



Perturabo: Hammer of Olympia

Guy Haley

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While crusading to build the Imperium, Perturabo, mercurial primarch of the Iron Warriors, hears of turmoil on the world where he was raised, and abandons the crusade to return home and save his people.

Born to a life of political conflict, Perturabo was always considered a child prodigy among the people of Olympia – indeed, his philosophical and scientific works were beyond compare. But then, after his rediscovery by the Emperor and decades of thankless military campaigning on the Great Crusade, the primarch begins to resent his Legion's place in the Imperium. When word reaches him of turmoil on his adoptive home world, he orders the Iron Warriors to abandon their campaign against the alien hrud and crush this emerging rebellion by any means necessary...

Focusing on Perturabo during his youth on Olympia, in the Great Crusade and upon his return to the world that defined him, this is a definitive look at what makes the master of iron tick.

Perturabo: Hammer of Olympia Details

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Author : Guy Haley

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From Reader Review Perturabo: Hammer of Olympia for online ebook

Mitchell Bird says

I finished Perturabo: The Hammer of Olympia by Guy Haley. Here's my review and thoughts on the work. Please remember, these are my opinions. If you don't like them either comment in a way that would facilitate good discussion or just move along.

"Your road will be hard, but few are worthy of it,' said the Emperor. 'I have many tasks for you, the indefatigable, the indomitable, the unrelenting. You shall be my Lord of Iron.'

Perturabo cried out in unabashed joy. Finally, he felt acceptance without caveat. Love radiated from the Emperor for his found son. Perturabo basked in it. For the first time, he felt a sense of true belonging.

'And may it forever be so,' said Perturabo."

- Alright, after much griping and complaining about how much I hated Perturabo and how much I didn't want to like him or have anything to do with him I can finally admit, I was dead wrong. This book was a masterpiece worthy of Mechanicum or Fulgrim. Haley made me care about the character in a way that kicked him from sixteenth on my list is favorite Primarchs to somewhere in the top ten.
- The look inside Pert's head, especially as a child, really helped to get the idea of why he is the way he is. The son who wanted nothing more than to be loved and to build but instead was forced to face horrors such as the Hrud without thank or respect. Just, well done.
- The Hrud, might have been one of the most horrifying things I've seen done. Astartes aging to dust or aging backwards to where they die from their implants rejecting. Every time they popped up I went, "holy shit."
- Calliphone might be another favorite character. Her and Pert's relationship was adorable. She called him Bo' and got away with it! I feel like if she had come with him on the Crusade she might have been able to help stabilize him a lot more.
- The Book really hit it's peak when Perturabo went back to Olympia. Him decimating the populace or burning it. Leading up to talking to his sister once again and her deconstruction god his character. Pure poetry on the page. Him sitting there in his home town and realizing what he did. It shook me to the core.
- Dantioch was really cool. We only got so much of him but seeing his origin story was a nice add on. I'm curious to see what becomes of him later. Especially since he's one of the few characters who's chewed out a Primarch and lived to tell the tale.
- Perturabo is a character I've had a hard time even giving the benefit of the doubt to, until this book. This book does him so much justice and explains his character so well that the end brought tears to my eyes. I now look forward to hearing more about the Lord of Iron (still first and foremost a Son of Dorn) in future books. He is a worthy adversary to my gene father.
- Overall, I loved this book and I regret giving it so long to read. There is a deep shame within me now. I cannot recommend this book highly enough.
- Final Score: 9.9/10

Next I'll be taking a break from the Horus Heresy and trying out Ahriman's series and following it up with Tales of Heresy and after that I'm taking a break from 40K to read Mistborn by Brandon Sanderson. So there won't be a ton of reviews after these next few books. I will see you guys next time.

Bodicainking says

A book that I, as an Iron Warriors player, enjoyed; but largely due to an unusually "high-sci-fi" element when the medieval-knights-in-space Space Marines face up against the temporal-distorting Hrud (a frequently appearing alien in the 'fluff' of the universe, but not the game) in one of the many storylines. Guy Haley struggles manfully with trying to reconcile two competing aspects of Perturabo's character (which feel like they exist due to other authors creating two incompatible versions of the character, rather than a complex individual) but comes up just a little bit short for me, with the 'final revelation' given by Perturabo's step-sister lacking strength as the character cannot be redeemed (as the game's background is set!) but failing to give him the veneer of tragedy so successfully given to Angron or Kharn in other Horus Heresy works.

