



# Dark Imperium

*Guy Haley*

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Fell times have come to the galaxy. Cadia has fallen, destroyed by the onslaught of Chaos. A Great Rift in the warp has opened and from its depths spew daemons and the horrors of Old Night. But all hope is not lost... A hero, long absent, has returned and with him comes the wrath of the Ultramarines reborn. Roboute Guilliman has arisen to lead the Imperium out of darkness on a crusade the likes of which has not been seen since the fabled days of the Emperor. But never before have the forces of Ruin amassed in such numbers, and nowhere is safe from despoliation. From the dreaded Scourge Stars come the hordes of the Plaguefather, Lord Nurgle, and their pustulent eye is xed on Macragge. As the Indomitas Crusade draws to an end, Guilliman races to Ultramar and a confrontation with the Death Guard.

### Read it because

It's a new beginning for the Warhammer 40,000 universe! Guy Haley crafts a tale of the returned Primarch Roboute Guilliman as he races to save his realm from the servants of Nurgle – it's the perfect accompaniment to the new Warhammer 40,000 game!

## Dark Imperium Details

Date : Published January 23rd 2018 by Black Library

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Author : Guy Haley

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## From Reader Review Dark Imperium for online ebook

### David says

It had its moments - Haley really captures the bigness of everything in the 40K universe.

Unfortunately, the book's critical flaw - one I find in many novice authors, is that it feels more like a number of short stories strung together.

All in all, a fun read at its best when dealing with the primarch's reaction to how times have changed millenia after his near-death, but it doesn't quite rise to the heights of Eisenhorn either.

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### Glyn says

I really enjoyed this book. Guy Haley is set a monumental and arguably task- to set the background for a whole new generation of Warhammer 40,000 fluff. One has to say that it is a task that would challenge any author, even some of the Black Library's bigger hitters like Abnett and Dembski-Bowden but he carries it off well.

He is presented with a very different Imperium, facing a radically exacerbated threat from the forces of Chaos and the need to use all the rebranded names for stuff. Here we have a returned Primarch who is wracked by disgust, guilt and (whisper it quietly) self doubt. A whole new generation of super Space Marines with the issues about characterisation and pure and simple humanity that have often afflicted these ultimate defenders of humanity. Actually the Primaris are one of the weaker aspects of the story. They seem bland and mainly distinguished by the colours they were - not a strong point in the written word. The new units are name checked but since GW are only now releasing the models, the descriptions are basic. The humans are nicely presented and are interesting and the Death Guard make fine bad guys.

This novel however is all about the returned Primarch Roboute Guilleman. This is one of the more divisive characters in GW. The most creator loved Primarch, this "spiritual liege" has drawn the mockery and contempt of many hardcore fans because of the sheer degree of his supposed perfection. Haley's approach is to make him a doubting, questioning autocrat. He knows that he has to rule that way- he presents himself with theoretical arguments to justify it, but he isn't convinced by his own reasoning. The extent of this questioning may be shocking to those who know the background but aren't hardcore fluff fanatics. It certainly makes for interesting developments in the future.

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### Michael Dodd says

Opening with Guilliman and Fulgrim's fateful duel 10,000 years in the past, this focuses thereafter on the conclusion of Roboute Guilliman's Indomitus Crusade, a little over 100 years after the events of the Gathering Storm.

This is a novel with multiple aims, but what it doesn't do is try to answer every question about what's changed in 40k. It doesn't detail the immediate aftermath of Guilliman's rebirth or explain what Cawl was doing all along...instead it offers occasional hints to a lot of those answers while focusing instead on exploring how Guilliman has changed since his 'death', and how the Imperium is reacting to his return and

the changes forced upon the galaxy.

It represents a powerful introduction to the latest iteration of the 40k setting, and one that harks right back to the Heresy with a strange, but compelling, mixture of darkness and unexpected light.

Read the full review at <http://www.trackofwords.com/2017/06/2...>

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## **Monsour says**

Gathering Storm brought us the biggest thing that happen in current 40k story.

### **A return of a Primarch**

The primarch is a big deal for the warhammer series but also in the franchise in general. For long as I could remember the story of the series was never progress until they introduce the Gathering Storm. Now GW cocktease engine heat up for the next chapter.

**Dark Imperium** stick close core to the main series and focuses upon Roboute Guilliman sometimes refereed as “Avenging Son”, “The Master of Ultramar”, and “King of five hundred worlds” and his war against Chaos and the Traitor legions(his brothers army), specifically the Death Guard A.K.A the Plague Marine.

### *Primaris Space Marine Vs Enchase Death Guard*

Possibly the strongest point of this book is how humane it is. Yeah where talking about 8ft tall super soldiers and regular soldiers fighting against other 8ft tall super soldiers with zombies as their cannon fodder. We see some human moments between imperial guards, the old Astartes and the new breed of Astartes the Primaris.

