



Star Wars: Thrawn

Timothy Zahn

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER - In this definitive novel, readers will follow Thrawn's rise to power--uncovering the events that created one of the most iconic villains in *Star Wars* history.

One of the most cunning and ruthless warriors in the history of the Galactic Empire, Grand Admiral Thrawn is also one of the most captivating characters in the *Star Wars* universe, from his introduction in bestselling author Timothy Zahn's classic *Heir to the Empire* through his continuing adventures in *Dark Force Rising*, *The Last Command*, and beyond. But Thrawn's origins and the story of his rise in the Imperial ranks have remained mysterious. Now, in *Star Wars: Thrawn*, Timothy Zahn chronicles the fateful events that launched the blue-skinned, red-eyed master of military strategy and lethal warfare into the highest realms of power--and infamy.

Praise for *Thrawn*

"The origin story of one of the greatest *Star Wars* villains . . . a book that fans have wanted for decades." --*The Verge*

"A satisfying tale of political intrigue . . . Thrawn's observations and tactical thinking are utterly captivating."--*New York Daily News*

"Quite the page-turner." --*Flickering Myth*

Star Wars: Thrawn Details

Date : Published January 30th 2018 by Del Rey Books (first published April 11th 2017)

ISBN : 9781101967027

Author : Timothy Zahn

Format : Paperback 496 pages

Genre : Media Tie In, Star Wars, Science Fiction, Fiction, Audiobook

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From Reader Review Star Wars: Thrawn for online ebook

Khurram says

This is a great book. I had very high hopes for this book. All the ingredients seemed to be in place. I remember reading Heir to the Empire trilogy when it first came this ignited my love of reading and since I have devoured everything from the expanded universe. What could go wrong with the book they even had Timothy Zahn (Thrawn's original creator). What could go wrong? NOTHING!!! The book is AWESOME!!!!

As much as I loved Heir to the Empire we were never given too much background of Thrawn's raise through the Imperial ranks. The fact that he was as non-human at the rank of Grand Admiral, which was unheard of in the xenophobic Imperial military. So he must have been brilliant to stand out or get as far as he did. However we never got that part of his story apart from hints. This book fills in many of those banks, whilst leaving part to expand on for later. It covers the highlights of Thrawn's entire Imperial career up till the point of him reaching Grand Admiral. On a side note as evil as Palpatine was I have not read anywhere about him being xenophobic himself, I am wondering if this is another Tarkin-ism that was passed through the military.

This has more then wet my appetite for Rebels Season 3. unless you have already seen this season I would say read this before watching this it should enhance the viewing, and provide a couple of links towards the end of the book. I think Eli says it be as much as not is not possible to full know Thrawn, he is as complex as he is brilliant. The thing this book portrays is Thrawn is not evil, he can be cold and a military man through and through, but he is always aiming his tactics for preserving life, and collateral damage. I did also like the introduction of the Nightsswan as Thrawns adversery, and Eli as a sort of apprentice. Towards the end of the book we do get a bit more understanding of why Thrawn joined the Empire. Even though he is not in the book much, I do like that fact the they show Palpatine is not an idiot, he is a very skilled tactician as well especially in their last conversation.

I cannot recommend this book enough even with my sky high expectations this book delivered in every way. This is a great book for old Star Wars fans like men and fans getting to know Thrawn for the first time or even wanting background on him after seeing him in the TV series.

Sud666 says

In a galaxy far, far away there was an epic story called Star Wars. Since that time we have seen the "new and improved" Disney Wars version and, most of us, felt varying degrees of disgust or ennui when faced with the "threat" of a vaguely metro-sexual Sith wanna-be and his "master" Snooky. So it was with great pleasure I saw this book by Timothy Zahn.

This is Star Wars as I remembered it- great characters, wonderful villains and a truly impressive Galactic Empire. This is the story of Mitth'raw'nuruodo. Thrawn for short. From the very start, when Cadet Vanto of the Imperial Navy and his squad stumble across an amazingly intelligent and crafty alien, it is obvious Thrawn is an impressive intellect. The Empire decides to use young Thrawn to their own benefit.

This is the story of the the gifted and talented Naval Officer who, in time, will hold the august rank of Grand Admiral. From his initial meeting with the Emperor to Thrawn's time spent at the elite Imperial Academy in Coruscant-we see his gifts on display as we chart his meteoric rise through the ranks of the Imperial Navy.

Thrawn is brilliant, cerebral and a military strategist of the highest order. His ability to read people and learn

about different cultures by their artwork is nearly Force-like in his talents-but he has no Force ability. He's simply brilliant. Without any spoilers we follow Thrawn from his time as a Lieutenant all the way to his donning the white uniform of the Grand Admiral. It is an amazing tale.