Oliver Patrick says

Having only read the first two books in the 50+ HH books a couple of years ago, I decided to give it a go at reading the entire HH series in chronological order. Starting with the "Last Church" audiobook set in 30,800. I am using <https://rateyourmusic.com/list/Tymell...> as a guide on which books to read in chronological order.

I listened to the audiobook version of this story which takes place between 30,799 and 31,000 roughly. The story goes back and forward between three main points of time. It starts with Perturabo as a child with no memory being brought to Lochos in 30,799, Perturabo meeting the Emperor in 30,849 and in 30,999 where the main story takes place with the Iron Warriors trying to destroy the Hrud race and the pacification of the rebellion on Olympia.

I enjoyed this book almost as much as Lorgar: Bearer of the word. This is how I expected the primarch books to be written, covering the primarchs rise to power before being discovered by the emperor as well as afterwards. I felt that this book gave a great insight into why Perturabo is the way he is, as well as why he turns traitor.

I really enjoyed the audiobook and would recommend it to anyone looking for a new read, I found it easy to follow. I found the action in the book to be very different from your standard Ork or humanoid enemy encountered so far.

Andrew Fletcher says

If you're at all interested in Perturabo, this is the book to read! A brilliant but flawed character, logical and rational in all things but not wise enough to see his own failings and realise that the praise and love he views as weak are the things he seeks most of all.

Gali Gali says

After reading the Iron Warriors Omnibus, which admittedly was fantastic, Perturabo: Hammer of Olympia became a must-read for me. Luckily, it did not disappoint! Guy Haley delivers an exciting story centered around one of the more interesting Primarchs.

Let's start with the pro's. Well, it is downright a well-written novel. I never found myself yawning out of boredom, and there weren't any significant dips in the story. It's also very concise and focused, which should be unsurprising considering it is a mere two-hundred or so pages. As far as the indomitable Lord of Iron (Perturabo) goes, I won't go into detail, but rest assured that Haley gives us a fully developed character. Actually, despite the brevity of the book, there are a handful of intriguing characters.

Now, as far as con's go, there is one central issue. It's a fairly short read. As a result, there isn't much development for most minor characters and battles do feel rushed. Don't come into this novel expecting rich battles, such as what can be read in "Corax: Nevermore" by Gav Thorpe, because you'll find none. Ontop of that, none of the Iron Warriors themselves get much time to shine either.

All-in-all though, I highly recommend this read, and is a good place to start before going into the Iron Warriors: Omnibus. I'd give it a 4.5/5

Andrew Ziegler says

When I started playing 40k I always thought of the traitor Primarch's and legions as just kind of write off bad guys. I read some of the fluff in the old second edition Chaos codex and thought maybe some of them got a raw deal and had a little more sympathy, but not much. It was not until I started reading the HH series and really through those novels really started to gain a better understanding of why some of them broke bad. ADB has done an amazing job with the "bad" guys. If you can, read the Night Lords trilogy. I had become almost an Iron Warrior apologist because of how Perturabo was represented and how close it seems that he would have stayed loyal if the Emperor or his brothers just gave him the love and credit he wanted. Because of that I was really excited about this novel. Finally, the Iron IVth would get some real spotlight and show you their true metal. (PUN) And this story delivers. But, I have to say, I experienced such a swaying of my allegiance to Perturabo. His motivations here are really exposed. His flaws are great, and his heart is so broken. This guy is a broken, broken dude, and honestly I hated him about 2/3 of the way through. I hated his legion after the decision to purge Olympia. I hated it so much, that this primarch and his legion kind of always seemed bad on the edges, and he was destined to fall away from the Emperor. The climax of the novel, when Perturabo is confronted by his sister, and she lays out the absolute truth that his gifts are unrelenting endurance and his tasks match that, and that it is the fact that he chooses constantly to suffer in silence and brood that no one notices, and he just outright kills her for it before he even realizes what he is doing. Man. At the end of this novel, when I was reflecting on how I just dont like him any longer, I realized I did not like him because I had not run into a Primarch characterized like myself! Someone who can just endure seemingly thankless tasks without complaint, but blows on my own embers of bitterness because no one notices. Instead of just being honest and open and recognizing the acceptance you do have! Anyway. Because of this rare moment of personal introspection because of a work of fiction based in a universe based on a board game...I have to give this novel and this character study 5 stars. If you just want violence and 40k bolter porn and dont want to dig any deeper than this is a 3-4. Enjoy. All in all, the Primarch's series has not been a disappointment.

