



## Death's Head Maximum Offense

*David Gunn*

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## **Death's Head Maximum Offense** David Gunn

With Death's Head, David Gunn rocketed onto the scene in the most explosive and entertaining science fiction debut since Richard Morgan's *Altered Carbon*. Now Gunn is back—and so is Sven Tveskoeg: antisocial, antihero, anti-you-name-it, a one-man killing spree whose best friend is an intelligent handgun with a bad attitude and whose worst enemy is, well, just about everybody else.

And if Sven weren't dangerous enough already, add in the lethal alien parasite that resides in his throat . . . and is capable of bending space and time. Then there's the fact that Sven's genetic makeup is only 98.2 percent human, the rest being undetermined but possibly contributing to his enhanced healing abilities, superior strength, unusual agility, and notable sociopathic tendencies. The result is one seriously badass soldier with a hair-trigger temper and a chip on his shoulder the size of a small moon. These are qualities that would doom a man to prison or worse in any decent society.

Luckily, Sven doesn't live in a decent society. He lives in the empire of OctoV, a tyrant who is part machine, part boy, part god, and all evil. Sven's qualities have brought him to OctoV's personal attention and earned him a lieutenant's commission in the Death's Head, the elite corps of assassins and enforcers whose purpose in life is to kill and die for the greater glory of OctoV.

Sven's new assignment? Lead his ragtag band of Death's Head rejects—the Aux, short for auxiliaries—to the artificial world of Hekati. It seems that a citizen of the United Free, an empire not only vaster than OctoV's but far more technologically advanced, has gone missing there. Now it's up to Sven to rescue the poor soul.

But Hekati turns out to be a vicious den of backstabbing and betrayal, where nothing and no one can be trusted, least of all the greenhorn colonel put in charge of the mission at the last moment. It looks like somebody wants Sven Tveskoeg dead.

So what else is new?

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## **Death's Head Maximum Offense Details**

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## **From Reader Review Death's Head Maximum Offense for online ebook**

### **Thelma says**

Second in a series by David Gunn, Maximum Offense will stand alone, if you're willing to make a guess as to some of the previous action (which isn't too tough to do). Populated by interesting characters, well-fleshed out with intriguing personalities and unique physical attributes. I think those who understand the deep camaraderie among troopers and military types will identify with a lot of the activity and motivation here. A take-no-prisoners space war romp, this book should really appeal to those who like their action non-stop!

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### **Daniel Solen says**

This is what happens when you let a 12 year old boy write a book. I honestly kept on thinking that this book was probably the 10th book in the series and that's why I couldn't understand what was going on with all of the different characters, races, etc. Nope, not the case, the write just doesn't understand how to write a back story at all, or a plot for that matter. The main character is one dimensional, cliché, unlikable, and essentially a 12 year old's wet dream—big penis, sword for an arm, invincible, etc. I kept on reading the book hoping the story would essentially tie together, and have some form of redemption. I was seriously disappointed. Good thing I bought his book for a dollar at the flea market. I will for sure skip out on reading any more books by this author.

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### **Kevin says**

#### **Exciting action, convoluted plot**

This was another good entry in the series. The story was too convoluted for my taste. The description of the space habitat was difficult to follow, but all in all the action made up for the book's shortcomings. I really like the personal code in and her thoughts of the hero. He lives a simple life by a simple code, and his actions stay true to this in any situation.

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### **Julien Declercq says**

#### **Not great**

While the world is interesting, the utter lack of exposition meant that you couldn't generally figure out where the characters are.

Such a pity as the rest is a joyride of senseless violence, one of those guilty pleasures...

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## **Liviu says**

Mini review on first read in June 2008:

After the unexpectedly good Death's Head 1 that I loved, this one was a let down to some extent. Sure, it's the same Sven bedding or killing anything in sight depending on circumstances, but it gets somewhat tiresome after a while. There were some excellent scenes, notably an arena duel to be remembered, but I hope the series will evolve from here rather than get stuck in a rut;

I considered it a 3 star book then

Second take on re-read in 2009 before getting to book 3:

Maximum Offense was much, much better on re-read and I really enjoyed it greatly this time; maybe the first time I read it I was not in the mood for it and did not truly appreciate its quirky humor, but this time I loved it and upped my rating to 5 stars for this

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## **Elise Oliver says**

Still think this series is one of the most intriguing ones I've read. Loved the characters and their interactions. There were some faults as there always will be because no one is quite perfect. But Gunn definitely comes close. Wonderful read. Enthralling from the first sentence to the last!

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## **Neal Asher says**

I liked and actually cared about the characters (including the talking gun). I enjoyed the action, the visceral violence and sordid sex. This is no nonsense entertainment and really you get what it says on the tin. If this were a tome delivering deep homilies about the horror of war, sexual and racial inequality or environmental issues, I'm guessing it wouldn't be called Death's Head Maximum Offence. I'm also guessing Gunn had his tongue firmly wedged in his cheek while writing it, probably to stop him laughing out loud with enjoyment. Once it grabbed me at about page 30, I polished off this book, with similar enjoyment, within a day.

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## **Mike says**

Good, fast moving story. You really need to read the first installment in the series in order to appreciate this second book. Sven and his crew kick ass once again and his talking, wise cracking, all knowing SIG gun keep your interest throughout. Good, rough edged, sexy sci-fi. Recommended.

