



Dark Space

Jasper T. Scott

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From the USA Today Bestselling Author of Stars and Empire

HUMANITY IS DEFEATED

Ten years ago the Sythians invaded the galaxy with one goal: to wipe out the human race.

THEY ARE HIDING

Now the survivors are hiding in the last human sector of the galaxy: Dark Space--once a place of exile for criminals, now the last refuge of mankind.

THEY ARE ISOLATED

The once galaxy-spanning Imperium of Star Systems is left guarding the gate which is the only way in or out of Dark Space--but not everyone is satisfied with their governance.

AND THEY ARE KILLING EACH OTHER

Freelancer and ex-convict Ethan Ortane is on the run. He owes crime lord Alec Brondi 10,000 sols, and his ship is badly damaged. When Brondi catches up with him, he makes an offer Ethan can't refuse. Ethan must infiltrate and sabotage the Valiant, the Imperial Star Systems Fleet carrier which stands guarding the entrance of Dark Space, and then his debt will be cleared. While Ethan is still undecided about what he will do, he realizes that the Imperium has been lying and putting all of Dark Space at risk. Now Brondi's plan is starting to look like a necessary evil, but before Ethan can act on it, he discovers that the real plan was much more sinister than what he was told, and he will be lucky to escape the Valiant alive. . . .

Dark Space Details

Date : Published October 14th 2014 by Anthem Press (first published April 20th 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Jasper T. Scott

Format : ebook 209 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Space, Space Opera, Fiction

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From Reader Review Dark Space for online ebook

Kev says

I was craving a sci-fi/space book and this hit the spot! It had everything I was looking for. Space, laser beams and starship battles to name a few. I love that the author was able to fit so much into such a short book. All around just an enjoyable read.

Max Shields says

Dark Space is a wonderful science-fiction adventure filled with solid characters thrust into increasingly difficult situations, more twists than you can shake a stick at, and a dire fate that the protagonists are fighting with all their might to avoid. The author rapidly brings us into this new world, using sufficiently descriptive text to whisk us away with lush visuals, while not overloading the story. Indeed, the book moves along at a brisk pace, and is sufficiently compact to make it a quick and entertaining read.

There are plenty of nods to classic science-fiction, making the story feel at home with the likes of Star Wars and Battlestar Galactica. The author works in current scientific concepts and security issues that ensure that it is a timely and particularly pertinent yarn. It definitely left me wanting to see what more is in store for these characters.

Vicii says

So there's a story behind this; I finished the previous book I was reading on Friday and there is a book that I've been waiting to read being released on Tuesday (The Mime Order). So I've got three days to kill and I know that I "need" to read something as a weekend without reading is just not going to happen... So I checked through the books that I own to find which one had the least amount of pages and I came up with this book at just over 200 pages. I figured that would be doable and should just about manage to finish it in time to start reading The Mime Order on Tuesday.

The truth is, I enjoyed this book so much that I just kept reading it and didn't want to put it down. This is only one of the few science fiction books that I have read but definitely the one that I have enjoyed the most and I have already marked the rest of the series To-Be-Read. In fact if I didn't have such a long awaited book to read, I would have started on the next book already. It totally caught me by surprise and I enjoyed the fast pace.

Steven says

First and foremost, when you pick up a book like this with the description it provides, you know you're not picking up a bit of classic literature. This is space opera from the start, complete with two-dimensional characters, laser guns, and not-sufficiently-explained science. As a way to kill time or just enjoy a book that is basically a written version of something you would see on network TV, it works. But outside of that it basically falls into the high school sci-fi genre.

The plot is simple. Our dubious hero is in debt to a bad guy who basically forces him to do a bad deed. As we learn more, the bad deed doesn't seem so bad. And then we find out that the bad deed is really, really bad. All of this because our hero, who is pining over his lost wife and son, is somehow hooked up with a very attractive woman half his age who he kind of likes but won't get with while she moons all over him. So, yes, two-dimensional.