There is only one thing that bothers me- where is this Empire in the movies? This glittering, efficient, ruthless war machine seems to have paroxysms of sheer incompetence when faced with Rebel trash in the movies. I know it makes for a "good story" but it is rather a jarring concept to read about the Imperial military and read about them in action- they are truly a war machine against whom none will stand. Unless, of course, you're a bunch of annoying, semi-communist, Rebel trash..then the Imperial military forgets everything and is annihilated by some insurgent trash, drunken pilots in outmoded equipment and some oversized teddy bears with sticks. Yep.

This is not that Empire. This Empire is intelligent and well trained. Disciplined and utterly ruthless. It's bad enough fighting against Naval/Army forces, but were you to be on the receiving end of a Stormtrooper assault, it is unlikely you will survive. In the movies Storm troopers fight with the ability of a bad African or Middle Eastern Nation-which is to say they get run over by any modern, well trained military force. This Empire is a juggernaut. Woe unto any who cross its path. THIS is an Empire to be feared. What a shame the Disney people didn't read this story.

So if you enjoy the concept of a truly impressive Imperial threat-then you will love this inside look at the Imperial Navy. I tremendously enjoyed charting Thrawn's career and reading about his brilliant ideas and plans. It is through stories like this, that the Star Wars world still lives in my mind. I use quality stories like this to blot out the pain of the "new and improved" Star Wars where the story makes little sense, the Force and its use has completely changed, the Jedi/Sith are banal and not very impressive, the "New" New Order is a joke-then you will hate this awesome version of Star Wars. For the rest of us- you will love this story. This IS what the Star Wars universe was supposed to be about. Highly Recommended.

Michael Galdamez says

THIS GUY:

AND THIS GUY:

Nuff said.

Sr3yas says

Say goodbye to Sun Tzu's *Art of War*. Behold Thrawn's *Art of War!*

Cue epic war drums

Leadership and obedience are the two legs on which a warrior's life is balanced. Without both, victory

cannot be achieved.

Leadership depends on information and comprehension. Not so obedience. Sometimes a commander may choose to share details of his plan. Often he may not. In either case, obedience must be instant and complete.

Such automatic response relies on trust between commander and those commanded. And that trust can only be obtained through leadership.

The next guy who is going to declare war on me is going to be really sorry.

A Stranger in Strange land?

Chiss: Most of the galaxy thought this mysterious race of warriors as a harrowing myth: A creation of blood-chilling stories and rumors.

Now, It is no longer a rumor, but a fact.

The empire's navy has found an exiled Chiss while patrolling the outer rims of the galaxy. His name? *Mitth'raw'nuruodo*. Oh, don't make that face. Say it with me: Mith-THRAW-noo-roo-o-do.

Now you are as cool as Emperor Palpatine.

We are introduced to many characters. Notably, Thrawn, the Chiss who made a deal with Emperor to get into Empire's Navy. We are introduced to Eli, a young outer rim cadet who end up being Thrawn's translator and later, his aide. We also meet Arinhda Pryce, an ambitious outer rim miner who vows to rise politically to gain power.

The story is about power and politics. It is about victory and defeat. It is about strategies of War. It is about principles and the fine lines that one crosses to become a Villain. Most of all, it is about the in-depth personal profile of a great tactical mind.

For me, one of the best parts of the story (*other than Thrawn himself*) was the portrayal of Empire. Okay, Let me explain. In the original trilogy, Empire was always this big bad wolf for me: An evil body of power. Yet Zann's is Empire is scarier. His empire is filled with politics, corrupt bureaucrats, racism, bribery, and pride.

In short, the Empire is nothing but a regular government.

I am a sucker for tactical planning and military strategies. Believe me when I say this one got it all, thanks to Thrawn. I loved the story, the politics, and the complex yet spectacular characterization. (view spoiler)

Undoubtedly, one of the best star wars stories featuring one of the greatest tacticians in the galaxy.

First Update

Who needs force when there is a character as awesome as Thrawn?!

RTC, soon... probably.

Zip it, Palpatine.

Jack +Books & Bourbon+ says

Damn but it's good to have Thrawn back in official rotation! Arguably the single best villain of the extended Star Wars universe, Thrawn was a character like no other, a cool, calculated, and supremely effective Grand Admiral in the typically blustery and barely competent Imperial Navy. And when Disney bought out everything Lucas, and the extended universe were removed from canon and made into "legends", many of us were saddened by the loss of this fascinating Chiss tactician.

But with appearances in both the animated Rebels series and this standalone novel, Thrawn is back in a big way. And while I haven't seen the Rebels episodes where he is featured, there's nobody that can write Thrawn like Zahn, and the novel *Thrawn* gives us the backstory we've been waiting and hoping for. Of course, Zahn created the character, so there's really nobody else that should be putting him to page. Anyone else just wouldn't do the character justice.