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## **Greg (adds 2 TBR list daily) Hersom says**

I'm so loving these Death's Head books! They are just flat-out fun and I'm having a hard time putting my finger on exactly what it is I like about them so much.

When I read a review of the first book, self-titled Death's Head, by Neal Asher; Asher referenced it to the likes of Robert E. Howard and Edgar Rice Burroughs, I just had to give that book a shot. As much as I enjoyed Death's Head, I didn't really get those references. Now after reading Maximum Offense, I do. It's that kind of pulpy fun to read.

Admittedly I have a soft spot for protagonists that solve most their problems by killing someone or something. Sven lives by the Death's Head motto, "death or glory". But don't assume he is a psychopathic murderer, -well he kinda is- but he does seem to be developing some compassion, but that crap will get Sven killed.

If Riddick had gotten inducted into the Legion instead of being a convict, he would be Sven Tveskoeg.

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### **Mike says**

**4 Stars** Sven has a Sig Sauer 37. The Sig is an AI, with citizen status, a bad attitude and "lives" for a fight, the messier the better. Sven also has a small commando group of former Death's Head Legion soldiers. They are deadly. The storyline takes a while to become clear but well worth the wait. Non-stop action. Excellent.

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### **Dantegideon says**

Bit better than the last one. Dumbo lumbers around murdering people. Decent read.

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### **Simon Ford says**

Just as violent and action packed as previous novel.

Like a Yorkie this is aimed at men (who are still teenage boys), plenty of action, explosions, gory death, sex and explosions again, cool tech eg a bad-ass sentient gun, who will f#@k you over if looked at funny, and did I mention sex?

There are over 60 Chapters but they are all pretty short and are ploughed through rather quickly, if hooked enough you can polish this book off in one sitting even allowing for tea & toilet breaks.

Leave your brains at the door and just enjoy, otherwise Sven and his gun will splatter them all over the nearest wall/bulkhead or ceiling.

Any book recommended by Neal Asher is good enough for me to give it a go.

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### **Yune says**

A victim of my enjoyment of its prequel. The protagonist continues to kill or screw his way through the book, which actually does get wearisome. The author also makes the mistake of trying for a more cohesive

plot and set of characters. I could sit back and enjoy the overblown action when it didn't really make sense -- just a patchwork quilt of sex and violence in varied places -- but making it part of something purposeful turns on my "oh really? I mean, really?" sniffer, and this failed.

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### **Shedrick Pittman-Hassett says**

While I consider myself a science fiction/fantasy fan, I must admit that, realistically, I'm more of a fan of fantasy. My taste in science fiction reading is fairly limited. I am not nearly as enamored of "hard" sci-fi: pages of realistic and scientifically feasible explanations of how the featured Mechawidget actually works. I'm really just into good futuristic yarns. This may be why I tend to watch more science fiction movies and TV than read science fiction books. That and it has been far too long since a good fantasy movie has been made. For good, old-fashioned, pulpy, space adventure, you can't get much better than David Gunn's Death's Head series.

Read the full review on my blog: <http://tinyurl.com/yh5mk8p>

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### **Cesar Felipe says**

I went into this book fully blind and ignorant, having loved the first book in the series, since I couldn't wait to follow Sven's adventures with his military team. I now regret it, since it takes most elements that made the first great and assembles them into a frankly annoying and pointless second part.

The main character, Sven Sveskoeg, seems to be the same anti-hero of the first novel, but instead of once again growing fond of him, I found myself endlessly annoyed by his attitude. He never stops being an arrogant invincible soldier who thinks he's better than everyone else. He loathes and criticizes the military chain of command, but he gets angry and judgmental when anyone breaks military protocol. At least in the first book he learned to respect people who earned his respect, but in this book he learns nothing and he respects nothing. He is always right, and he always wins. The end.

The reason this book is praised as having a "break-neck pace" is not because it's full of "non-stop action", but rather because the author skips out on descriptions and scenes just to keep going. Many scenes will be unclear because what is actually happens is implied rather than described, and while that is not a bad thing in itself, it is when you never... stop... doing it. Everyone except the reader knows what is happening, so not even dialogue will help you understand people's motivations. You'll be thankful when you actually understand what is happening and why.

The worst part is how the setting is handled. I personally dislike the "stranded in a barren world" deal when you could instead be reading about the actually important kick-ass galactic conflict happening elsewhere. But that's just me, so that's not the issue. The real issue is that most of the story taking place there, which is most of the book, ends up being pointless. That's as much as I can say without spoilers so... (view spoiler) That's all just adding insult to injury.

There's also an additional issue I had throughout. The first book was pretty clear in establishing that death is final, but... (view spoiler) The worst part of this is that the author doesn't reveal this until later, so he tricks you into believing that a character's fate is a big deal until surprise! It isn't. I decided to write it down as a

warning rather than a spoiler, because all it is, is this: Annoying.

There is indeed some decent fighting action, and even some space fighter action by the end. But again, the motivations for all this (beyond "Sven is an invincible badass and he must kill everyone who opposes him and treat everyone else like trash") are unclear, so they were barely worth the read. But that's the reason for the two stars rather than one.

By the end I lost all concern for any of the characters, most of all Sven, and they were just "there", so I just wanted it to end. I can't recommend this book even to die-hard fans of the first, because I'd rather remember Sven as the lovable badass jerk of the fun first novel, rather than whatever unlikable thing he is in this pointless second story. Sadly, I will be dropping this series. Goodbye Sven, I'll miss you.

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