



Halo: Evolutions, Volume II

Tobias S. Buckell

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The original Halo: Evolutions, split into two volumes. This volume contains stories by:

Tessa Kum & Jeff VanderMeer

Kevin Grace

Robt McLees

Karen Traviss

Fred Van Lente

When humanity expanded beyond the safety of Earth to new stars and horizons, they never dreamed what dangers they would encounter there. When the alien juggernaut known as the Covenant declared holy war upon the fragile human empire, millions of lives were lost—but, millions of heroes rose to the challenge. In such a far-reaching conflict, not many of the stories of these heroes, both human and alien, have a chance to become legend. This collection holds eleven stories that dive into the depths of the vast Halo universe, not only from the perspective of those who fought and died to save humanity, but also those who vowed to wipe humanity out of existence.

Included in this volume you'll find the stories of:

- * A high-ranking prophet musing on the catastrophic last days of the Covenant Spartan: Team Black, who discover that the Covenant's politics might be more deadly than their military might
- * The terrors of survival in the aftermath of a Flood infection
- * The Master Chief struggling with his own humanity as he battles through war-torn New Mombassa
- * The insatiable appetite of the Gravemind as it claws its way through Cortana's tortured consciousness
- * An existential Elite, in the aftermath of the Human-Covenant War, returning to the site of his greatest victory as he deals with his worst defeat
- * And new to this volume, the last confessions of a Prophet in "Wages of Sin"

Halo: Evolutions, Volume II Details

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From Reader Review Halo: Evolutions, Volume II for online ebook

Suzie Q says

I will break down my review for each story, with the assumption that most readers will have a basic knowledge of the Halo universe. I have left out the poetry and the (essay?) Icon, just because I really have nothing to say about them, positive or negative:

Blunt Objects

Fire Team Spartan: Black are on a mission on one of the Covenant occupied human colonial worlds. Their mission: to destroy giant beehive-like machines called Beacons that the Covies use to mine Helium-3, which is then used for fuel. Once the He-3 is depleted, the planet is glassed, leaving it an uninhabitable hunk.

In the penthouse of one of the only stable buildings, Spartan: Black comes across a badly injured insect-like Covenant creature known as a bugger, whom they follow into the Beacons to help destroy it and free the rest of the buggers from the servitude forced upon them by the rest of the Covenant.

Here's the thing about this story that bothered me. While members of the Spartan:Black team have their misgivings about following this bugger (Hopalong, as Black-Two called it), they still readily follow him into what could very well possibly be a trap. Sure they have their doubts, but would Spartans really take that risk without more information?

The Mona Lisa

The UNSC ship *Red Horse* is among the debris field that was once the first Halo destroyed by Spartan-117 near the gas giant Threshold. They bring aboard a civilian escape pod to find that it contains a fatally injured man who, in his insane final ramblings, reveals that he is from the story's titular freighter. Sergeant Lopez is sent to lead a team to investigate what happened aboard *The Mona Lisa*, which was converted to a penal ship, and to find out why it is near Threshold in an area which has been classified and is crawling with Covenant.

Lopez and her crew arrive, expecting to see the signs of a prison riot. Instead they find Covenant Elites, unarmed and without armor. The Elites are scared, but of what? In a short matter of time, Lopez's team discovers that The Flood, which had been previously unknown to them, are running rampant aboard the freighter. What's more, Lopez discovers that the ONI's treachery runs deep.

Palace Hotel

Spartan-117 finds a surprise on the battle field in New Mombasa!

Honestly, this story felt like, at best, mediocre fan fiction. I got the impression the author didn't know much about Halo aside from knowledge one can gain from reading the Halowiki. There are also some writing errors that made it hard to read, mainly shifting POV's and awkward dialogue.

Human Weakness

What happened between the time that Cortana was left with Gravemind and Master Chief practically got killed (or, in my case when I played Halo 3, got killed about 100 times) trying to rescue her? Well, here you have it. This story was the reason I gave this book three stars instead of two. The imagery alone (Cortana floating in an ocean of information) made this story a great read.

Wages of Sin

The Minister of Discovery writes out the confessions of lies and deceit committed by the Covenant Hierarchs in the name of The Great Journey. Another great read, and it makes one loathe the Hierarchs no less, and justifies none of what they have done. Good anti-Covenant propaganda.

The Return

Two decades after destroying a human colony, an Elite Shipmaster returns on a pilgrimage to discover what the gods want of him and his fellow Sangheili now that it has been revealed that the basis of their faith has been proven false. He reminisces and regrets the act he committed in the name of the Prophets, and he seeks to make himself worthy. I found this story interesting, and it was written a way that made it a quick but

memorable read.

Trinity Lizalde says

I love the whole multiple short stories in one book deal. Mostly all the stories are a good read. I recommend this for a seasoned Halo science fiction reader. I could imagine if you've never played the games and read the first 3 Halo novels this book may not make any sense. Fanboys/girls only.

Alec says

So this just had one story extra that was that in the first book. Apparently I don't read user reviews well. So yeah that happened. Anyways, pretty much all the stories are solid. Good read.

Graham Maxwell says

A fair and imaginative array of short stories set in the Halo universe. Some patchier or more worthy than others based on author, subject or maybe my own personal biases :)

Krissys says

Evo 2 is the same book as Evo 1 except for a single novella that was added to it that wasn't in 1. I rated it four stars because I'm a fan of the Halo world and single story or not I'm a sucker for more.

Jett R. says

All of the authors are great

Pk Devan says

Halo Evolutions vol. 2 is a collaboration of short stories in the Halo Universe! My favorite short story was Blunt Instruments. Fire team Spartan: Black is a team of highly trained marines. They had one mission, look for a big purple beam of energy shooting up the horizon on the planet Verge. Who ever controlled the beam had the power to instantly spawn a whole fleet of ships! As Spartan Team Black lands on the planet they find out they are not the only ones there. The covenant (a group of harsh aliens) are located around the beam. Spartan Team black's mission just got a little bit harder!

Halo Evolutions Vol 2 Blunt Instruments is a very powerful and entertaining short story. It is in a family of other amazing short stories. It was written by Fred Van Lente. The writing is very effective and difficult at the same time. But an amazing story makes up for the difficulty. A main strength in this story is the plot. The plot is very interesting and makes you care about what happens. The only weakness that I found is it might be too hard for some people to read and this book was definitely a major challenge for me. I would recommend this book to anyone who's willing to challenge themselves in the aspect of reading but also want an amazing story!