Veronica Anrathi says

Listen guys, this was FANTASTIC. This was so much more than I thought it's gonna be after reading previous three Primarchs books, but it was EXACTLY what I originally expected from the series. I haven't read many of Guy Haley's work yet and I was rather critical of his Night Lords short stories, but this one just blew me away. Wonderfully written, through this book we get to know the Lord of Iron like never before, from his upbringing on Olympia to his infamous downfall... also on Olympia. Reading it was a total pleasure and a tragedy through and through. I feel like the Iron Warriors is one of those legions that often lack depth and dimension when they appear in the novels, but here they are portrayed beautifully. We follow Perturabo, a tragic genius that he is, becoming his own greatest enemy. We also get to experience a "prequel" of a sort to one of my absolute favorite short stories, The Iron Within by Rob Sanders, and learn the details behind the painful condition of Barabas Dantioch aka Badass King of Badassery. And we meet the warrior-poet, Venerable Vastopol! It was intriguing and intense, I can hardly even think of a single weaker link. I know this review is all over the place, but it's 2 a.m. and I just can't squeeze my excitement into a short post without giving away all the spoilers. It's a must read and you will love it, I promise.

From iron cometh strength.

From strength cometh will.

From will cometh faith.

From faith cometh honor.

From honor cometh iron.

This is the Unbreakable Litany. May it forever be so.

Zare says

It seems that Emperor created all of the Primarchs as reflections of his own personality (and by that humans at large).

Perturabo is walking computer, man who sees things only in absolutes, there is no grey area for him. He is also a person fully aware of his superiority over normal humans and thus very very alone. In his mind he is so off from the main human that he cannot trust them and thus isolates himself from everyone - be them bearing gifts, love or death. He tries to act like he has no emotions but he is in constant internal turmoil. In order to stifle his emotions he blunts his soul against ever so increasing levels of violence and rigidity.

He needs company, he needs someone to look at him and say "Well done" but unfortunately by perfecting his isolation he became for all means and purposes completely invisible. For superhuman who does not bask in lights of glory he is of no interest to anyone and soon his legion and himself are fighting extremely hard offensives in deep space out of everyone's sight.

If he was Alpharion/Omegon this would be his life dream. But unlike these two and even Curze, Perturabo is living among people, he seeks attention but [knowing what he truly is] he punishes himself in more and more brutal ways while hoping that someone will say "Stop it! You have greater purpose, lets achieve it!" and take him in to build and create instead to destroy.

This of course is his fatal flaw and as such paves the way for the ultimate fall.

Very good book, good addition to the series.

Highly recommended.

Chris Dennison says

Perturabo has always been one of the lesser understood characters in the 30k pantheon and this book goes a long way towards explaining why the Lord of Iron is the way he is.

Very enjoyable from start to finish. I really enjoyed the penultimate chapter and genuinely felt a bit sad for Perturabo.

Well done Mr Haley, I really hope your BL masters let you loose on another primarch soon.

Marc Collins says

I remember when BL polled their audience at one of the Lives about whether or not people wanted a Primarchs Origins series; every hand shot up. The assumption when these stories first began to be announced was that these stories would be origin stories. As time passed, though, it became clear that they were not. Guilliman was a standard action and character study, Magnus was a brooding revisit to many old friends, Russ was a legendary moment immortalised and expanded.

Perturabo bestrides expectations, as it is both a Perturabo origin story and a telling of two of his most infamous undertakings; the purgings of the Hrud and the cleansing of Olympia.

Immediately we are thrown into the youth of Perturabo, as a precocious not-quite-child, following on directly from the Theogonies section of "Angel Exterminatus." AE remains the definitive character study of Perturabo, but Haley plays off of it deftly. He creates a brooding and tortured youth, whose disconnect from humanity leads to his greatest triumphs and agonies.

These vignettes in his past are contrasted with some grittily brutal war in the present. The Hrud pose a unique threat in how they manipulate time, and we see proud warriors reduced to nothing beneath their influence. We are also reintroduced to Barabas Dantioch; heroic Warsmith of the later Heresy. Haley continues to wield him well, displaying his conflict as ably as he does his future loyalty.

