



The Flood

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The Human-Covenant War, a desperate struggle for humankind's very survival, has reached its boiling point on the mysterious, ring world called Halo. But the fierce Covenant warriors, the mightiest alien military force known, are not the only peril lying in wait.

As the fortress world of Reach and its brave defenders were bombarded to rubble, a single cruiser fled the carnage with the battle's only human survivors: Captain Keyes, his crew of a few hundred Marines, and the last remaining SPARTAN super-soldier, the Master Chief.

With the cruiser's artificial intelligence, Cortana, concealed in his battle armor, the Master Chief crash lands on Halo in the midst of a massive Covenant occupation. Curiously, the alien soldiers appear to be searching for something hidden on the ring. Built by a long-dead race, Halo harbors many deadly secrets, but one overshadows them all. Now the Master Chief must lead the scattered troops in a brutal race to unravel Halo's darkest mystery--and unleash its greatest source of power. . . .

This novel is based on a Mature-rated video game.

The Flood Details

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Tina says

This one wasn't nearly as enthralling (or well written) as the previous novel. Now, I'm not saying Dietz is a bad writer, just that he didn't have a lot to work with with this book. Why? Because it's the goddamn game in written format! It's like a freakin' walkthrough! Hell, I played the game YEARS ago and I still remembered most of the plot, so while reading this I had these moments where I actually remembered a certain scene in the book from the game. That's why I didn't really like the book - I like adaptations of video games that show a different perspective or are a prequel, not reading the damn game as a novel. I like guns and action and all, but frankly, I didn't need a play-by-play of every single battle. I wasn't exactly bored, because Dietz had a blisteringly fast pace that kept me reading, but it was a little annoying to know what was going to happen next, but, mainly I didn't like the characterization. There is no depth to the characters at all. Unless you're playing an RPG like Final Fantasy, you don't really care about the characters' motivations or background. This is true with Halo - it's a fun FPS. *Fall of Reach* was great because it gave substance to the characters. This novel did absolutely nothing of the sort. Chief neither grows nor extrapolates anything in this novel, and no one else was all that deep either. Hell, Yayap was the only character who had an interesting perspective. McKay was awesome, but only because she was badass - we learn nothing about her personal life or feelings. Same with everyone else! They might have one or two characteristics that made them stand out, but overall they were worse than cardboard cutouts - they were stock photos.

I'm still going to read the next one, because, quite frankly, these books are fun, but this one wasn't really my cup of tea.

Dirk Grobbelaar says

Thankfully I read *The Fall of Reach* before I attempted this, otherwise I would have been hard pressed to understand how Master Chief could survive the sheer amount of carnage in this novel. The background provided on the Spartan project and, probably more importantly, the MJOLNIR armour, goes a long way in justifying some of the madness in this book. Those of you who have read Dietz before this will know that he is no slouch when it comes to writing military science fiction. I refer, especially, to his *Legion of the Damned* books. So, an obvious choice then for the novelization of Halo - *Combat Evolved*. Again, like its prequel, this is a military science fiction novel, but with the emphasis squarely on action. I did enjoy the fact that Dietz wrote some sequences from the Covenant point of view. Reading this book in conjunction with Halopedia (the Halo wiki) is actually a great deal of fun, especially for someone (like me) who hasn't actually played the Halo games. This is a good way of finding out how the pesky aliens look, for example. The whole back story is pretty epic too.

So, pros. The action scenes are solid, although I enjoyed the battle scenes with the marines more than the scenes with Master Chief. I was reminded of the *Legion* books, but also of some of David Drake's stuff, maybe *Redliners* or something from the RCN series. The Halo construct, or array, is still fascinating, and we learn rather a lot in this novel as to its purpose. The Flood of the title, especially the despicable infection types, evoke emotions usually reserved for Ridley Scott's *Xenomorph* facehuggers. Revulsion and Fear, anyone?

And of course, cons. Yes, being based on a game, this book is pretty frantic, with mindless engagement

following mindless engagement like clockwork. It's all here, from 'reloading' to 'weapon swapping'. Master Chief outdoes himself in this one, as far as the alien death toll is concerned. Coherence gets lost somewhere in the mix. In Dietz's defense, he was doing what was expected from him, writing the game (or re-writing someone else's story, if you will). Perhaps he should have another shot at a Halo title somewhere along the line, where he can have some creative freedom.

This is by no means a bad book, as far as I'm concerned. It's exactly what you would expect. I think Dietz has done as good a job as anyone could, given the same material. The series so far is truly enjoyable and I'll be digging in for Halo: First Strike soon.

Dakota says

Halo The Flood by William C. Dietz is a science fiction novel that has more background stories than the X-box game Halo combat evolved that it is based on. It is much more detailed and explains in much detail the story of the Flood.