Now, adolescent (or mid-life crisis) fantasies aside, this book has some things going for it. First, it is easy to read. Unlike some sci-fi books that try to explain the science, this one does not. So there is nothing here to make you stop and actually have to think. Nope, you get to just skip along through page after page. The chapters and chapter breaks are straightforward, come at a good pace, and are not too numerous. You feel like you're getting somewhere as you're reading because, well, you are. And you know that because the hero is supposed to be a good guy gone bad and now going back to good that things will work out.

On the downside, among the other things you just don't really care for anyone in the story. The good guy just kind of is there with these great flying abilities and tactical thinking, and things just kind of happen to him. The side characters appear and disappear and reappear like characters in a melodrama, so you never get to know or like them either. And about the only thing the bad guy is missing is a long, greasy moustache that he can twirl between his fingers as he laughs maniacally. Oh, and it's part of a series, meaning there is no resolution coming for at least two more books.

If you want to kill some time in a non-thinking story that reminds you of a sci-fi TV series, this is not a bad stop. But otherwise, move along, there's not much to see here.

Michael Pang says

This was an enjoyable quick-read. The whole book took me a few hours or so to complete. The experience is similar to watching an episode of Battlestar Galactica (cruiser-carrier ship, fighter pilots, humans hiding out against enemy seeking to wipe them out, etc.) Much like a TV episode, it isn't complex, original nor is it hard sci-fi. It is fun and enjoyable if you take it for what it is. I picked this book (#1 of series) up for .99 cents on my Kindle and bought book #2 (1.99) once I was done. If you are up for a quick/light read where humans battle in space, this book is worth a shot; especially for around a \$1.

Ron says

It's okay. A simple-minded, fun space opera.

It's too bad the early space operas described space combat in terms of World War II aircraft dog fighting because most everyone since has copied. Rudders? Afterburner? Banking? I don't think so. Even "pulling Gs" as described is not the way objects in space behave.

But who cares? It's just good, clean fun.

Doug Hoffman says

I love good science fiction, SF was one of the reasons I became a real scientist. For me the first requisite for good SF is good, or at least believable, science. Unfortunately, Dark Space is hack science fiction. The author is obviously not a scientist or even scientifically literate. This is a mediocre adventure novel stuffed with obligatory SF tropes and stage dressing. Lasers? Check. Shields? Check. Faster than light travel? Check. Evil scary aliens? Check. Logical consistency and adherence to real science? Not on your life. Beyond the miserable SF sheen lies a pointless story line and unlikable characters with all the depth of a mud puddle. Only the fact that the writing was grammatically serviceable saves this abomination from a single star. I really wish all the scifi posers would go write fantasy, where unreality is acceptable.

Online Eccentric Librarian says

More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>

Somewhere about the half way mark of listening to the Audible version of Dark Space, I began to realize that this was very much a Mary Sue (or, at least, a Gary Stu - pure middle age male wish fulfillment fantasy). The deus ex machina is so thick here as to really be mind boggling - in a very bad way. From the loser 'salt and pepper haired' main character with the hot exotic girlfriend half his age, perfect wife and son, and chance to really inexplicably prove he's still studly to the evil moustache twirling bad guy. Really, take a blender and add in Firefly and Star Wars and here you go.

Story (such as it is): Ethan and the surviving humans have fled to a place called "Dark Space" - closing a gate behind them so that the vernicious knids...er...evil aliens...can't continue to exterminate the humans. Han Solo...er...Ethan Ortane wants to rejoin the army but his ship is in hock to Jabba...er...Brondi and Brondi concocts the most senile plot ever in order for Ethan to get his debt paid. Ethan must use a holo device to pretend to be an officer of the surviving military - infiltrate and sabotage the last remaining law in the human universe. The only ones preventing the aliens from finding the humans....