Ultimately the crux of Perturabo's character is his fear of perceived failure, much as the early depictions of Horus. He is such a deeply thoughtful and logical character, yet spends a great deal of his life working on projects that will never come to life. He is a man at war, eternally yearning for the ultimate expression of peace- his nature makes him believe that that is better weaponry and the threat of violence.

When it comes, though, it is no real deterrent and so the warrior becomes his own worst enemy, his own nemesis.

This is a surprisingly thoughtful novel; burning slow and racing hot as it alternates its plots. I had worried

that it was trying to be three different books, but it balances it well. Haley's prose is a delight and his insight is welcome, even if it sometimes extends to lifting Plato wholesale for this Grecian world. Olympia simmers with paranoia and intrigue beneath his pen, mild worldbuilding bringing it to a sumptuous life previous depictions have shied away from.

A minor quibble would be that we're never even made aware of the Word Bearer presence with them, hinted at in "The First Heretic", not even as a passing mention, though that is more the pedant in me talking. On a similar note, it would have been nice to see; or have a push towards, the scene where Horus vindicates Perturabo.

All in all, this book comes the closest to what we expected this series to be while simultaneously veering from it to be more like "Leman Russ". At once we are presented with Perturabo as he forms and as he is finished; as he is shaped for his ultimate destiny. While it does not always surpass the exemplary work done on the character in "Angel Exterminatus", it uses that novel as a framework on which to develop and add, giving the existing lore additional layers and depths.

Daniel says

This is the fourth book in the Horus Heresy: The Primarchs series. It will come as no surprise that I enjoyed this one as I have all of the books in this series so far. The story here is set to describe the Primarch of the Iron Warriors Chapter. He and his sons are entrenched in a vicious war against a xenos race know as the Hrud. These strange beings actually have a natural temporal anomaly field that comes from their unnatural molecular makeup that causes time to distort and bend near them. The more of them you have together, the stronger this field becomes. The Hrud weapons are also temporal in nature and have weird effects. Iron Warriors fall in close combat, withered and dead of old age, their armor and weapons corroding after just a few seconds when near this strange xenos threat.

And the war is not going well, at all...

The Emperor charged Perturabo and his legion with scouring a system of the Hrud and they are failing. They realize the folly of their actions when their devastating attacks and destruction of the Hrud forces an early migration of the creatures from one planet. This draws the Hrud fleet to the system and triggers yet another unbelievable event. The main Hrud city actually burrows out of the planet surface and is discovered to be a massive orbital lander, carrying the Hrud breeders and younglings to safety. Perturabo's fleet is then struck with the full force of the main temporal cannons of their warships, and more Iron Warriors and ships are lost. In fact, the Primarch himself barely escapes, by burning through one of his one legion ships to get away and clear the explosion of the planet torn apart with temporal radiation.

Soon after the decision is made to continue the crusade against the Hrud, a new event happens. Iron Warriors find the Primarch to deliver a stern bit of new. Olympia has left the Imperium. This is the homeworld of Perturabo and he immediately changes his plans and burns his whole fleet back to Olympia. When he gets there, the Regent of Olympia hears the complaints and arguments of both sides of the conflicts. Perturabo loses his temper and declares war on the humans of his homeworld. His legion takes to this with relish, killing one in ten to begin with, and any and all who resist. Women, children, no one is safe. It takes many days of this, including Perturabo destroying his own home city, whom he designed the defense for, before he is overwhelmed by his mistakes and kills his sister, who is trying to explain his temper and folly. She gets to him and wracks his soul and conscience with her final words before he crushes the life from her. This act causes the Iron Lord to falter and make him see the depths of his weakness and he stops the assault. This act also plants the seed within Perturabo, wherein he begins heretical thoughts and realizes that the Emperor has caused him to become what he is and the failures he has made were never realistic deeds to begin with. He

was set up to fail, in his mind. His hearts turn to a darker path and the seeds sprout and grow, as the Horus Heresy later reveals...

This was a really fun read, and a unique insight into the Iron Lord. He really is a perfect, flawed creature and the words written here make it very evident. Mr. Haley is a really fine storyteller and the personality and depth he gives even to genetically modified superhumans is amazing. "Iron Within, Iron Without" this is the words of this legion and yet there is admirable quality amongst this legion. It made me sad, knowing how far they will fall and how strong they were before becoming traitors. All together this one was a fantastic book and I cannot wait for the next one in October.