This story starts in the year 2552 so it is about 500 years in the future. The Covenant a collection of alien races has taken the plant of Reach while the Pillar of Autumn their ship travels through slip space to a unknown location due to the Cole protocol. They soon find they ran into something bigger, something they had never seen before, that will not only challenge them physically but mentally. There are several main characters in the story but the one that mostly intrigued me was the Master Chief John 117 which was the last of his kind. He was a Spartan. Spartans were kids that were kidnapped at the age of 7 to be trained in the art of killing. About the time they start puberty they are augmented (injected with drugs) to make them into super soldiers. Another Main character that intrigued me was McKay who is a hell jumper or odst which are highly trained marines. These two characters play a big factor in the outcome of the story.

The setting of this story takes place on a ring or halo which has many of the same characteristics of a planet but this ring which was created by the Forerunners is where the battles take place. The Halo has a normal environment and atmosphere but it is not a planet. This ring they landed on holds a deep and dark secret, which they are ready to battle for.

My opinion of this story is that anyone that is familiar with or has played the Halo videogames or read any of the other books in the Halo series would thoroughly enjoy this book. The authors writing style makes you feel as if you are there or in the video game with Master Chief John 117 as he faces the Covenant.

Mike (the Paladin) says

Okay I suppose you can only get "really involved" in a story based on a video game for so long. This isn't really a bad book. For what it is it can be fun. The fight for Halo has begun...and the search to find out what Halo is of course.

Lots of explosions, some human drama (sort of) even some prejudice involved in the story. As I said, not bad but not one I think I'll follow up. If you're looking for action and science fiction combat this may be your cup of tea. I love action books, but I like a little more story than we get here...

To each. If you like it enjoy.

C.T. Phipps says

HALO: THE FLOOD is an adaptation of HALO: COMBAT EVOLVED or the first Halo game. It's interesting that a game which consists primarily about Master Chief blowing up hundreds of Grunts, Elites, and Jackals is expanded into a military science fiction novel I really enjoyed. William C. Dietz is a favorite science fiction novelist of mine and I absolutely loved his work on Starcraft: Heaven's Devils.

The premise of the book is pretty much the one of the games. Master Chief and the crew of the Pillar of Autumn are marooned on an ancient alien space station. The station proves to be a massive superweapon capable of wiping out all life in the galaxy. There's greater threats than the Covenant, the evil religious sect that wishes to destroy humanity, though and stopping them may require the weapon to be used.

William Deitz adds multiple interesting new plots like an ODST plot to steal a Covenant starship, the first in the war, but potentially endangers all of humanity by carrying a Flood spore to Earth. There's also the stories of a human traitor, a poor Grunt who just wants to survive, and an Elite determined to avenge himself on the Master Chief despite being just another enemy to him.

My favorite storyline in the book is probably the tale of Yayap, a Grunt who is smarter than the majority of his cowardly brethren and tries to survive by rescuing an Elite soldier as a mission objective versus charging at Master Chief or his companions. Unfortunately, things go from bad to worse for him as he discovers said Elite wants to kill the Master Chief more than anything. He's also glad to have Yayap along!

I don't quite like this book as much as the other two novels in the trilogy but it's still damned entertaining and we also get some insights into how the "regular" people reacted to the events of Halo. There's some really tragic moments like the death of Captain Keyes, the fruitlessness of certain characters' attempts to survive, and even the Covenant get humanized. We also get some insight into the awesomeness of Sergeant Johnson, one of my all time favorite Halo characters.

9/10

Zan says

I hate myself for reading this book.

I needed something to distract myself from the joys of labor history, but choosing this was a terrible mistake. I think I read the sentence, "Master Chief threw a grenade" approximately 100000 times. I am so disgusted with myself.

Melisa Ramonda says

DNF at 40% percent.

If I ever get this over, I might come back and tell you why I couldn't take it anymore.

Ok. I'm back. I will review this book with a single, definitive and utterly accurate phrase:

OUT OF CHARACTER.

That's it.

John is portrayed like your ordinary Terminator: a trigger-happy douchebag focused only in engrossing his kill-count. Cortana? So forgotten that whenever she talks, nobody cares, not even the Chief. Her best lines are the ones transcribed from the game.

I hardly doubt that UNSC Marines are that rude with everyone. Seriously, there's no respect for anyone or anything. So much unlike the previous story. All the Marines seem to be retarded assholes, even the commanding officers -scratch that, ESPECIALLY the commanding officers-

Keyes, portrayed in Fall of Reach like a genius battle-strategist... well, he lacks completely of genius in this one.

There are scenes that are unbelievable even for a sci-fi story, and others are plainly stupid and nonsensical.

