



Malekith

Gav Thorpe

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The third book in the Time of Legends series begins the epic tale of the Sundering. Malekith triggers a tragic sequence of events that plunges the realm of the elves into a civil war from which they will never recover.

Malekith Details

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From Reader Review Malekith for online ebook

Kaohlir says

From behest the day I picked this mere tome from my dusty shelves I blessed it with such bold expectations. I dared not think if it could ever wholly suffice them; the fabled legends of Ulthuan holding a rich significance within me, with the Sundering being the zenith of the bloody, millenia-old, never-ceasing war but lo! Was I wrong with such a base hypothesis.

The story has its foundations barely a handspan after the cataclysmic creation of the Vortex, the magically nulling void centered within Ulthuan to drain magic from the world, and with it the manifestation of the servants of the Dark Gods. Though such significance as to this event, arguably the greatest battle within the bounds of history, is not spoken of much, or to any particular depth, especially when one considers how the crowing of Bel-Shaanar, is yet a lowly year after the death of both Aenarion and Caledor and their equally triumphant and bereaved victory; Though the reasoning behind the denial of Malekith's claims are well documented, the false joy expressed by the Prince masking his utter loathing, whilst Morathi shrieks her protestations towards the contempt of her son.

Seeking to abate the glory-hungering song within his tainted blood, Malekith and a host of the Nagarythe sail towards the Old World, to forge themselves their own kingdom, a barb to the pride of the crowned Pheonix King, an insult to his dominance over the true land of the Elves. Through the blood of his warriors, the thrust of gleaming silver tipped spears and arcs of flaming brands, Malekith builds his colony from the ashes of Athel Toralien, the milestone of his fruitful empire.

As the tides of savage Orcs are slain and pushed ever further, the denizens of Chaos routed, driven by the Princes lust for glory and taste for blood, the Naggarothi stumble upon the peculiar folk, so named the Dwarfs. Short where the Elves are tall, stocky where they are gangly, gruff to noble, and gritty to graceful, these two races, upon the wealth-gilded pinnacles of their race, their empires flourishing, as the darkness is ever abated, meet within the vast forests of the Old World, perturbed as one-another, concealing outright disgust with faint amusement and mockery.

Malekith travels towards the mountain holds of the Dwarfs, the jewel-encrusted summit of his ambassadorial trip, to talks within the mighty fortress of Karaz-A-Karak. It is here, amidst the descriptive genius that Gav Thorpe paints so truly magnificently, that the underling demeanour of Malekith is revealed. His inferior views of the Dwarfish-folk, and the timely assassination to those who would usurp his newfound alliance shatters any fictorial pictures we had of the Prince, with the ruthless, single-minded and power-thirsting son of Aenarion, his infamy knows him for.

Years, decades, centuries and even millenia flow away, as trade flourishes between the coastal Kingdoms of Ulthuan and its colonies, their coffers bulging with grain and gold. But as with any empire, it can only flourish so high before waning and floundering within the spoils of excess, depicted here, as the hedonistical Cults of Excess and Pleasure, their figurhead Morathi, Malekiths unholy mother.

Athel Toralien, as beautifully cemented later within the tome that is [B:]Shadow King[/B:] too falls under the excessive shadow of the cults, and rife with disgusts, our Prince heads towards the glacial crown of the world, the warping and magically infused Wastes, poisoned by the might of Chaos, yet confined to its pitiful existence by the Vortex. Battling through the evil-worshipping tribes of early humanity, warp-mutated beasts and the fell daemons of Chaos itself, the party descends upon the blighted kingdom of long since vanished

halflings, skeletal figures of foul breeds of Elf and Human.

And yet it is here. Upon the grandure of the blasted Wastes, within the warping echoes of the city, does Malekiths destiny finally manifest and abide his whims. Plucking the Circlet of Iron, an arcane crown of power-imbued metal, gifting the young Prince an audience to the lairs of the Chaos Gods themselves. Transversing through the blighted, coalescing, bloody and excessive kingdoms, Malekith, unknowingly condemning his warriors to slaughter, truly grasps the profanity of his birthright.

Whilst her son plys the seas of the world and tempts the wrath of the Chaos Gods, tilling the Wastes for ever greater glorious and foolish deeds, the taint of evil seeps slowly back into the newly freed isle, as cults spring from ever grang city, isolated farmstead and noble port. Bel Shaanar orders the cleansing of such vile practices, beneath of the banner of Malekith and Nagarythe, newly returned, with Ulthuan the ripe fruit for him to pluck from the conquest of war. With the ample and bloody culmination of such a vast campaign the storming of Anlec and the overthrow of the forbidden cults.