Let me get this out of the way now...I'm a huge Zahn fan when it comes to his Star Wars books, so whenever he releases a new one, I know without even a shadow of doubt that I'm gonna love it. I try to be impartial in my reviews, and I'll certainly do my best here, but it's going to be difficult. That said, I always try to keep spoilers to a minimum, so folks who haven't read the book yet can go in relatively blind.

So how does *Thrawn* stack up to the older Zahn books? Quite well actually. Obviously *Heir to the Empire*, *Dark Force Rising*, and *The Last Command* were much grander in scope, being (at the time) the official final Skywalker trilogy. So the focus was more on Luke, Leia, and Han, with Thrawn being their primary antagonist. The cool thing is, even though those books are no longer canon, Zahn has written *Thrawn* in a way that still fits with those original books. Since this is effectively a prequel, telling the story of Thrawn's first meeting with the Galactic Empire and his subsequent rise through Imperial ranks, it doesn't have to reinvent the wheel, and doesn't really have to retcon anything that's already been written. It also explains, in a roundabout sort of way, why Thrawn spent so much time in the outer reaches of space instead of with the inner system fleets. That said, because it's a self-contained novel, and exists to fill in the narrative background, it has a smaller scope than previous Thrawn tales. But that also allows for a more intimate look at the character, which helps paint him more as an antagonist than a true villain.

In keeping with the writing style from the previous novels, most of *Thrawn* isn't told from Thrawn's perspective at all. The majority of his growth within the Imperial Navy is witnessed/recounted by his aide/translator Eli Vanto. The other converging narration comes from Arindha Pryce, a private citizen who rises to prominence within the civilian bureaucracy of the Empire. For a while there, I wasn't quite sure how the narratives would mesh, but I needn't have worried, as Zahn had it well in hand.

Of the two main POV characters, Eli definitely has the lion's share of the story. This is a book about Thrawn, after all, and Eli is rarely far from Thrawn's side. The dynamic between Eli and Thrawn is terrific to read about, as Eli initially wants nothing to do with his new alien charge. In the very xenophobic Empire (both blatant and subtle), being assigned to an alien office is tantamount to career suicide...Eli knows it, and everyone around him knows it. Eli's very career hinges upon the success that Thrawn finds within the Imperial Navy, with everyone expecting the alien to fail. Fortunately, Thrawn is generally more than up to the task, and the relationship between the two men grows from ambivalence, to respect, to friendship. The good thing is, Eli is no slouch either, and coming from the wild reaches of space (ie underprivileged), has to fight against the prejudices of the core world elite. This gives both men a similar uphill battle against preconceived notions, further cementing their relationship. In fact, Eli's relationship with Thrawn is very similar to Captain Pellaeon's in the original Thrawn trilogy, viewing Thrawn as a mentor as much as a superior officer.

As for Arindha Pryce, her story takes a completely different track, but she crosses paths with Thrawn more

than a few times in the book, with their interactions becoming increasingly heavy and impactful. The daughter of a miner family, Arindha rises to prominence in the civilian sector of the Empire, eventually ending up on Coruscant, and rising to political power. While Thrawn's rise is generally accomplished through logic and superior tactics, Arindha's is from a mix of tenacity, luck, and sheer audacity. I actually had an idea of how her tale was going to go, and it ended up going a different way entirely. So kudos to Zahn for making her character more than what she initially seemed to be.

As for the portions of the book themselves told strictly from Thrawn's perspective, they are few and far between, but they serve well in showing his superior analytic and people reading skills. But it's a good thing that Zahn kept these to a minimum, as a whole book with those continual observations would have been a tedious read.

Supporting characters are varied, a healthy mix of various Imperial officers, civilian government employees, a few adversaries for Thrawn to match wits with, some early rebellion forces, and maybe a guest appearance or two by a few Star Wars favs. But keep in mind that unlike some of the other recent Disney-owned Star Wars books, this is not a cameo heavy novel. Aside from Grand Moff Tarkin, cameos are used very sparingly, and with good effect. This is a good thing, as many Star Wars books (canon and legends both) had a tendency of throwing in cameos from as many fan favorite characters as possible, just to give the books that extra oomph. Which was not only wholly unnecessary, but was frequently annoying. Every author had a different take on how these core characters would act, and none of them quite gelled with the movie versions, so in the end you had some bastardized version of a character that didn't even need to be in the story, resulting in a narrative clusterf*ck. The mass appeal of Star Wars went well beyond the "main" characters, so throwing them into every single story only served to diminish the impact of any original characters being introduced.

One of the biggest compliments I can pay Timothy Zahn as an author is that I don't feel you have to be a Star Wars fan to get enjoyment out of his Star Wars books. This is especially true here. There are no Jedi or Sith, no lightsabers, and nobody is using the Force. This is very much a tale of the inner workings of the Empire, and the factors and circumstances faced by some of its military and civilian members. Yes, it's Sci-Fi, but very broad and approachable Sci-Fi. Sure, there are a few space battles here and there, but for the most part it's a very character driven piece, using conversations and interactions to set the tone and propel the narrative.