Danny

Matthew says

Fascinating tale about one of my favourite Primarchs. Well worth checking out if you're a 40k fan.

Andrey Nalyotov says

Abbati, medico, patrono que intima pande
(Conceal not the truth from thy physician and lawyer)

Guy Haley is a proficient and talented author, who wrote quite a lot in his writing career. Richard and Klein, Railroad, shorts and standalone novels and a lot of AoS and W40K stories. Even a full Horus Heresy novel. Perturabo: Hammer of Olympia is his second big foray into the time of Great Crusade/HH in M30-31K. Let's point out something from the start - Primarch serie, which goes at the time and before the mainstream of Horus Heresy is a definite success for BL as a publisher. Partly due to the time it's start to sell. Partly due to the 'main' characters of each narrative.

I already reviewed all of the previous installments, which are quite different in ratings. From a truly boring and uninteresting Roboute Guilliman: Lord of Ultramar to a good Magnus the Red: Master of Prospero and amazing Leman Russ: The Great Wolf.

Guy Haley has a lot to prove with that novella sized novel. And he did - especially if he got one of the hardest jobs so far.

IV Legion Primarch suffered a lot through years under the writing pen. His character was written by a big range of BL authors. Each of them used this character as a staging stone in their own stories and showed him absolutely in different light. But what they all used as a constant - is that Perturabo is a petulant child with the complex issues of self-validation and grandeur. And that Lord of Iron in general is a sadist and impersonation of fury itself (sometimes even Angron could envy Perturabo's aggression).

So Haley's job was not an easy one. And as a truly proficient writer he tried to do the best he can with what he got. But even through he tried to do best - result is a mixed bag of stones.

First of all I will mention that I'm not a big fan of Iron Warriors - mostly cause you can't be so unchangeable in your behavior and logic in a Galaxy of M30-31K. So I was patiently waiting will someone will give them justice in all their long road of HH and show true meaning to all their actions. So far - the best depiction of Perturabo was done by John French and partly by Graham McNeill. Partly - cause 'Angel Exterminatus' has more flaws than goods. And seems I will still be waiting further... Cause Haley failed with them (Not so profoundly as McNeil) but still - it is a failure.

Second - I was expecting to see the reason why let's say a rank legionary of IW Grand battalion live and breath. And... another failure.

Third - that's the first BL book in a long while which I was trying to read and finish for 9 days. And not because I was too busy (through I was) - but because it's missed something, a soul if you would say.

But let's dissect it the right way.

Plot/Narrative/Style

As BL synopsis said: *"Born to a life of political conflict, Perturabo was always considered a child prodigy among the people of Olympia – indeed, his philosophical and scientific works were beyond compare. But then, after his rediscovery by the Emperor and decades of thankless military campaigning on the Great Crusade, the primarch begins to resent his Legion's place in the Imperium. When word reaches him of turmoil on his adoptive home world, he orders the Iron Warriors to abandon their campaign against the alien hrud and crush this emerging rebellion by any means necessary..."*

But it is much more. It is a war story and a story of regret. It is a story of one vengeful, spiteful curmudgeon, and how he sees himself very differently, as a misunderstood genius.

In general novella consists of 2 parts and addendum. 1 part is focusing on Perturabo during his youth on Olympia and should have shown us why he became that way. Second part focuses on his role and part in the Great Crusade and upon his return to the world that defined him. Addendum is a story from the eyes of one warsmith Barabas Dantioch and how he became the 'insolent' cripple in UE and Pharos.

Story progression is quite good and actions seen are definitely not bad. But where this novella shine - is actions about time-warping hrud (and not in a definitive look at what makes the master of iron tick).

That's the first time we truly saw how SM found one of the 'enemies' that are more efficient than the Emperors Legions themselves. And how sad that is - especially then we are shown that they are not even fighting - but simply running/migrating away.

There's a huge amount about the hrud in the novella (and probably the best parts of it) - not least a ground-breaking revelation about what their "migrations" actually are...

But through awesome they are they are replaced with events of Perturabo youth on Olympia and his logic behind prosecution of Olympia later on in Great Crusade. And it's here where all the interesting build up failed utterly flat.