Ulthuan is led, blindly into blissful peace, once more, as the Prince of Nagarythe, now unleashes the Cults founded my Morathi, to cause spontaneous anarchy and unrest within the realms of the Elves once again. Malekith grips this feverant degeneration of Bel Shaanars power, forcefully poisoning the Phoenix King, making his way upon the Dragon Ship Indraguir, to the Shrine of Asuryan.

And it is upon this pyramid of white marbled and gold, that the cloying veil of century spun falsity drops: Malekith, his pent up and millenia agression and distrust, nourished by Morathi and provoked by the ignorance to his plea by the remaining Princes, slaughters near all the assembled throng of nobility. Knights of Anlec clash with stoic Phoenix Guard upon the docks, whilst the foul blade of Malekith is swung in magic-spitting arcs, every fiery sweep decapitating yet another Prince, as his hold upon the Pheonix Crown grows ever yet more, his dreams yet closer.

The blasphemous slaughter within the halls of the Creator God ends, alabaster steps stained by tacky rivulets of dripping crimson, as the once gallant and righteous protagonist, now turned blood-stained antagonist, casts his arrogance swaythed form into the fiery chasm as his father did millenia before, not to be blessed by the Allfather but burnt, as his vile body is wracked by white-hot fire, burning his mind and reducing his mortal form to ash, screams bubbling from scorched lips to a soul-gnawing crescendo, as Malekith crawls back towards the dais, away from Asuryans wrath, and so, the Sundering truly begins...

Rated at an impressive 4 stars from a potential of 5, for intoxicating prose, a gloriously weaved character that is Malekith, with substantial development through the read, his heroic and little-known rise and the magnitude of his traitrous and infamous fall, with action from former page to latter. Though beautifully detailed at times, lacking badly at others, with bristling sieges, yet poor skirmishes, dimishing the perfection made manifest, ever so slightly.

My preconceptions - as majestic and high as the sky-touching towers of Tor Anroc itself - sated perfectly, my love of Elves quelled.

Jesse says

Warhammer fluff at its worst. The writing is so sloppy and half of it doesn't even make sense. Malekith climbs on top of a shaggoth and hacks its head off while one of his arms is broken. Morathi gives her son

Indraugnir v.2 and betrays him in the next chapter. Eataine is portrayed as more susceptible to pleasure cults because it's rich and idle, but the cults are rooted in Nagarythe, which is portrayed as super-martial-disciplined. On page 384, Malekith manages to both "pause to consider" and "speak without hesitation".

Forget the tragic, scarred, terrifying villain who barely gets driven off Finuval Plain- this book's Malekith has the temperament of a pissed off nine year old and spends the vast majority of the book dicking around with numbingly stupid politics, fighting token enemies, and backstabbing other characters with minimal backstory or meaning.

Don't read this book if you like Asur. Don't read it if you like Druchii. Don't read it if you like Gav Thorpe. Don't read it.

Peter Bobovsky says

Reads like a history book. The contents are good, but the pace is way off.

Bookwraiths says

Malekith was my first foray into the Warhammer Universe, and in hindsight, I have to say it took me too long to sample this wonderful place. Sure, some will argue that the world of Malekith is yet another retreaded version of LOTR with a bit of Moorcock mixed in, but to me, even while such criticism holds a small sliver of truth, I honestly could care less because this stuff is good. Warhammer has gained another fan!

But why should anyone consider reading the novel Malekith?

The world of warhammer itself is why, for this is world building done right. As you read, past heroes and villains rise before your eyes, bestriding civilization and clashing with steel and magic to forge the world where our flawed elven prince resides. And you realize with undeniable conviction that the Prince of Nagarythe's story is of immense importance to the future of this world, and that all history stretching forth will, in small or large part, be influenced by Malekith's choices. Indeed, as the pages turn, you even understand that Malekith's own fate is influenced in part by the choices his own father, Aenarion, made centuries before, making it clear that even as mighty and flawed as Malekith is, he is but a small droplet in the vast ocean of warhammer history. That is what this novel offers: the weight and breath of a complete history that - unlike many fantasy novels - rings true to life in so many ways, making you wish to discover all its stories.

Well, if it so wonderful, why did I only give it 3 stars you ask?