But the most interesting part of this is the reaction of Guilliman in the modern Imperium. His basically a guy who just woke up in a coma and ask to manage an entire galactic empire without a single person he personally knew and cared (because all of them are dead/disappear) to help him. It shows how he dislike the concept of religion taking over the empire he knew that suppose to be the symbol “Logic and Reason”, how the other Ultramarine only care about gaining glory instead of actually defending humanity against their enemies and the best part is how bad he feel on dividing the legion into 1000 per chapter. He didn’t think that the war would be this bad and this long and giving them with a limited soldier makes everything worse.

The battle scenes are great in Warhammer standards but also brief. Guy Hayley also had the balls to have a primarch fight in the first and have Guilliman with emperor’s burning blade in the last fight. It’s very entertaining, but you need some little knowledge about Horus Heresy to get to know why the fans are so hype about this.

### **Now let’s talk about the elephant in the room**

This guy

**HOW THE FUCK** this guy made the Primaris project without any background in the Astartes project. I

know his an Arch Magos and probably rediscovered some lost technology after the Horus Heresy event. But without any experience on genetic manipulation, how could he build these guys?

And his 10,000 year old? AND NOBODY TALKS ABOUT HIM?

Don't let me start about Guilliman forcing the imperium into teaming up with the Eldari faction. *The guys their been killing for 10,000 years is their ally now*

#### **OVERALL:**

I like what Guy Haley's doing is this book and I dont even mind that Games Workshop will give him the blessing to be the main writer of the current story.

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#### **Lemuel CyroN Salubo says**

The next progression of the story of Warhammer 40k is well told by Guy Haley in this book. I always wondered whether there would be named Primaris marines and they are pretty much brought to the front by Guilliman himself. Interesting to see where the conflict between them and the Death Guard would go to. Nice start for 8th edition lore!

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#### **Kevin Stillman says**

The good: The book serves to "conclude" the story of the Heresy-era Ultramarines and to further the story of the 41st/42nd Millennium Ultramarines! And it does so by bringing the most Ultra of the Heresy Era Ultramarines, Roboute Guilliman, into the 42nd Millennium! He gets to meet Black Library's primary Ultramarine protagonist, which sent me into spasms of fanboy glee.

The characterization of both Guilliman and Marneus Calgar were the narrative highlights of the book. The Rise of the Primarch game book showcased Guilliman's character in the 42nd Millennium, but did \*not\* do so for Calgar. Dark Imperium shows both Calgar's character as the first \*former\* Chapter Master. It also showcases Calgar's style of governance, which I do not think any of the previous Ultramarines books demonstrated.

The bad: The book does not have a very strong "end" to the main story it is telling. It just kind of ends. The bolter bits, while not awful and serving as a great way to sell a \$150 box set of models, are less interesting than the character bits with Guilliman, Calgar, Ventriss,

The ugly: Mortarion, Typhus, the Death Guard, and other Nurgle-ish elements show up. Mr. Haley demonstrates pretty clearly....they are ugly, icky, and disgusting.

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#### **Alex says**

It was a great book and read and I commend GW on taking a brave step forward. However I think it needed more Guilliman. He is so superbly written in this, it's just a shame he only appears in about 6 chapters.

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### **Matthew says**

A solid new entry into the 40k pantheon. Dark Imperium has some decent action sequences, and the fluff is built upon nicely by Haley. The stuff regarding the Primaris marines needed further development, and I was disappointed not to read more about Mortarion in this entry. A lot to look forward to in the future.

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### **Keamy Loken says**

I loved it, great story, good pacing everything I hoped for and more.

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### **Sud666 says**

Dark Imperium was truly excellent. Set in the "current" Warhammer 40K universe it tells the story of the Primarch Roboute Guilliman of the Ultramarines.

In the wake of the events of Abbadon's 13th Crusade, a Primarch has risen to defend the Imperium. This is the story of how he went about reorganizing the Imperium and the Ultramarine star system of Ultramar. This book went a long ways towards explaining the hows, why and whats of the events during the Dark Imperium. The Indomitus Crusade is over and new Primaris Marines are bolstering all of the Chapters. The Realm of Ultramar is under attack by Nurgle and the Death Guard led by their Daemon Primarch Mortarion.

That is all I am going to say about the plot. The side story which fills in the history of the events was of true interest to me. It not only explained the import of the events but also gave a good insight into the major players. It was interesting to see the changes wrought by Guilliman as Imperial Regent. This is one of the first books I've read where there is a deep discussion about the mistakes the Emperor made. Often he is looked at as a God. Perhaps he is now, but he was once a man, albeit superhuman. Still it is a frank discussion about things that have bothered me about the Emperor- from his knowledge about Chaos, his stringent moratorium on psykers in the ranks of the Astartes and how this turned Magnus into a traitor, etc.