I mean, come on. There was probably a more interesting way to write a novelization of a FPS game without overloading it with blasts, fires, grenades and shooting. It gets tiresome and boring after a while.

It was just awful. Awful-awful. I only read it because I thought I'd miss something if I just jumped straight into First Strike. Trust me: you won't.

I'm off.

TempOcean says

In order to understand this book, you have to read the first book in the series and play the Xbox game *Halo: Combat Evolved*. Even if you don't get it half the time, it's a good read!

This book is set in 2552, in the middle of a great war between humanity and a collective of alien races calling themselves the Covenant. This war reaches its peak intensity when a human ship discovers an ancient ring-world named Halo (hence the name of the book). The ship crashes there, and among the survivors is SPARTAN-117, the Master Chief. He is a biologically enhanced cyborg-soldier clad in special armor. He traverses the ring with the remaining Marines, fighting the Covenant and unlocking the secrets of the ring. But when the Master Chief finds a subterranean laboratory in the middle of a swamp, the galaxie's greatest horror is unleashed . . .

Read it for yourself, and discover why this book is called "The Flood". To this day, I still have nightmares about them. When you read this book, you will, too.

Chris Gordon says

Halo: Combat Evolved, the video game version of this book, is easily worthy of 5 stars. However, its novelization, Halo: The Flood, is the definition of a 3 star book. I don't hate the book; I don't love the book; I'm left in the middle thinking the book was okay overall. It had its moments, for sure, but it also had its

share of problems. Being as how this was a novelization of my favorite video game of all time, I expected a lot more out of it. Although I wasn't wholly disappointed, I wasn't totally impressed either.

The book shifts between four perspectives that build upon a grander narrative. The first perspective follows the Master Chief and Cortana, his A.I. companion, as they venture across Halo to complete a litany of missions and objectives. These scenes were taken straight from the video game, Halo: Combat Evolved, and were rarely altered for the book. The only times the Chief's story changed was when it intertwined with the other side stories being told in the book, which weren't included in the video game. Also, I noticed that many of the lines from the game were altered slightly for no apparent reason. The changes were minor enough to not affect the story, but also noticeable enough to peeve me, as I know virtually every line of the video game verbatim and felt the need to recite the lines properly in my head during my read through just to atone for these pointless changes. On the plus side, we were treated to additional dialogue between the Master Chief and Cortana which helped to flesh out our protagonists in a way the video game was not able to accomplish. Although this was the main story in the book, I found it to be a bit dry at times, especially as it concerned the battle sequences. There are only so many ways one can describe a gun being fired or an enemy being killed before it gets really old. The lengths taken to describe these moments went way too far, and they detracted from an otherwise strong story.

The second perspective followed Captain Keyes and his crew after evacuating the downed ship, the Pillar of Autumn. These parts were some of the most interesting to read for a few reasons. For one, I think Captain Keyes is a great character, and he is written very well in this book. Following him was also a new experience for me because the video game only extended so far as to include him in three levels out of ten, therefore he was seldom involved in the major happenings of the game. In Halo: The Flood, we get a much more in-depth account as to what happens to Captain Keyes after landing on Halo. Apart from the Master Chief and Cortana, I found Captain Keyes to be the best character in the book and was disappointed to find that more of the book was not dedicated to his storyline.

The third perspective, the worst of the four, followed a group of surviving ODST soldiers after abandoning the Pillar of Autumn. The bulk of their story took place on a makeshift base called Alpha Base and entailed very little in the way of meaningful story. They take their interim base from the Covenant early on, hold the position down for 90% of the time, and complete one reconnaissance mission to their downed ship close to the end of the novel. They don't do much, and whenever something big happens with them, it ends up being a very long, overly drawn out, poorly written battle sequence that I recommend glossing over lest you wish to be bored to tears. When this particular side story came to a whimpering end, I was relieved beyond belief that they wouldn't be returning in the next installment of the Halo book series.

The last and most unique perspective of the novel followed a commando Elite name Zuka 'Zamamee and his Grunt companion Yayap. 'Zamamee is nearly killed by the Master Chief at one point in the story and is rescued by Yayap. Given a new lease on life, 'Zamamee is assigned to track down his assailant and take him down. As you could probably guess, this plan does not go too well for him, but it was still fun to read a Halo story from the Covenant's perspective. Despite this story not amounting to much, it was interesting to read because of the insight given into the hierarchy and operations of the Covenant side of the war. These parts were pretty bare at times, however, so I hope future Halo novels take more time to tell the Covenant's side of the story.