Characters

Novella contain a lot of interesting secondary/main characters - the good old Triarchs of Iron Warriors, battalions commanders etc. But where Guy Haley truly shine - it then depicting a usual human beings. And his cohorts of Olympian characters is what makes the book alive. Dammekos, Adophus, Lord of Iron 'sister' from a tyrant side - they are real and they are what makes the novella truly ticks for the Perturabo character. And here we have the main character of the novella - great Perturabo or let's say his egocentric logic. That's who is the main character of Perturabo: Hammer of Olympia. And thus I will go to the cons, cause they are truly and totally based on Perturabo's depiction.

Cons

Let be honest - Perturabo always was a petulant ego-maniac. Guy Haley tried to make Lord of Iron feel sympathetic (not empathetic! important distinction). But sadly - he failed in that. Partly it's not his fault - IV Legion Primarch was ruined by different authors before him. Each of them tried to do justice to his character. Instead they are totally ruined his personality.

There are a lot of points in his life where you can see he easily could have been different. Or where him being a 'giant jerk' wouldn't have mattered as much, because being a 'giant jerk' is part of the whole "intergalactic warlord" job description.

What are the real reasons for him to snapped and be so full of loathing and hate? Olympia showed him kindness, Dammekos always said 'how great he was' - instead even upon first meeting for his 'step-father' roaring maelstorm in Perturabo's head declared him a liar.

Even being a boy he made assumptions which he validate as a constant of a universe. In regards to how he felt about Olympians, he just knew he wasn't one of them from the beginning and was made for bigger

things. AS a result - he never made any deep connections, he used them as tools to and then dispose of them, then they had served their purpose.

A lot of IW fans will tell you that among all the Primarchs, nobody embodies the weariness, the meat grinder aspect of the Great Crusade, quite like Perturabo. Many may lament it, but most still accept their lot in it.

Perturabo chafed at it, always. His talents didn't just serve to tear down fortresses, but also his own character and Legion. Instead of uniting it and making something greater.

Just look at Perturabo behavior with failures, even he was the reason for them:

«Dantioch did not like the bitterness of this statement. 'Then perhaps, my lord, it is your mistake in persisting with this campaign in the face of all available information.»

He simply can't fathom that he could be wrong:

«Stone and iron decayed, everything decayed, but the rapidity with which the human body ceased good function and began to collapse offended his sense of order. Humanity was, in many ways, despicable 'Others have suffered the same fate and yet they fulfill the orders given them,' said the Primarch. 'You were told to hold the straits. You did not.»

If I had the father like him - I would have rebelled after the first year. You can't follow a cruel king who kills for any fault or on his mood whim. How many legionaries have rebelled - we simply don't know. His own Legion 'loves' and hates him:

«Dogma is no substitute for wisdom...' Try telling that to our primarch,' said Zolan».

But Perturabo himself view them as expendable meat (through author tried to show it from a better view - but failed in that):

«Perturabo gave no thanks or valedictory words to his captain. He expected his warriors to die for him without question».

And through his IW SM are ready to die for him (again - totally unexplained why. Reasoning he is our Primarch totally doesn't work here - cause he is a sadistic tyrant) rank and file humans in his fleet is another matter. Why nobody ran to Terra to tell the Emperor how his son butcher everyone who displeases him? Why they simply does not rebelled against him - his own serfs?

Through it's much better than how he views everyone else - with a sense of totally insane 'honor':

«Death is the greatest peace of all,' said Perturabo. 'Unending and total. I prefer other lands, but I can give you death's peace, if that is the peace you would prefer.»

And biggest Perturabo issue of all is his desire to 'drown the shame this news brought in blood'. Sometimes like half of all the Perturabo appearances in different shorts, novellas, novels he is more mad with rage and bloodthirsty than Angron himself. To be honest - Angron seems more sane than Lord of Iron with all his 'cold logic' most of the times.

The problem of Perturabo as a character, a being, a warlord and a Primarch probably best shown through his dialog with his step-sister during a decimation of Olympia.

As his 'sister' said:

«Bo, a tomb lord. You cannot achieve the impossible so you rage like a child, and now you have unleashed this horror upon us because you can accept no compromise... You waste your men to prove a point that needs no proof, and then grow angry when no one notices and praises your self-sacrifice. Your petulance has cost this planet whole generation of youth...»

And that's the first and biggest truth ever said to the Primarch. Because that's exactly who Perturabo is. In all his errors, in all his flaws, in all his issues - he is a perpetrator. And all of it is overshadowed by his dogmatic view of the Master of Mankind and the Galaxy.