Like all things, Malekith does have it's flaws. To me, the writing bogs down into too much detail of actually bloodletting and not enough details of the people who fight the battles. It also does too much telling me what happens instead of letting me see it unfold in a story setting. And lastly, the chapters where the author tells the story through Carathril instead of Malekith just seem out of place. Don't get me wrong, I like Carathril, especially his neutral view of the main characters, but he is introduced, relates his part of the story then disappears for chapters with no explanation before reappearing to say more only to vanish yet again. It did not work for me.

So if you do not mind elves and dwarves in your fantasy and want to sample a fantasy world of legendary breadth, this would be a good place to see if Warhammer is to your liking.

Markus says

There was once a time when all was order, now so distant that no mortal creature can remember it. Since time immemorial the elves have dwelt upon the isle of Ulthuan. Here they learnt the secrets of magic from their creators, the mysterious Old Ones. Under the rule of the Everqueen they dwelt upon their idyllic island unblemished by woe.

When the coming of Chaos destroyed the civilisation of the Old Ones, the elves were left without defence. Daemons of the Chaos Gods ravaged Ulthuan and terrorised the elves. From the darkness of this torment rose Aenarion, the first of the Phoenix Kings, the Defender.

Aenarion's life was one of war and strife, yet through the sacrifice of Aenarion and his allies, the demons were defeated and the elves were saved. In his wake the elves prospered for an age, but all their grand endeavours were to be for naught. The warrior-people of Nagarythe found little solace in peace and in time would turn upon each other and their fellow elves.

Where once there was harmony, there came discord. Where once peace had prevailed, now came bitter war. Heed now the tale of the Sundering.

After having pushed back the daemons of Chaos and saved Ulthuan from annihilation, the warrior king Aenarion is dying. His son Malekith aspires to rule as Phoenix King in his father's place, but the elves do not want a second military leader to be crowned in a new era of peace. Instead, the First Council chooses another prince, Bel Shanaar, to rule them. Malekith returns to his realm of Nagarythe, and soon departs Ulthuan, a ruthless prince filled with envy and ambition...

Warhammer Fantasy might be the most underappreciated fantasy universe ever created.

After reading *Heldenhammer*, the tale of Sigmar's unification of the human tribes and the formation of the Empire, I decided to make the tale of Malekith and the elves my second Warhammer trilogy. I did not regret it for one moment.

While the Sigmar books gave the impression of a relatively limited setting, this book is a peak into a fantasy world that's been created with master craftsmanship. In *Malekith* is the story of the elves, their beginnings and their wars against the legions of Chaos. Here is the story of the dwarves and their settlement of the great Mountains at the Edge of the World. Here is the story of the grand mythos that forged the Old World in truly ancient times. And the story of a primitive, nomadic people living at the edge of the Chaos Wastes: humans.

I would strongly recommend any fantasy lover to read this book to see what the Warhammer world has to offer. It is popcorn fantasy, sure, but popcorn fantasy at its finest.

Brian says

Having read the background on the Dark Elves for WHFB I knew the story. In reading Gav Thorpe's novel I have a greater appreciation for Malekith and his followers. In many ways I was reminded of Mordred and Morgan LeFay, another infamous M and M pairing of mother and son, when you see the ambition of Morathi push her son Malekith to achieve new heights. At times I found myself feeling sad for the prince, but then he

would speak or do something in such an arrogant fashion that it was quickly forgotten. All-in-all an enjoyable read. If in the first few chapters you find yourself feeling a little uneasy about the pace of the book, it will pick up and quickly move to the end.

Dylan Murphy says

God damn! Gav Thorpe really knocked it out of the park with this one!

Malekith was a terrific adventure, full of exploration and ambition, betrayal and violence. So many twists and turns it'll make your head spin!

The pacing was excellent, the characters were well rounded and believable, and each grew as they went through their respective arcs. The action was intense and the intrigue kept me on the edge of my seat!

This first tale of the downfall of the Elves was phenomenal, and I can't wait to read what's next!

Devin says

I honestly don't expect much from Black Library novels except to see the histories of a game world I really enjoy come to life in my mind.

That's what I got out of this book. It was a lot of fun to read the beginnings of the fall of the Elves of the Warhammer World. I'll admit, the moment that Malekith returned to Ulthuan after his 1000+ years in the 'Colonies' (building the kingdoms of the Elves & Dwarves), and we first get introduced to Eoloran Anar & his grandson Alith...I had a fanboy moment. I huge smile spread across my face knowing exactly how much devastation that innocent, quiet, brooding child would do to Malekith's rebellion once it starts.