The persisting problem of the book is that it attempts to novelize a sci-fi shooter that was scarce on story from the start. The video game did a well enough job conveying its simplistic story without all the extraneous material. The author tried to artificially imbue more substance into the main story with the addition of side plots and new characters, but it just felt out of place to me. Truth be told, Halo: The Flood

was an unnecessary read in the grand scheme of the Halo series and is better substituted with a playthrough of Halo: Combat Evolved. You will get the same general story out of the game as from the book, but you will no doubt have more fun playing the game. Yet, its flaws notwithstanding, I still managed to enjoy reading Halo: The Flood to some degree – but that's just a testament to my love for Halo. If you do not have a similar passion for the series, then I fear you may not be as lenient towards this book as I managed to be.

Jason says

This book was such a let down and unworthy of the sequel to "The Fall of Reach". This book was a novelization of the first Halo game (Combat Evolved). That said, it reads like the author played the Xbox game and wrote play-by-play what happened, where he goes, what he shoots, etc. You're not reading a story, just a re-telling of what happens in the video game. If you play the video game, it's fine, because you're playing the video game, not reading a page of words of what someone did in the video game without any stunning detail. It's that boring. Very boring

I was originally going to give this book half a star, but there were some good tidbits of info scattered in the book like the events of the UNSC people while Master Chief was running around Halo shooting everything that moved.

Stay away from this book. Stay very away. The good thing is the next book in this series ("First Strike") is authored by the guy who wrote "The Fall of Reach" so at least you'll know the series gets right back to where it's supposed to be.

Liam says

I never really liked The Flood very much, but I feel obligated to read it regardless. Maybe it's just because I've played through the story in a game and so trying to transfer it into text falls flat for me, but I think there are several problems with the book because of its direct game-to-book heritage that the other Halo novels avoid.

Firstly, the author feels compelled to at least note every other encounter with enemies in the game and after a while it gets pretty dull. The combat in the other novels is well executed and spaced out because it can choose when, story-wise, it makes sense for there to be a big fight, rather than needing to entertain a player through 12+ hours of gameplay. In First Strike and Fall of Reach the combat feels important and scary because it only happens every now and then, rather than being a throwaway sentence ended with "-and reloaded his weapons."

Similar to above, the author - I suppose through some sense of loyalty to the source material or whatever - feels the need to repeat as rote the dialogue in the game, a lot of which is unnecessary or clunkily phrased in order to provide the necessary amount of tutorialisation or exposition. It could be reworded much nicer, but as I said - loyalty to the source material I guess.

He also gave the Chief a lot more emotion and personality than in the other novels - not to say he didn't have any in the others but some of the things he says and thinks in *The Flood* seem downright out of place for a straight-lace, genetically engineered super soldier.

On the other hand, I quite like the ideas and plot that he brought to the story - Silva and the ODSTs, 'Zamamee's vendetta against the Chief, etc. It shows an ability to write interesting original ideas within an established world that I wish he had brought to the rest of the novel. It probably would have been a better novel if it had focused *entirely* on that sort of thing rather than providing an abridged re-telling of the adventures of Chief and Cortana. I think it's telling that they never did another direct game-to-book adaption of Halo.

Anyway, onto First Strike.

Pika says

The second book in the Halo series was not written by Eric Nylund, but by William c. Dietz. In my opinion, I think Eric Nylund is a better author, but since its a Halo book, that automatically makes it good. What was cool about this novel is that it's based on the actual game, so it was fun to say "Oh, I love that level." or "Haha, I always die there." The book answers the question "I wonder what Master Chief would do." because you can play exactly what happens in the book. One other thing is that you know what's happening at the time with people that weren't in the game. So if you were wondering what happened to the other marines that survived or what happened between missions, this book reveals it all. The only thing I don't like about the book is that sometimes the author writes unrealistic things that could not usually happen and exaggerates many things. I read this book from a friend.

Eric Farmer says

I read a digital version of this book checked on from my local public library. I meant to finish it faster but I took a bit longer.

The book was OK. I would rate the book 3.5 stars if I could.

The book is a retelling of the game down to the dialogue being the same in some parts. The book adds some insight on the what was going on installation 04 (Halo) but nothing that really changes much. The ending is the same as the game. The only memorable characters are the same in the game. Captain Keyes, Master Cheif, and Cortana. While new minor characters are introduced I never really get to care too much about them. The story reads like a script of the game. Lots of shooting things and going to places.

The book gives the Master Chief a personality which is sort of odd at first. The Master Cheif is shown to care deeply about his comrades. Something you don't quite get from just playing the game. It is an interesting touch of personality but it doesn't quite match with what I remember from the game. People were dying left and right and I hardly cared or could do much about it.

I liked the book a little but not a lot. I found the Fall of Reach to much more of an interesting story. I mostly read Halo the Flood because I have fond memories of playing the game as a teenager and I loved it. Being