«The Emperor of Mankind makes no mistakes!' shouted Perturabo. He powered to his feet, towering over the ruined warsmith. 'His plans are flawless - how could it be any other way?»

Which eventually leads to absolutely errored and horribly wrong deduction:

«This pointless, ruinous campaign was the fault of the Emperor's vanity.»

As his sister said - maybe he was given he hardest tasks cause he was able to overcome everything?

Or maybe if Horus weren't the Warmaster, forcing Primarchs into his own camp by exploiting their flaws. In

Perty's case, knowingly sending him against threats like the Hrud that are obviously not going to work out well with Perturabo's approach to war. I think Horus was doing that before he even knew he wanted to rebel against the Emperor, too. Just manipulating things his way out of pride and vanity. And thus that leads us to the greatest tragedy of the Iron Warriors. It wasn't the perfidious influence of Chaos or anything that broke them. Just years and century of thankless grinding and a perfect storm of cultural circumstances. It's at least a little heart-breaking to see the Perturabo from Magnus, where he seems confident and wise and the Great Crusade is a fresh thing to believe in for him, and to compare that to the Perturabo by the end of this novel.

Score

Guy Haley did tried to make a whole and believable Lord of Iron personality from all the previous shards which were left by his predecessors.

And for that only he deserves respect and fans appreciation.

But in general, as I said before - he was able to create a vengeful, spiteful curmudgeon, who he sees himself very differently, as a misunderstood genius.

I will rate it as 4 out of 5 stars (through I was going to give it 3 due to really hard road while reading it) - cause hrud, last chapters dialogs and Perturabo egocentric horribly direct bluntness saved the story for me.

I think if Guy Haley was able to least partly save Lord of Iron 'depiction', he would be one of the best candidates to write a Mortarion Primarch novella.

Nick Ohrn says

I love the Primarch series and this is another excellent entry. I didn't know much about the Iron Warriors or their primarch, Perturabo, before reading this book. Now, though, I feel like I understand more clearly their actions during the rebellion.

The story jumps back and forth in terms of reference points, and I like that. It allows the main character to be fleshed out and made me much more interested in the story overall.

The only thing that prevents this work from being a 5-star is that there is a huge main plot point that kind of just ends for no reason and with no conclusion. Otherwise, another exceptional work from the talent at Black Library.

DarkChaplain says

Review also published here

Perturabo: The Hammer of Olympia is the best Primarchs novel to date (or at least up to Lorgar, which recently dropped in a limited edition. I won't be reading that for a while). I feel like I'm repeating that with every book in the series, but here I can say without a doubt that Guy Haley moved me more than any of the previous authors managed to. Not just because it is a stellar, character-building novel about one of the most underappreciated Primarchs of the Heresy, but also because it struck home on a very personal level.

The novel is split into two plotlines which obviously relate to one another but still divided by almost two centuries. Both focus for the most part on Perturabo and draw different pictures of the Lord of Iron, without making the character's incarnations indistinguishable from one another.

The major plotline plays out just before the outbreak of the Horus Heresy, mere years before the disastrous betrayal at Isstvan. Perturabo and his Legion are throwing themselves into the meat grinder at the tail end of the Great Crusade, attempting to contain and exterminate a Hrud migration. I cannot remember if we ever actually saw Hrud in action in a Black Library novel - I kinda doubt it. This alien race existed for a long time, of course, and was even covered in the ancient lore tome *Xenology*, but the most we got was a throwaway reference here and there. The most recent examples I can think of are in fact the Horus Heresy stories featuring Barabas Dantioch, Warsmith of the Iron Warriors. Dantioch, to my delight, is a key figure in this novel, leading right up to *The Iron Within* by Rob Sanders from the *Age of Darkness* anthology.

The Hrud are a menace upon the galaxy. They don't function in the typical way beings of flesh and blood might - they distort time, travel through it and their weapons and mere presence produce warped fields that can turn humans to dust within moments, or age them for thousands of years. Fighting them proves not only a logistical nightmare, but utterly devastating in morale. This is the campaign that really broke the Iron Warriors, after decades of chafing at being handed dirty, thankless jobs.