In terms of quality of writing...meh. Mr. Thorpe likes to hear himself describe a setting that he spent most of his career. Thuomas Pierinen wrote the majority of the High Elf canon, yes, but Gav Thorpe filled in a lot of the latter details. Perhaps he was not the best choice to write the story of the time period. There was honestly very little character development. Malekith is very similar the first time you meet him to the last time you read about him.

I know I can't expect much from fluff fantasy...but honestly I could easily quantify the number of paragraphs into a percentile of 10% character thought, 20% dialogue & 70% world/cultural description.

It would have been nice to see some more effort put into delving into the characters more instead of trying to bring the time period alive.

Books are about characters, conflict & how the two interact. Well this is the Warhammer World, there is nothing but conflict...I just wish I felt more attached to the characters as their were living through it.

On the positive side, the action was really well done. Magic was slinging, swords crossing and there were some pretty bad ass stand offs.

Like I said, I liked it...but I have a feeling that if I was not so attached to the source material I would not have felt anywhere near the same about it.

Eric Smith says

I thoroughly enjoyed this start to the Sundering trilogy. I especially liked the main character Malekith. He is a powerful and good intentioned individual whose ambition, pride and arrogance get the better of him and cause all of his noble ideals and goals to be consumed in anger, jealousy and his desire for power. Its certainly not a new story to be told but it is written in an enjoyable fashion that doesn't feel dull or stale. It also takes place in a time period of the old world that I am very unfamiliar with and the relationship that develops between the elven and dwarven nations is fascinating to watch. I do very much recommend this book and think it is an excellent entry in the Warhammer world.

Nicholas says

For those of you not familiar with the Warhammer universe, Malekith is the king of the Dark Elves, a cruel and heartless leader who will gleefully expend the lives of anyone he pleases to achieve his own ends. This book, however, is dedicated mostly to the time when he was a noble and upright prince of the Elven kingdom of Ulthuan with the last quarter (roughly) of the book telling the story of how his ambition caused him to turn to dark powers. So it's the classic 'hero falls into darkness' plot, but then who said the Warhammer universe was teeming with originality? Nevertheless the story is enjoyable, the action sequences lack the usual gore factor of other Warhammer novels but then this is the Age of Heroes in the Warhammer world so perhaps the dark gothic factor has yet to kick in, and they were still exciting in the traditional sense. The description of some of the famous landmarks of the Warhammer world was particularly good, I felt, in that they offered enough for a newcomer to get a good idea of what the things looked like, while not belabouring the point so much that people already in the know would get bored. All in all this was an enjoyable read, and has something to offer to anyone, familiar with the Warhammer world or not. There is no doubt however that pre-existing knowledge of the Warhammer world will allow you to get more out of it, even if it does mean that you already know how the story ends.

Paul says

Aenarion, Uniter of Ulthuan and the whole of the elven race, the first Phoenix King, and defender of the world during the first two Chaos Incursions has passed. After much debate between the Princes of Ulthuan, Aenarion's son Malekith is not chosen as Aenarion's successor. It is decided that Malekith's older half sister will wed Bel Shanaar, and bel Shanaar would rule. malekith is fine with this ruling, and returns to his realm of Nagarythe were he rebuilds his realm and prospers. Growing bored of the day to day rule, Malekith sets out across the see to the elven colonies to look for adventure which he desires greatly. After leading the defense of the forsworn colony against an orc invasion, he expands the colonies and forges an alliance with a race the elves never met before, the Dwarves. After a while there is little left to explore and little adventure to be had. So Malekith sets off on an expedition to the Chaos Wastes. Finding a circlet laced with great magical power in a pre human settlement, Malekith spend decades mastering the powers of the circlet before returning home to lead the elven armies against his own mother and her Slaaneshi pleasure cults. Taking his own mother prisoner she slowly twists him even further till he willingly commits treachery against Bel Shanaar and attempts to become the new Phoenix King, as is his right. Walking into the fires of Asuryan is the final test for all those who would claim the title of Phoenix King. Malekith makes his attempt, but the fires reject him and burn him horribly.

Gav Thorpe spins a great tale of how The Sundering begins, a great book.