Sadly, because this is a standalone novel, and isn't the size of Stephen King's unabridged version of *The Stand*, there are some segments that get glossed over. Thrawn and Eli are in the Imperial Academy together, but aside from a couple of notable exceptions, this section breezes by awfully quickly. Once they are in full Imperial service, there's a few instances of time jumps, usually around a year, and so Thrawn's ascendancy from Commander to Admiral, and then from Admiral to Grand Admiral, happen awfully quickly. There's also Thrawn's interactions with a certain sinister villain that ring kind of false, given the level of Thrawn's awareness and intuition. But these are really the only nitpicks I have against the book.

Ultimately, this is an relatively easy, fast paced read, chronicling the rise of the best tactical mind the Galactic Empire has ever known. While die hard Star Wars fans will get the most mileage from the book, any fan of Sci-Fi can find something to like here. And if you are in any way a fan of Thrawn, then you need to read this origin tale as soon as you can!

Michael Otway says

While so far I'm not a fan of any new Canon novels, I'll eagerly look forward to this release.

This story will be set before Rebels Season Three and Timothy Zahn has said it will explore a part of Thrawn's history that he has never had the opportunity to write about before. Therefore it may very well fit in nicely with his books from the old Universe for original EU fans, even though it is part of the new Star Wars Universe.

"You're going to get to see how Thrawn basically got to his position of power, how he became so respected in the Empire, and just what makes him such a brilliant villain and tactician" - Penguin Random House UK's marketing manager, Matthew Ruddle.

Zahn has also said there will be plenty of Easter Eggs for fans of the original Thrawn books too, which will delight many of us throughout reading.

Here's to hoping this sets a new standard from the so far disappointing new Canon books.

Ben Brown says

Boy, did I want to like this book more than I did.

A few quick background details: prior to his appearing on Star Wars: Rebels last fall, I had close to zero prior experience with the character of Grand Admiral Thrawn (I say "close to zero," because after doing a little research, I was surprised to discover that he did make an appearance in one of the "Galaxy of Fear" books from the 90s, a series that I remember reading voraciously as a youngster. I have zero recollection of his appearance, however).

After YEARS of hearing from scores of EU fans about the sheer awesomeness that was Grand Admiral Thrawn-about his uncanny intelligence, his calculating nature, his overall badassery-I'd be lying if I said that, upon finally meeting the man himself in "Rebels," I wasn't a tad disappointed. While I dug his "look" and I could appreciate what made him a threat to the Rebels gang, there was little about Thrawn-or at least, this version of Thrawn-that struck me as distinct or original. Honestly, if there was anything that did surprise me about Thrawn, it was how eerily similar in personality he was to Grand Moff Tarkin.

I lay all of that out, because I want to make it clear exactly what I was hoping for from book. My hope was that it would illuminate for me why Thrawn is a character that deserves all of the accolades that he's had heaped upon him. And with Timothy Zahn-the character's creator-returning to pen this newest book, I had every reason to hope and anticipate that this book would get me jazzed about Thrawn in a way that "Rebels" never quite managed.

Judging by the star rating, I guess you see how well that turned out.

For years, I've put off reading "Heir to the Empire," "Dark Force Rising," and third "The Last Command," Zahn's early 90s-sequel trilogy that more or less acted as fans' sequel trilogy long before Disney did; unfortunately, if said books are anything like "Thrawn" in terms of how they approach their narrative, I'm thinking that's a wait I can continue to prolong. Look, I can appreciate the crispness of Zahn's prose and the way that he constructs militaristic battle sequences-there's one action scene about halfway through that almost makes the book worthwhile-but on the whole, I was stunned by just how thoroughly unaffected I was by any of what Zahn was doing here.

I didn't connect with any of the characters-not Eli Vanto, Thrawn's conscripted right-hand man; not Arihnda Pryce, who you might recall as "Governor Pryce" on "Rebels"; and especially not Thrawn, who-to my shock-I found here to be even MORE "blah" than he was on Rebels- I didn't care about the stakes, and I found Zahn's writing style to be curiously cold, Simply put: I just didn't care about any of it. At around the halfway point, when I found myself skimming over huge swaths of text, I realized: this book just wasn't working for me.

So overall, this was a big bummer for me. With Thrawn due back for Season 4 of Rebels, I'm still (perhaps naively?) holding out hope that the character can be redeemed for me and that I can still be convinced of his awesomeness, but at this point-after 20-some episodes and 427 pages of novel-I'm not holding my breath.

Crystal Starr Light says

I don't care to read any "new" Star Wars canon, but anything Zahn writes, I will read.

Rob says

Executive Summary: After a slow start, I really enjoyed this book a lot. But I spent the whole book rooting for a member of the Empire, and I feel dirty for it.