We've heard about Perturabo's belief that the Emperor and the Imperium at large neglected him and his Legion, didn't appreciate them and used them poorly, but we never really *saw* why they might think that. It is one thing to be told they got bad tasks set for them, and another to truly experience how bad it could get. *The Hammer of Olympia* is that story that the setting, the Legion and the Primarch desperately needed. This is a vital tale to fully appreciate just what would motivate the Lord of Iron, previously shown as so enthusiastic in Graham McNeill's *Magnus the Red: Master of Prospero*, to break his oaths and side with Horus Lupercal. It does so marvelously.

Haley's writing of the Hrud and the way they defied time and space reminded me of another novel of his, namely *Champion of Mars*; I don't want to ruin the twist of that particular sci-fi adventure for you (though I will say that you should go out and read it, the Kindle edition on Amazon should go for about 3 bucks only and it was very well worth more than that), but there are certain parallels to be drawn. Haley is no stranger to timey-whimey topics and I felt that the whole theme was handled very competently.

Through Dantioch, we see the meat grinder itself, the Legion's doubts and misgivings, and the price Perturabo's sons had to pay for going against their lord's own arrogance and martyr complex. I honestly love that Haley got a chance to show this fallout, after the excellent job he did with the Warsmith in *Pharos*. Barabas Dantioch, ever since *The Iron Within*, has been one of my favorite characters in the franchise. The past two years have seen him a hero with a big legacy, so it felt satisfying to follow a younger Dantioch for a change.

On the other side, we get to see Perturabo's early days. We see him arrive at his foster father's court on Olympia, grow up with, if not really under, the Tyrant of Lochos. We see him achieve great marvels and defy culture and religion. We see him reshape his adopted home world, while growing stronger in mind and body. However, we also see him shaped by the court intrigue, the paranoia of Olympia's tyrants, the assassination attempts, the heathen beliefs of priests and demagogues. We see him butt heads with his father Dammekos, bond with his sister Calliphone, and grow ever more petulant, cynical, bitter and untrusting.

Perturabo grows up feeling appreciated only for his many talents, yet not really seen for what he truly is. He feels used and abused, despite all the status and fame thrown at him. He comes to despise many aspects of his home world, subjugating it while lacking the passion to really lead it himself. He thinks others fools, and

even his sister, the one person he seems to bond with, cannot be fully trusted. He keeps looking for the stars and awaits the Emperor's arrival, neglecting his subjects in turn.

Things obviously go south before long, and if you've followed the Heresy for a while, you'll probably know how things end for Olympia. I found the final chapters dealing with the Primarch's return home to be hard-hitting, uncompromising and utterly suitable to express the Legion's fall from grace while also showing them as conflicted, complex creatures with broken spirits. The Lord of Iron let his heart grow hard and weary, and it shows on his Legion and their relationship with him.

There is an exchange towards the end, between Perturabo himself and his sister, which really hit a nerve and made me reflect on the Primarch and even myself:

"Always you do things the most difficult way, and in the most painful manner. You cultivate a martyr's complex, lurching from man to man, holding out your bleeding wrists so they might see how you hurt yourself. You brood in the shadows when all you want to do is scream, 'Look at me!' You are too arrogant to win people over through effort. You expect people to notice you there in the half-darkness, and point and shout out, 'There! There is the great Perturabo! See how he labours without complaint!'"

The entire chapter and Perturabo's conversation with Calliphone are, in my eyes, the *definitive exploration of Perturabo*. Everything Haley built up throughout the novel, everything we've seen in the past, is boiled down and addressed in their argument in one shape or another. I cannot possibly express just how incredibly satisfying Guy managed to sketch the Lord of Iron in that chapter alone. Even without everything else in this book, that single chapter highlights the qualities and faults of the titular character better than anything else printed about him to date. It instills an understanding of the character that goes beyond what McNeill managed in *Angel Exterminatus* and turns Perturabo into simultaneously one of the most tragic figures of the franchise, but also one of the most damned and twisted. Haley understood Perturabo on a fundamental level that I can only applaud.

To be frank, this is one of the few books that made me feel utterly fulfilled. It ticked all the boxes I was hoping it would. There was brutal, uncompromising action, disastrous arrogance, tragedy in motion and a sense of fully fleshed out complexity about the titular character that every single novel in this *Primarchs* series should be striving for. *The Hammer of Olympia* reaffirmed once more just how spectacular an author Guy Haley is, in my opinion. He understood the Lord of Iron and all his disparate depictions and was fully able to knit them together in a wholly compelling rendition. *Perturabo: The Hammer of Olympia* stands tall next to the best the Horus Heresy series has to offer.