Characters. Right off the bat we have the aging vet and hot girlfriend from well-to-do family slumming with him (for reasons unknown). He treats her like crap and she takes it - being so 'madly in love' with him. But he's still mooning over his missing wife and son from some 20 years previous, so it's ok that he abuses the girlfriend and treats her like crap. Of course, we have the wonderful cliché of women: exotic 'super' gorgeous young girlfriend with 'violet' eyes and fancy name like Alara. Contrast that with the other female character, a hard hitting, tough talking pilot with the common name Gina. Because who would want to date a Gina when you could have an Alara?

It's hard not to go into the silliness of the holo device, lack of any ability of detection of someone using it, and that no one seems to question the personality change of the office he is impersonating. Better yet, (mild spoiler here), everyone seems to forgive quite easily that he was involved in the officer (and mate) being tortured and killed for that identity and used it to do harm (actually, kill) 10,000 other people. But hey, it's ok, no biggie.

We're also supposed to like a character that is willing to hurt so many in order to save his own hide or that of his idiot girlfriend. I didn't buy it and everyone seemed to have 1 second of half hearted regret before patting him on the back and welcoming the loser to their fold - no biggie that he killed so many.

The bad guy is so over the top and yet so incredibly stupid. Half the time the set up is gentle coercion but it always turns into kidnapping of family, etc. E.g., Brondi has Ethan over the coals for the debt but only thinks to kidnap the girlfriend on impulse later? Or the scientists who are concocting Brondi's evil scheme for a payment - only to have family members kidnapped after completion anyway. Why not just kidnap in the beginning and get it over with? It just seemed silly and a forced way to escalate the drama/plot.

There are some 'plot twists' at the end that are so left field as to make implausible segue straight to impossible. I won't go into it for spoilers but the book ends abruptly on the spoiler and not in a very eager or satisfying end of arc way.

There was a lot I really didn't like about Dark Space. It lacked gravitas, realistic characters, or an interesting storyline. I hated each one of the cliché characters and never invested in any part of the story.

I listened to the Audible version and the narrator did an ok job with a really silly story.

Philip says

At the time of my writing this review Dark Space has a 4.1 out of 5 stars review on Amazon based on over one thousand reviews. I managed to snag this book for free. I thought I had a win-win; a solidly rated book for free. For likely at least the millionth time in my life, I was wrong.

I can say at least one positive thing for Dark Space; the book does grab you at the beginning and keeps the action going steadily to its conclusion. Unfortunately, I'm struggling to come up with additional ones. The chapter lengths are appropriate, so there's a second.

I finished the book and I will say it wasn't a wholly unenjoyable experience, but it had many flaws. I could not relate to the main character, so that put the book behind the eight-ball from the start. The author tries to give the main character a mysterious past that is somewhat revealed throughout the book, but it makes his actions so seemingly random at first that I started off disliking the protagonist. Also, he and seemingly all the other characters are two dimensional stereotypes typical of the genre put into relatively stereotypical situations. I didn't feel I was getting a new story, but rather a mishmash of many others.

Want to read more? <http://nerdsdom.com/dark-space/>

Readerone says

Decent self-published space opera that will while away a few of hours of your daily commute without taxing too much of your concentration. At times it does feel a little like Battlestar Galactica fan fiction, but the excellent pacing of the book won't leave you with too much time to dwell on its problems. Three stars from me, as I head off to the Kindle store to pick up book 2.

NOTE: If there is another book in the language which uses the word "roiling" with as much frequency as Dark Space, I want to know about it.

Douglas Bittinger says

Dark Space, by Jasper T. Scott is a rollicking space opera that kicks off a series of books in high adventure fashion. This review is based on the Kindle edition, this book is also available in paperback.

Ethan Ortane is captain of a badly beat up space freighter, he already owes crime boss Alec Brondi a lot of money for previous repairs and now Ethan and his female sidekick are on the run. But you can't hide from Brondi. When Brondi catches them he forces Ethan into a deal he doesn't want. A deal that would mean he would be responsible for the loss of a great many lives.

Our setting is a place called Dark Space, a galaxy within a shell of black holes. Once used as a dumping ground for convicts it is now the final refuge of humanity's remnants as they flee a merciless invasion by the Sythians who are bent on the extinction of all humankind.

