrathful along with a motley crew consisting of marines from the Space Wolves, World Eaters and Thousand Sons legions.

Unfortunately, the Word Bearers don't emerge as the sinister but deluded religious fanatics that they're supposed to be, rather they're portrayed as the standard snarling villains of every bad fantasy book ever written ever. The Ultramarine is a drag, the Space Wolf is a weak Viking parody and the action is stop-start and thoroughly uninvolved.

For all that though, there is a considerable amount of mileage to be gained from the twin tragedies of Mhotep of The Thousand Sons and Skraal of the World Eaters, as they fight tooth-and-nail to stop the Word Bearers, ignorant of the fact that their own legions have already turned traitor.

Skraal in particular is a revelation as he fights a one-man war from within the bowels of The Furious Abyss itself. These two characters may well have saved the book, but it finds itself dragged straight back to mediocrity thanks to the thoroughly bland and incompetent Word Bearers.

Must do better.

Richard Stuart says

This book was TOO NEAT. All the loose ends were tied... with knots and bows. Everyone had their opposite number, and vanquished them. Silly, really.

And another thing:

A ship like the Furious Abyss captained by a nincompoop who is worried more by an ambitious upstart(Ultis) than by sabotaging Astartes... weak. Sure, a zealot's blind faith can be the same as towering arrogance, but when you are put in command of a super-ship with ONE VITAL MISSION, how do you get so distracted??? Was it necessary to make Zadkiel so incompetent? It ruins the novel. If the entire plan to destroy the Ultramarines hinged upon the destruction of Formaska, then why would Kor Phaeron put Zadkiel in charge of it? Powerful weapons don't automatically make up for the idiots in charge of them, in fact, the blockheads often times render the weapons suicidal!

My point is this:

The dumbing down of this novel hurts the series. There was no need for it. If you make the threat real and alive, then everything else is elevated.

Also:

What a waste it was to not give Skraal's story of infiltration and evasion more gravity. It was a golden opportunity to embark on some much needed psychological weight. In fact, the whole book skims on the surface of things, never wanting to dig in and give the characters a tug of veracity. A pity.

(P.S. watching Star Wars or Sink the Bismark! would have been more entertaining than reading this novel.)