Audiobook: Marc Thompson is so good, that I really don't want to listen to a Star Wars book he doesn't narrate. You get the usual Star Wars audiobook treatment here: Music, Sound effects and a narrator who can do all the voices, making this feel more like a radio drama than a novel at times. Generally I find music in audiobooks distracting, but the Star Wars books always do it right, and make any book narrated by Mr. Thompson a must listen for me.

Full Review

I always loved the Star Wars movies as a kid, but I was never a big enough fan to jump into the Expanded Universe (Legends) books until I was much older. Shortly after I did, Disney bought Lucas and it made all of that stuff non-canon. The one series I did read, was the one that everyone seemed to recommend the most: The Thrawn trilogy.

I enjoyed that trilogy, especially in audio. Often dubbed the third trilogy, it was a pretty good attempt to tell a bit story after the end of Return of the Jedi. I enjoyed those books, but I didn't love them. The main antagonist however, was fantastic. Thrawn made for a very different character than the emperor and Vader. I also found Mara Jade another excellent character. Timothy Zahn's contribution to Star Wars was substantial. It was a shame to see those characters suddenly be relegated to "Legends". I understand why they did it though.

Fast forward a few years, and when I saw the announcement that Thrawn was being added back into the canon again, first on the excellent Star Wars Rebels show, and later with a new book written by Timothy Zahn and I was really excited.

I don't remember a whole lot about the original Thrawn series beyond the characteristics of Thrawn himself. Most of the other characters and plot details are hazy at best. What is fresh however is his appearance on Rebels. This book serves as a backstory of sorts. How Grand Admiral Thrawn came to be such a highly ranked member of the Imperial Fleet.

You get a lot more insight into his thinking. At times I found that a bit tedious, especially the parts where he was observing people's facial movements in order to evaluate what they were thinking. However as the book went on that seemed to be a bit less frequent, or maybe I just finally got used to it.

The character is so well done, that I found myself rooting for him to outmaneuver everyone he went up against, and forgot that he was working for the Empire. He's certainly not the villain in this book that he was in the original trilogy, or that he's portrayed on the Rebels show. It probably helps that none of the usual heroes are present to oppose him. Much of his issue stems from the empire itself. I enjoyed getting this kind of view of the character.

The secondary characters were quite good as well. Not quite to the standards of the original series, but memorable nonetheless. Eli Vanto is definitely a new favorite, and I hope we get more stories about him in addition to Thrawn. Marinda Price was another interesting character, who despite being a secondary character, got quite a lot of character development.

Originally I was wondering what her story had to do with the plot, and I found the early parts of her sections slow. Eventually though her story got more interesting, and its relevance was revealed.

Overall, I thought this was a really enjoyable addition, and I hope that it's only the start, because while we got a lot of interesting backstory on Thrawn, I found myself with a lot more questions than answers. I especially want to see where this fits in with the final season of the Rebels show.

HBalikov says

I did not read the earlier "Thrawn Trilogy" written by Zahn over 25 years ago. This book is Zahn's reinvestment in Mitth'raw'nuruodo, more commonly known as "Thrawn." The book takes us back to when The Empire discovers Thrawn as a "castaway" in a chance encounter in the outer regions.

What The Empire doesn't initially know is that Thrawn, having risen through the ranks to become a well respected member of the Chiss Ascendancy, advocated breaking the code of the Chiss and, we are told, was exiled for that. The Empire knows little about the Chiss.

This book is a slow-mover and thus, for fans of action, it may not offer enough punch per chapter to satisfy. Zahn is creating a backstory that will illuminate the Thrawn Trilogy and he is not going to be rushed through it. From the point that Thrawn is "discovered," we are taken through how each of his superiors plans to exploit, train, sidetrack and/or discredit him.

Zahn takes us inside Thrawn's thought process and we see how the humanoid Chiss have additional sensory perception and what that allows them to perceive. Each chapter that focuses on Thrawn's perspective begins with an observation or maxim that allows us to better understand this person and his code of conduct. It also serves as a tutorial for those who wish to adopt his "warrior" p.o.v.

Zahn gives us the stories of two younger characters: Arhinda Pryce and Eli Vanto. In that process, we see things from their perspective and we share their innermost thoughts. I guess it is time for full disclosure or, at least, self-revelation. I am a Star Wars fan. I was from the time of A New Hope. I have read some of the Star Wars books, but I am not a Star Wars geek. It was only when reading Alejandro's review that I learned of Thrawn and that a valued author, had written about him. Zahn gives us a measured build-up of information that leads to understand how this Thrawn becomes Grand Admiral, arch villain of later novels and dramas.