An excellent book for anyone looking to get caught up on the epic events going on during the Dark Imperium. Highly Recommended.

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### **Alexander Draganov says**

Very generous to give four stars to this, but that's what a fanboy would do.

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### **Vincent Knotley says**

An exceptional first step into the future of Games Workshop's far flung and grim future. Though it could be argued that the end comes a little quicker than one might desire, this fact serves to reinforce the bedrock of a quite excellent tale.

There's a miss or two here and there, as with all books. Certain characters yearn for just one more interaction as all who foster our intrigue might.

What Dark Imperium does is fling open the doors to a future of the IP which I for one cannot wait to see explored deeper.

Also, one scene in particular where an assload of rancid daemons show up is without a doubt one of the most joyous and disgusting things I've ever had the pleasure (or displeasure?) of reading.

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## **Marc Collins says**

There are very few things as daunting as new beginnings, but Guy Haley takes the challenge head on. Dark Imperium represents our first look behind the curtain of 8th edition, the first lurch into the 42nd Millennium. It acknowledges the past, anchors the present and presents a number of wonderful glimpses towards the future. It is a daunting undertaking, and one that will undoubtedly be subject to heightened scrutiny and scorn.

And I loved it.

Moving from a macro-view of the nature of the galaxy, before pivoting to look at the personal tragedy of Roboute Guilliman, the novel begins in the past. It covers the slaying of Guilliman by Fulgrim. We get to see Guilliman the warrior, Guilliman the lynchpin which holds the Imperium together. It is a Guilliman who struggles with the decisions he has already made and the mistakes which haunt him. He is a man already at odds with the galaxy he inhabits, lamenting the heightened reverence of his sons in this new age.

In confronting Fulgrim he seeks to break his "by the book" persona and surprise the daemon primarch, but it flounders in the attempt. Fulgrim is wonderfully portrayed; vain, contrary, playful and easily provoked. The battle doesn't unfold as I expected (what with Fulgrim's lot still being in possession of the anathame in the Heresy) but instead plays off of the wounding of Guilliman by Kor Phaeron.

When the timeskip hits, it not only skips 10,000 years but the additional 100 of the Indomitus Crusade. The Guilliman we are confronted with is world weary and time-worn; hating everything about the current age. He hates the omnipresence of religion, he hates the architecture, he hates the singing of the Mechanicus (and has made them stop). Representing a man still out of place and out of time, Haley delves into Guilliman's doubts throughout. He is wary of his deals with Cawl. He is shattered by his communion with the Emperor, and he is disgusted at what he is forced to do with his power.

He is also deeply lonely, described at one point as "the lonely demigod". This drives him to identify with and mentor Decimus Felix, one of the Primaris marines appointed as his equerry. Taken as a child from Laphis in Ultramar, Felix is a living link to the past Guilliman yearns for. Guilliman's decisions are motivated by a deep sense of nostalgia. His ambitions for restoring old (or Greater) Ultramar seem practical, but are ultimately driven by his yearning for the past. He tries to force things to be as they were, to orient himself. He lies, even to himself, about what he truly needs from his home.

Added to this is Guilliman's issues with the Emperor. Bracketed by the unbridled soul of the Emperor, Guilliman has realised that they were nothing more than tools. The Emperor's love is for humanity, but is caustic to the smaller parts of it. This struggle to rationalise the Emperor's plan and betrayal are counterpointed by the Ministorum, who Guilliman is forced to court. His interactions with his new militant-apostolic cast a harsh light on the unease that Guilliman has for his part in the Emperor's design, and the

notion that such design is divine.

The meditative and contemplative aspects of the novel are marbled through with combat that reflects the new normal. As the Plague Wars rage and Ultramar burns, the primary lens we see this through is that of the Primaris. The initial battles show us the Unnumbered Sons of the Primarchs, the pseudolegions of the Greysields. The new toys are introduced in withering displays of fire, though it also shows how many of them have to act in concert to take down the Traitor forces. They're powerful, but not invincible, and by this time the enemy has had 100 years to adapt to their tactics. There is one memorable moment where an Iron Warrior tries to melta-bomb a Repulsor and gets crushed by the grav-field.

The Death Guard get minor focus, in a particularly grotesque series of horror vignettes which sets up the invasion of Iax. There's a wonderful sense of paranoia pervaded by the shift in focus and tone. A later sequence takes us into the head of Mortarion himself. Dealing with unruly sons and obsessed with revenge against his fathers (he has hunted down his alien foster father's soul and imprisoned it), he forms a haunting mirror of Guilliman. While Guilliman is bounded by the shadow of Konor and his loss, and haunted by the distance and lies of the Emperor, Mortarion has taken his personal betrayals in stride. It is his fixation on these slights that Typhus feels prevent Mortarion from truly surrendering to Chaos, and being utterly as instrument to the will of Nurgle.