There are several sub-plots that wind around one another to propel the events of the story. There are surprises and twists too.

The main characters are fairly strong. They're a little slow to build, but by the end of the book I felt I knew them well enough to care about them. This will, no doubt build in the subsequent books.

Dialogue was fairly natural, never cornball, but not always as smooth as I've seen. Part of this is the slow bonding with the characters: if the reader does not know the character well, it's hard to say if a statement is natural for them.

This is where I beat up a lot of self-published books pretty badly. Not so here. I found three obvious editorial errors: two instances of a misspelled word that makes it a properly spelled word, but the wrong word for the sentence (i.e. "is" instead of "it") and a repeated word that should not have been. Not perfect, but above the curve.

The main "what's new about this" factor is the idea of a small galaxy hidden inside a cluster of black holes and this left me squinting sideways at the idea. The rest is fairly stock Sci-Fi/fantasy stuff: FTL drives, gravity plating, inertial cancelation, beam weapons. I will give him credit for using a fair number of missiles and projectile weapons, including missiles that split down (like a fireworks rocket) into multiple warheads that acquire and track a target.

No failures in any of the above categories. Weakness in a few of them means I'll call this one a 4 out of 5 star read. And I look forward to Dark Space 2, due out in July 2013, which ought to build on the foundation laid here and be an even better read.

Glenn says

I really have to say anyone who likes science fiction stay away from this, its really not going to be for you. The book is full of so many plot holes, for one he sneaks onto a ship using a holographic skin which is apparently common place and yet no one checks for it, the main character is cliché at best and the author doesn't really seem to know anything about space travel or even space itself.

The technical aspect is also just plain wrong! i quote, "it was flying toward him at a pitiful 68 KAPS and at 3.5 kilometres away, it was just out of laser and ripper range." What? If your laser cant hit something 3.5 kilometres away in space then I'm not sure what your doing is it pointing sideways? How are you even going to get to within 3.5 kilometres of a space fighter. Then there's the fact that apparently ships are about half an hour away can be seen with the naked eye through a window, i dont want to think about the fact that those ships are probably traveling at a few cms a second, approaching a stationary target, exc exc theres too many things wrong to mention in this regard.

M Hamed says

this, this piece of shit. with it Constant Presence in amazon top lists is what gives the genre a bad name

Greg Tymn says

It sometimes takes new, self-publishing authors a while to hit their editorial stride, so I tend to overlook minor grammatical errors, spelling problems not caught by a spell-checker, etc.

However, this sentence irritated the *#@\$* out of me and I put the book down unfinished when the grammar seemed to continue to erode into a metastatic morass.

"The alien's forearms and legs were striped a darker blue and also lined with bony protrusions, BUT THOSE ONES LOOKED LIKE SPINES." [emphasis added].

Get an editor.

Isaac Hooke says

Wonderfully well written!

Dark Space is a thrilling action-adventure set in the far future. It reminded me a little of an exciting episode of BattleStar Galatica. The story revolves around Ethan Ortane, who lives in Dark Space. Formerly a cluster of black holes, Dark Space holds all that is left of humanity. In classical "Dude with a problem" style, Jasper Scott starts off with Ethan on the run from crime lord Alec Brondi, who catches Ethan and forces him to sabotage the ship that guards the entrance to Dark Space. Ethan accepts, though he eventually discovers that the real plan is far more sinister and could threaten humanity.

I have to admit I really liked the characters in this story. And the dialogue was engaging, and real, especially the playful banter between Ethan and Alara, the love interest.

I enjoyed the twist at the end regarding the Supreme Overlord.

The kindle version has some nice touches, such as graphical headers for each chapter, and is gorgeously laid out. He's spent a lot of work on this puppy, sending it out to droves of beta readers before release, and the polish definitely shows. Dark Space 2 comes out July 23rd. I'm on board!

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and would recommend it to my friends, and readers.