Thrawn is paired with Eli Vanto, just a cadet in a “rural” finishing school for The Empire’s space force. Cast initially as Thrawn’s “translator,” he becomes more of a factor as the story goes forward. And, whether he wishes it or not, his fate seems tied to that of Thrawn. On the other hand, young Arhinda Pryce sees politics destroy her family’s remote world mining operation and she seizes what opportunity is left to her. The book spotlights her relentless climb to political power and her eventual encounters with Thrawn that lead to mutually supported activities. By the end, Pryce has become the governor of the Lothal Sector (as is consistent with the story in the animated version of Star Wars).

As I mentioned above, you may find the plot ponderous and the backstories less than essential. For my tastes, it was a very skillful and innovative novel that succeeds in both giving us a solid slice of the Empire under Palpatine and great insight into why Thrawn is Thrawn and what the Chiss may become.

<https://vignette.wikia.nocookie.net/s...>

Bradley says

A long time ago in a galaxy, far, far away, I was once absolutely amazed and thrilled when a certain Timothy Zahn revitalized the whole Star Wars franchise by picking up a few decades after the events in Episode Six, introducing the most charming and deadly enemy the New Republic had ever faced.

I was doubly amazed because there was no heavy reliance on BDOs, just strategical and tactical strength. Grand Admiral Thrawn came back from the outer rim and WIPED everything in his path.

My jaw dropped. I said to myself, MY LORD, I WISH WE HAD ANOTHER TRILOGY OF MOVIES BASED ON THIS. It's BRILLIANT!

Instead, we had a prequel trilogy and then two out of three after-trilogy and two side-stories.

AND NO THRAWN ANYWHERE.

I felt a great disturbance in the Force, as if millions of voices suddenly cried out in terror and were suddenly silenced.

crickets

So, eventually, I got this bright idea. Go back to the original author of Thrawn and read all about Thrawn's rise to power. I avoided it only because I tend to avoid franchise novels, but come on! It's THRAWN!

And I was satisfied. More than satisfied. I loved getting an inside look into this brilliant guy with dual loyalties and enough wisdom for three sectors. :) So? Love to hate? Enjoy just how brilliant a villain he is because he's also complex and admirable?

Yep. All of the above. All the love of Darth Vader before we saw him as a kid and none of the mistakes. :)

Totally worth it. Easily my favorite SW novel after Timothy Zahn's original classic. :)

Josh says

Thrawn lives on.

As a large majority of the reviews from various sites have stated, this is the best version of Thrawn we have ever gotten, we get to spend more time and learn more about Thrawn in the first quarter of this book than we ever did in the Legends books, and yet he still remains mysterious. I'm now okay with saying goodbye to Legends Thrawn, and embracing Canon Thrawn as an equally incredible version of the brilliant strategist.

With the combination of his excellent portrayal in Star Wars Rebels: Season 3 (Timothy Zahn himself praised the use and characterization of Thrawn in Star Wars Rebels, after the 2-part season finale 'Zero Hour', his full interview can be found on StarWars.com) and this book, simply titled Star Wars: Thrawn, it's hard to deny the fact that this beloved character has been brought back with the utmost care and respect, and has evolved beyond the simple (and awesome) villain he was in Legends. Kudos to LucasFilm (Yes, they run everything, not Disney like some people think) and Timothy Zahn for bringing back one of the greatest villains in a galaxy far, far away.

Now, onto the book: I will specifically not say anything plot based because of spoilers (Yes I'm aware you can hide your review if it contains spoilers, I'm trying to avoid that), so what I will say is this: Solid characters - Eli Vanto, the new Captain Pellaeon, certainly proves to be one of the best new characters, and even better than Pellaeon. Pryce isn't the tough aggressive character we see in Star Wars Rebels, her arc from point A to point B is one of the best in the book. Obviously Thrawn shines the brightest here, it is the most developed, strategic and brilliant he has ever been.

This book certainly has a more focused narrative than that of Dark Force Rising, The Last Command or Outbound Flight, and I personally find that refreshing, it always felt like it was building, rather than padding. The audiobook has brilliant voice-work from Marc Thompson (who does a great Lars Mikkelsen Thrawn impression). The working relationships between characters are incredibly strong, and feel natural and grounded for a galaxy so huge. The empire's alien-racism (Xenophobia?) is finally touched on a lot, unlike the Legends books which hinted at it, but never really tackled it. And finally, this book contained some great universe/history-building, showing the empire eventually evolving into what we see during the Galactic Civil War.

This is a perfect character study. It's the Thrawn we always wanted but never got in Legends, and finally he's here in all his glory, in the Star Wars canon.

Mogsy (MMOGC) says

4 of 5 stars at The BiblioSanctum <https://bibliosanctum.com/2017/05/04/...>

Unpopular opinion time: I never cared for the Thrawn trilogy. Though to be fair, I was late to the party and only started reading Heir to the Empire after college sometime in the mid-2000s, about 15 years after its original publication. In my eyes, the books did not age very well, and I think many tended to view them through nostalgia-tinted glasses.