All in all I was very impressed by this novel and the scale it presents. It gives us just enough of the new normality while also setting us up for other stories which have lurched from the Noctis Aeterna. In this regard, special mention has to go to "In the Grim Darkness", the short story which accompanies the Limited Edition. While the novel itself gave us a fleeting glimpse at Cawl's ambitions, motivations and undertakings, this short puts them front and centre. By taking us back to the formative years of Felix, caught in the web of Cawl's workings, it allows us to see the Archmagos up close.

Cawl, as presented by Haley, is a marvel. Regarded as an "insane polymath" in the text of the novel, Cawl is so much more. The excesses he goes to and the extent of his deviation is utterly fascinating. Just wait until you see his 'wardrobe.' I truly wish we'd had more work like this to anchor Cawl in the setting before the Gathering Storm descended; because this slice of life of the magpie Magos has been immeasurably helpful in my understanding and appreciation of the character.

A concise and intriguing piece, with a subtle but well-worn twist, it adds immeasurably to the whole of the novel.

Even if not from Haley, the next few stories in this new age of darkness have a solid foundation.

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## **Becky says**

### **Good read especially for a new comer**

I to the book was well around a great read d especially for someone like me who is new to the Warhammer word. Have me a new respect for Robute Gulliman that I did have before.

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## **Daniel says**

Well here we are, the beginning of the next chapter in 40k history; the return of the Avenging Son. Roboute

Guilliman has been on death's door for thousands of years, struck down after the Horus Heresy and nearly slain. This book details events that have spurred the new lore in the 8th edition of the Warhammer 40k tactical wargame. As always, the game writes the lore, and it has for many decades now.

Guilliman was revived by the master of the Adeptus Mechanicus, the rogue genius Belisarius Cawl. He healed Guilliman and helped him use saved gene seed to create a new breed of Space Marine, the Primaris. Taller, stronger and better in every way, these new Primaris Marines have mostly populated the Ultramarines and its further foundings, such as the Novamarines, Relictors, Scythes of the Emperor, and many others. Further chapters have been remade and filled with new Primaris Marines, such as the Dark Angels, Blood Angels and Space Wolves.

The Avenging Son has returned from Terra after talking with his father to discover the his foul brother, Mortarion, Primarch of the Death Guard has attacked the 500 worlds of Ultramar. This simply will not do, and Guilliman assaults his brother's machinations on his homeworlds and also has to deal with the disparity amongst human leaders and planetary governors, not willing to give up power and return it to the Emperor Secundus, as Guilliman was once called. Assigning Tetrarchs to the five most powerful and heavily populated worlds of his dominion, Gulliman equally has his Ultramarines and Primaris Marines to take over in these positions of authority. He leaves the Master of Ultramar, Marneus Calgar in his lofty position, of course, though Calgar has the feeling of failure when standing in the light of his Father/Primarch.

The discovery of Mortarion's Plague Clocks, stationed on certain worlds and tasked with opening huge rifts into the Warp is followed up on by Guilliman and these threats are dealt with and destroyed, by a joint venture lead by Guilliman, The Adeptus Custodes, the Sisters of Silence and many Space Marines, Primaris and old guard. The Unnumbered Sons, as the Primaris Marines of all the different Chapters Guilliman has brought back are called, are also with him. He leads them to victory against a vile Daemon Lord of Nurgle to won the day, though not without loss of life on the side of the heroes.

This book was just great and its a logical and well written progression into the new lore of 40K. I like the humanity the author gives Guilliman, as old and powerful as he is, he still considers himself a man, though a man built by his father, The Emperor. He wields the Sword of the Emperor now, the object of the Emperor's power and the sword that slew Horus at the end of the Heresy.

I like the way there is a debate throughout the book over the Emperor's divinity. A simple priest named Mathieu gives Guilliman doubt and makes him think that perhaps his Father is indeed a God, though having heard from his Father that he is not a God, Guilliman reverts to his Theoretical and Practical mindset, the hallmark of Ultramarine thinking.

In this book we see Guilliman ignore the tenets of the Adeptus Astartes, the organizational book he wrote due to the Horus Heresy. He has made thousands and thousands of Primaris Marines, and kept them to become his Unnumbered Sons, sending them wherever needed to fight in the void of space against Chaos, or on planetary battle actions on the 500 worlds.

This was a lot to take in for a person who has been reading 40k books since the likes of Draco and Demon Download. The changes are different and new, and a lot to consider rests within these pages. It is exciting to see the new lore and units, the return of Primarch(s) and Chapter. I can't wait to see what the next offering in this series brings light to. Amazing stuff!

Danny

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