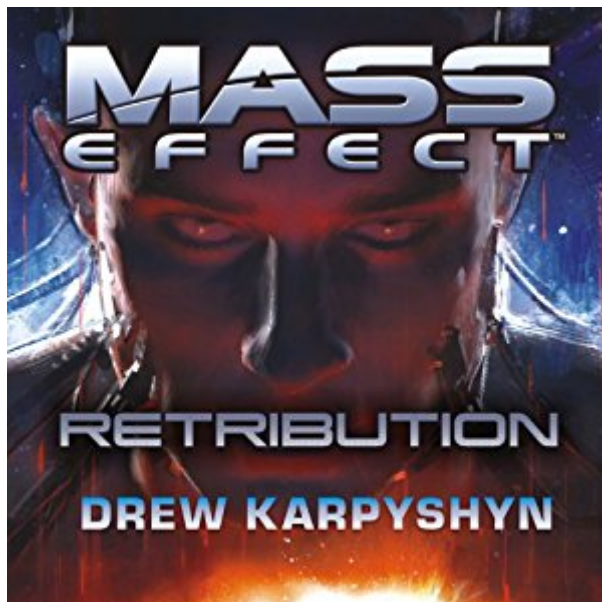


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Mass Effect: Retribution



Synopsis

Humanity has reached the stars, joining the vast galactic community of alien species. But beyond the fringes of explored space lurk the Reapers, a race of sentient starships bent on "harvesting" the galaxy's organic species for their own dark purpose. The Illusive Man, leader of the pro-human black ops group Cerberus, is one of the few who know the truth about the Reapers. To ensure humanity's survival, he launches a desperate plan to uncover the enemy's strengths---and weaknesses---by studying someone implanted with modified Reaper technology. He knows the perfect subject for his horrific experiments: former Cerberus operative Paul Grayson, who wrested his daughter from the cabal's control with the help of Ascension project director Kahlee Sanders. But when Kahlee learns that Grayson is missing, she turns to the only person she can trust: Alliance war hero Captain David Anderson. Together they set out to find the secret Cerberus facility where Grayson is being held. But they aren't the only ones after him. And time is running out. As the experiments continue, the sinister Reaper technology twists Grayson's mind. The insidious whispers grow ever stronger in his head, threatening to take over his very identity and unleash the Reapers on an unsuspecting galaxy.

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Customer Reviews

*Caution, some spoilers will be contained below*First off let me say if you haven't read Mass Effect: Revelation and Mass Effect: Ascension, you probably should do so now. The books are both a great addition to the Mass Effect Universe and help to flesh out things for players of the game, making the

experience all the better. And Retribution is no exception to this. Retribution is essentially a non-Shepard based sequel to Mass Effect 2 wherein we learn some of the things that occurred in the aftermath of the assault on the Collector base, and it helps establish some canon for the series as well provided BioWare sticks to what's stated in the book, which hopefully they will as it would make choosing a canon Shepard in Mass Effect 3 feel much better than choosing one for Mass Effect 2 (if you've done so you know what I mean and I won't delve much into why). In it, we find out that while Shepard did destroy the Collector base and not turn it over to Cerberus, The Illusive Man was able to recover some of the technology within anyways. Paul Grayson, the semi-protagonist (especially towards the end) of Ascension is captured and has the technology tested on him, becoming what is akin to a stronger version of a husk (think Saren at the end of ME1). Kahlee Sanders; who readers of the other books will recognize as the Co-Protagonist of book one along with Anderson, and the Protagonist of book two, returns in this installment as well. She requires the aid of Anderson who has left his post as an ambassador (not much of a surprise to anyone who played ME2) to help her figure out just what is wrong with Paul and to protect her from Cerberus. At a few points Aria T'Loak is involved, though I won't specify too much into how. It's interesting to see a slightly more personal side to her though, with the death of her hush-hush daughter (whose relation to her she'd been keeping secret). But by the books end the fact that she decides to assist the Illusive Man a second time despite his backstabbing, most will likely lose their liking of the character and wish to see her killed alongside her "ally" of sorts...All in all I found the book an interesting read both for what it adds to the series and for the interesting viewpoint it provides via Grayson and his struggle and eventual succumbing to the Reapers. We don't get to see what runs through their minds in the game so the book is a perfect means of doing so. The Illusive man is shown in a similar manner, although he's admittedly almost as hard to read emotionally in print as he is in the game. On a related note: With the upcoming prequel novel that delves into the Illusive Man's origins, let us hope BioWare's continuing success with the series is maintained, as that should also provide an interesting read.

These Mass Effect novels are on their own good science fiction novels. They also add information regarding the video games which are excellent as well. I'm a fan of any science fiction especially the ones that include various intelligent aliens living in an advanced space-faring society. This novel took the time to define the human supremacist group Cerberus and what they stand for. It also introduces its most deadliest agent, Ki Leng. One thing is clear, this book does not censor its violence, this story depicts and showcases more violence than the video games. The suspense of what will happen next urges you to keep reading, no one is safe at all at any moment. Overall, this is

a good story, you don't even have to play the games to get the story line but it would help since somethings may confuses you regarding the technology and lore of the Mass Effect universe.

I've been following Mass Effect relatively closely since it was released, playing through the original Mass Effect's campaign several times, and then through all of Mass Effect 2 in its entirety. So of course, when I found out that there were books to go along with the games, I was all over it. Revelation and Ascension were outstanding books, also by the one and only Drew Karphysyn, the lead writer on the Mass Effect franchise. Revelation was a pre-story, leading up to the events of Mass Effect, filling in more of the origins of some of the main characters of the franchise. Ascension fell shortly after Mass Effect, opening up some more subplots within the story and adding more characters, including the biotic child prodigy, Gillian, and her father, Paul Grayson. To be honest, their introduction left me wanting more, and I was pleasantly surprised (and thankful) that that particular subplot made a return in Retribution in a rather big way. What's more, we get to revisit Omega, a quest hub that players become intimately familiar with after playing Mass Effect 2, and learn more about the Pirate Queen, Aria T'Loak, a few other minor characters, and of course the Illusive Man, himself. All in all, Retribution brings everything up to speed, answers a lot of the questions that I had after finishing the ME2 campaign, and leaves me on the edge of my seat waiting for the next installment in an already epic tale.

First off, I would like to say that I read both Revelation and Ascension prior to reading this, the third installment to the series. Retribution captured me just as the others in the series. It captivates you in a way that only the Mass Effect universe can. On that note, I feel that I can only give this book four stars. This should not diminish any reader trying to pursue the entire series from reading this book. This feels more like a middle chapter in the bigger scope of the series. After finishing the book I felt like there needed to be more, I needed more out of the story, I needed to know what happened! Of course, I finished the book only a month before the next book was released, giving me that needed closure (or so I hope, I have yet to read the fourth book... its downloading to my kindle as I type). With that, I say that Retribution is a great book, an excellent bridge to a broader story that is taking place. I recommend this book to those following the series, it only adds to the excitement I have for everything to come!

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