Still, setting my personal critique of the books aside, as a character I do maintain that Thrawn is one of the best to come out of the Star Wars universe. And I suspect the powers that be agree as well, explaining why Thrawn was canonically reintroduced in the third season of Star Wars Rebels, despite the original trilogy having been classified "Legends" along with much of the old Expanded Universe. Timothy Zahn was tapped

to reprise his role as author to a new novel about the titular character, which is intended to chronicle his early life and meteoric rise to power. It's a rare opportunity for any reader to revisit a favorite character like this, and thus far I've really enjoyed Thrawn's appearances on the show, which is why, come hell or high water, I knew I was going to read this book.

Like many origin tales, Thrawn begins with our Chiss protagonist in humble circumstances, alone and exiled on a planet at the edge of known space. For those familiar with Zahn's *Mist Encounter*, this first section is essentially a fleshed out and updated retelling of the events in that short story. A good chunk of the novel is also told through the eyes of Eli Vanto, a lowly Imperial cadet who is taken along on an investigation of this jungle world because of his knowledge of these backwater systems. When the crew encounters Thrawn, they are immediately impressed by his survival skills and knowledge of military strategy, traits that are said to be valued by the Chiss Ascendancy. Obviously, these skills are also highly sought-after in the Empire, leading the Imperials to bring Thrawn to Coruscant so that Emperor Palpatine can decide his fate.

Despite being an alien, Thrawn manages to impress the Emperor with his eloquence and persuasiveness, and immediately gets assigned to a military academy to hone his skills and knowledge of the Imperial Navy. Eli Vanto is sent along with him, in order to be translator and guide to all things related to the Empire's culture and society—a role that the cadet resents at first, but in time he learns to respect Thrawn's intelligence and personality, especially when after graduation, the Chiss starts getting promotion after promotion.

Meanwhile, on a mining planet called Lothal, another origin story for a Rebels character is beginning to unfold. Before she became the governor of her planet, Arihnda Pryce was a young company heiress, forced to watch everything her family has built fall into the Empire's hands. Secretly vowing her revenge, Pryce agrees to work for an Imperial Senator, already making plans to worm herself inside the political machine where she will bide her time until she has enough power to take what she wants. Along the way though, she'll need some help—and Thrawn, who is making his own way up the ranks at this point, may prove to be the perfect ally.

Not surprisingly, Thrawn is a very character-focused novel, detailing how the Chiss became so successful even in the face of the Empire's xenophobia, as well as to put readers into his head. The first is accomplished by simply by giving examples of Thrawn's genius and describing the processes that led to his victories. It didn't matter that many in the Empire held anti-alien attitudes; the Emperor saw potential in Thrawn and he only cares about results. It is clear that Thrawn eventually achieved Grand Admiral status on his own terms and merits, and his leadership skills naturally drew others to him despite what they might think of his origins.

However, putting readers into Thrawn's head is another, more subtle, matter. Zahn's writing has always struck me as rather stark and clear-cut, in a whatever-it-takes-to-get-the-job-done kind of way. I daresay without the glimpses he offered into Thrawn's mind, this book could have been a very dry read indeed. Fortunately, peppered throughout the novel are brief looks into what makes his character tick, from his journal excerpts at the beginning of each chapter to his furtive observations on how others are behaving and reacting around him (though there must have been at least a couple dozen mentions of "facial heat" or "cheeks tightening", making me wish there'd been more variation in the descriptions). A lot can also be gleaned from Thrawn's interactions with the other characters. Through Vanto's and Pryce's eyes, we see how much Thrawn values and rewards hard work and loyalty, and he puts just as much of both into the men and women who work under him. In many ways, Thrawn serves as a counterpoint to a lot of traditional Star Wars villains as well. For one, he does not possess the Force, mainly relying on thinking rather than fighting to win his battles. He also views unnecessary loss of life as a waste, a point that I think earns him a lot of sympathy from readers. While it's true Thrawn may be a symbol of the Empire, Zahn nevertheless makes it so easy to root for him.

All told, Thrawn isn't among the best novels I've read from the new canon, but neither is it among the worst. It's actually quite a decent book, and in my eyes, "New Thrawn" certainly beats out "Old Thrawn" hands

down. In theory, you'd think Thrawn would also appeal most to fans of the character, the original trilogy, or Star Wars Rebels, but I would urge anyone—even if you do not consider yourself to be a hardcore Star Wars fan—to give this one a look. There's a reason why Thrawn as a character is so beloved, and this is his story.

Audiobook Comments: At this point, I think anything I say about Marc Thompson will sound like a broken record. But if all of my praise for him happens to sound the same, it's only because it's true! The guy is great at voices, and I love his Thrawn, the way he made him sound similar to the Rebels version. Do yourself a favor and listen to this one.

Alejandro says

The great tactician returns to the canon!