Zashi says

Unfortunately, this book reads like an extended wiki page. Stuffing a wiki article full of bland dialogues does not a good book make. The prose is clumsy, boring and tedious. I mean, I get it, people have to write books for a living. However, from a reader's perspective, I would recommend sticking to the wiki. You will get the same amount of enjoyment from it, I promise.

Nguyen Duy Pham says

Read this as a challenge from a friend. It was OK. Your usual dark fantasy. Nothing bad but also nothing worth noting.

Alexander Draganov says

This is probably the most epic fantasy I have read in my life, which is no small feat considering the fact that I have devoured everything by authors such as Terry Brooks, Raymond E. Feist and David & Leigh Eddings, am quite familiar with later authors such as Robert Jordan and Terry Goodkind and am fond of Dungeons & Dragons stuff. Nevertheless, this is the first Warhammer novel which I finish (I have started Malus Darkblade but did not like it) and I did it because I love the Eldar Path trilogy from the Warhammer 40 000 setting (in case you are wondering, one is medieval fantasy, the other a space opera), which was also written by Gav Thorpe.

The book chronicles the life of Malekith, a noble Elven prince, who dreams to inherit the throne of his father, with disastrous consequences to his own people. In the beginning, the other Elven princes choose another one to be their King and Malekith travels to distant lands in which he builds a vast empire. This is the first part of the book and it is wonderful - for the first time since many, many years, when I read books like The Lords of the Rings, Magician and The Elfstones of Shannara - I felt like a kid, completely enthralled by the tales from a distant, nordic land, populated with elves, dwarves and awesome monsters. However, there is a subtle difference between "Malekith" and those books - while Tolkien, Brooks and Feist always remain optimistic, "Malekith" is quite grim, even when Malekith is still mostly heroic and less villainous. Still, you root for him when he fights monsters, admire his friendship with the High King of the dwarves and marvel at his discovery of a strange, exotic city where time and space are meaningless.

The second part of the novel tells a much sadder tale. The High King of the Dwarves is no more and Malekith returns to the land of elves and the poisonous ambition to the throne is still there. However, he faces greater obstacles when he discovers that the Elven nations are caught by powerful cults, who participate in hideous religious rituals. Dark betrayal awaits Malekith when he discovers the true nature of the cults and yet he finds an opportunity there, which will allow him to fulfil his destiny. And a sad destiny it is indeed...

Words are too weak to describe to you how powerful and wonderful this book really is. Gav Thorpe is a master when describing the world and the psychology of Elves and Eldars and manages to make them both alien and close to you. He also effortlessly creates a Tolkienesque feeling of scope and epicness and I am talking Silmarillion scope, not Hobbit or The Lord of the Rings. Fans of epic fantasy will be charmed to find nods to other series here and there (the name of the Elven King Bel Shannaar is quite similar to Jerle

Shannara even if the character is not and the strange city in the Chaosrealm reminded me of the Eternal City from the Riftwar Saga), but the whole feel of the book is of a unique and original tale, even if told with familiar tropes. Thorpe's greatest power, however, is his ability to make you feel and even root for his characters, who are quite often very flawed, in the case of Malekith simply evil - and not as a "grey" character like in A Game of Thrones, but dark, bad character, like a Sith Lord or Sauron... and still you can understand his motivations and tragedy.

My only criticism is the abrupt ending - as a technique it is original and worked perfectly in "Path of the Warrior", but here it feels pretty rushed. However, this is a minor con of otherwise fantastic novel. Truly recommended for fans who long for something which will bring them the echo of true epic fantasy.

Farah Aziz says

This was one of those random finds in a bookstore, didn't really search out for it but my goodness! That it was so far off my radar of books to get was already a wonder in itself. With some trepidation being from a non-gaming world background, I thoroughly enjoyed it from the get-go. I can imagine if you're a connoisseur of the gaming world from whence the world of Malekith is somewhat rooted in as I understand it (I may be wrong, who cares!), it must be a wonderful experience. If you're not, like me, it was an awesome introduction to walk into an unfamiliar, deliciously dangerous, dark and mysteriously intriguing place. The story grabbed me from the start with Malekith almost holding your hand as he guides you into the path that he takes.. It's a wild ride with many twists, turns, often violent, disturbing, terrifyingly frustrating and yet strangely beautifully sad. While there are predictable paths in the story telling, I really enjoyed immersing myself in the story and to be honest I chose to forget and ignore the vague references and suggestion to the Tolkienistic realm, allowing me to enjoy the story as is. Dang it Gav! I was hooked and sad that I had to put it down when it drew to a close.