ONCE GREAT, ALWAYS GREAT

Grand Admiral Thrawn was created by Timothy Zahn in his original *Thrawn* trilogy that it was the cornerstone of the then *Star Wars* Expanded Universe in prose novels.

However due the buying of Disney of Lucasfilms, that trilogy became non-canon and part of what is know nowadays as “Legends”, and of course, since that trilogy was written so early in the franchise where the Clone Wars weren't properly developed in the Prequel Trilogy, it's also clear that several details in that prose trilogy were already imposible to fit in the *Star Wars* canon timeline.

Of course, Thrawn kept returning in a way or another (mentioned or actually appearing) in other following novels by Zahn, but all those novels fell under the “Legends” label too.

So, while a couple of years, Thrawn remained in a blurry area without a canonical status.

But...

Thrawn became canonical (once again) in the Third Season of the CGI animated TV series *Star Wars: Rebels* and he was great there, but it was a matter of respect and gratitude that the high powers (Disney and Lucasfilms executives) would give a green light to the prolific author Timothy Zahn to write a new novel, now properly inside of the current *Star Wars* Canon, revealing an unknown part of Thrawn's past and how he reached the high rank of Grand Admiral in the Imperial Navy.

And so, Thrawn proved once again, that he was great since the beginning, with his military cunning, astonishing tactics, timing caution, charismatic manipulation, deep interest in art and culture, and intense honor.

Once great, always great. Not matter if canon or not.

NOT EVEN THRAWN IS AN ISLAND

In this exceptional novel, Timothy Zahn exposed how an alien, from even outside of the galaxy, was able to reach one of the highest ranks in the racist and elitist Imperial Navy, that as in many real life situation, you can't do it without friendships, alliances and contacts.

Thrawn forges key links with already known *Star Wars* characters (I don't spoil them), but also, he played his hands when choosing to keep near of him, characters like Eli Vanto (first appearance here) and Arihnda Pryce (introduced in *Star Wars: Rebels*) where each became valuable assets to the great tactician in different battlefields: Military and Politics, respectively.

Of course, while the book was really great in the chapters dedicated to Thrawn, that it was my reason to read the novel, I felt that there were just too much about Arinhda Pryce, that it was clear that she was pivotal to help Thrawn in certain moments of his rising military career, however, I don't think it was necessary to explain in so much detail how Arihnda Pryce ascended in her own choosing of career path.

Each chapter begins with excerpts of Thrawn's personal diary, that they are astonishingly written, certainly a book about the art of war from the point of view of Thrawn could be something overwhelming to read.

The great tactician is back! The war games are on again!

Jessica ❁ => Silverbow => ❁ Rabid Reads-no-more says

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

After finishing Chuck Wendig's AFTERMATH trilogy, I tried to settle in to several non-STAR WARS books, but after a few lackluster beginnings that were all unceremoniously set aside, I surrendered to my fate and indulged my recent obsession with THRAWN.

I didn't know what to expect, having never heard of the character, but it was well received by readers, and if a character is so badass that his name is the only title needed . . . I was okay with lack of prior knowledge (which worked out just fine, FYI).

The story begins with a small unit of Imperial soldiers on a recently discovered planet, for the purpose of gathering information about a recently discovered alien population. Apparently part of the Imperial initiative is studying any and all new life forms (probably to better subjugate them).

BUT.

Something is picking off the members of the group.

The way it's presented is horrifying.

So imagine my surprise when an officer discovers that the wraith responsible for the deaths of so many of his drones has stowed away on one of the Imperial vessels, and rather than destroying the culprit in a hail of laser fire, questions and ultimately delivers him to the Emperor himself.

You: O.o

Me: RIGHT?!

Thrawn is a Chiss, a member of an alien race so feared and respected that it exists only in legend. Or so Eli Banto, a student of one of the Imperial academies thought, but he recognized Thrawn for what he was immediately, and being the only one present capable of communicating with the Chiss, he finds his life upended when he gets assigned as Thrawn's translator and guide.

The Emperor is intrigued by Thrawn, you see, and enrolls him into the Imperial academy on Coruscant, transferring Eli with him, the equivalent of a semester away from Eli's intended graduation.

THRAWN is the story of them both, alternating primarily between their POVs.

Zahn did an excellent job of illustrating the alienness of Thrawn's mind. Not only are his senses heightened, but he uses them to analyze and categorize the humans that surround with surprising insight. It's as unsettling as it is captivating.

In contrast, Eli is wholly human, albeit a decent human as far as humans go, and his perspective keeps the bizarreness of Thrawn's from becoming overwhelming.

Beyond the likability of these main characters, THRAWN is ultimately an underdog story and who doesn't love a good underdog?

SO. If you also love STAR WARS and and underdogs, I highly recommend this recent(ish) addition to the canon. If you're anything like me, you'll be chomping at the bit for more information about this blue-skinned, red-eyed alien and his legendary people.
