



## Lethal Heritage

*Michael A. Stackpole*

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The year is 3030. For the past 300 years, since the Star League collapse and the rise of the Five Successor States, these mortal enemies have fought over space, land, and politics. But a new threat looms just outside the Inner Sphere. The descendants of an old Star League general, the Clans, bred to be the best military force humanity has ever seen, have come to take what they believe is rightfully theirs.

## **Lethal Heritage Details**

Date : Published June 1st 1990 by FASA Corp. (first published 1989)

ISBN : 9781555600914

Author : Michael A. Stackpole

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Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction

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## From Reader Review Lethal Heritage for online ebook

### Magussartori says

These novelettes were absolutely entertaining, but they weren't what I would call well written. The plot moves at blinding speeds covering literally years and massive world-significant events in a matter of sentences or an offhand bit of dialogue. The result is that the novels are a series of things that happened, with little foreshadowing or other storytelling artistry.

Note that while I'm being very critical of the book, I don't intend to condemn the author. Rather I think that the stories were severely handicapped by their short format, which was likely not in the author's control. A Song of Ice and Fire level of material is being jammed into 3 tiny novelettes. Quite naturally reading them is going to feel like you're hanging on to a wild bull.

Rather I applaud Stackpole for being able to surface multiple interesting characters from this cacophony and give them unique voices.

Still, the story would have greatly benefited from being a trilogy of 3 full-length novels rather than a trilogy of mini-novels.

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### Stewart says

I listened to the Audiobook over on Audible. It was abridged, which is a bummer. I listen as I work and can knock out a 3 hour book (like all these Battletech books) in a day. But, you get the gist of the story. It's a pretty good story as well. Knowing the lore from playing the board game and video games as a kid I didn't miss out on much. The 1994 animated series is based off of these novels.

I'd recommend giving this series a go if you like Sci-Fi. The Innersphear is a totally believable thing. Humans expand out and colonize worlds only to have progress halted by infighting. Corporations manipulate States, Houses, and Nations to bring on a new dark age.

There is some believability that has to be pushed aside but the story makes sense as does the believability of the universe.

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### Josh Ellis says

Lethal Heritage.

The book that introduced the Clans to the BattleTech universe...

...the book that blew the mind of many, pissed off a few, and forever changed the face of a popular game...

...and...

Totally. Friggin'. AWESOME!

Lethal Heritage is forever emblazoned on my brain as both one of the best BattleTech novels, and as one of most memorable books I've ever read. The author, Mike Stackpole, does an excellent job of engrossing the reader in the sci-fi, and 'Mecha based, universe that has become a hallmark of the gaming industry.

7 stars out of 5

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### **Shane says**

You can't go home again...

Twenty years ago or so I read this book and thought it was just great. At the time I wasn't much older than the "second generation" characters in the book - Kai Allard, Phelan Kell and the others. Also, I had played a lot of Battletech in my youth and the Clan invasion was a natural continuation in what I thought was a fascinating story of politics and war. Most of that is really still true - the Battletech Universe is vast and sprawling, yet feels very human. The technology is a little dated (some of the high-tech depicted has already been surpassed, 1000-something years early). But overall I still can get excited about the world and its characters.

But the writing is just bad. Bad. Bad. Michael Stackpole was always one of the best, maybe *the* best of FASA's writers and did a lot of good work in both Battletech and Shadowrun. But this book was just painfully poor in regard to realistic responses, characterizations and so on. I own a whole bunch of Battletech books - we'll see if I get up the gumption to try another one, presumably the second in this series which I also thought was great, back in the day.

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### **Jacob says**

I read this because my recent re-introduction into the Battletech universe (Harebrained Schemes superb game) got me curious about the lore. I had read this back when I was maybe 12 or 13, and found the entire Blood of Kerensky trilogy for maybe 3 bucks at Half Price Books. Being a huge MechWarrior fan at them time (as well as a proponent of needlessly capitalized letters in the middle of words) I remember really enjoying this book, so much so that I've been recommending it to people well into my 30s.

I'm not going to lie, I may have to rescind those recommendations. If you like Battletech, this book is readable. It rewards a familiarity with the lore (as do most franchise fiction series from the mid-90s...lookin at you Shadowrun) but this comes at a cost of feeling very lost if you aren't.

Stockpole attempts to get around this with some seriously, uh, interesting dialogue choices. Each of the main characters gives a soliloquy in their initial chapters, explaining who they are, their heritage, their motivations, their desires. In at least one case, this monologue is delivered to an empty beach with nobody in particular there to listen, aside from the reader. This continues throughout the book, as liberal use of italics as internal monologue continue to explain some of the more finicky plot points that might go over the heads of readers. Unfortunately, this feels like the characters being over-explanatory and verbose, almost like they're talking down to you.

I have my critiques about the way the plot is presented as well. The plot, honestly, is superb: after centuries of war between several states, all those states are invaded by a mysterious force with advanced technology and seemingly unstoppable tactics. Man, that's a great story!

Except you, the reader, are privy to the truth in the first 25% of the book. By the time the Successor States are figuring out what the nature of the invasion is, you are already experiencing the other side of this invasion from another POV character. Everything that comes after seems hollow. Imagine if the White Walkers in Game of Thrones got their own POV chapter in the first book.

In the end, I can dissect what went wrong and what didn't, but it boils down to this: if you're just curious about the lore, go look at the Battletech wiki. If you're looking to read about the Clan Invasion after that, then pick up the book.

I'll be reading the rest of the series, honestly, because the book does set you up with an interesting premise for the next. I'm just going to be hoping that less things will be explained to me via internal monologues so I can draw my own conclusions about the plot.

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### **Gary Adams says**

I read this for the first time some 15+ years ago. To this day, it's still my favorite book of all time.

Yea, OK, so I'm not all that well read. But I'm a sci-fi fan, and I enjoy this light-hearted stuff. I mean, the story is deep and engaging, but it's not dark by any means. The plot points all tie up nicely with satisfying, feel-good kind of conclusions, even if they are quite predictable. Anytime you find yourself saying, "I hope such-and-such happens" it generally happens that way.

But with that said, the characters are memorable (I'm a fan of Phelan Kell and Kai Allard-Liao) and there's enough action and plot to keep you turning the pages.

This really is the must read trilogy for anyone into the Battletech universe.

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### **Jim Nowlan says**

#### **Still a great read**

I first read this book over 25 years ago. Thus began my love of battle tech.

Character development is great and the ritualistic scenes of the various units and soon to be clans make for great reading.

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### **Charly Dwyer says**

#### **Star Politics At Its Best**

Well written story that introduces the major players for the time well. The politics are well played out and

you start to get a feel for the different societies.

I especially like the way Stackpole writes and describes 'Mech combat. I'm not a particular fan of big, stompy, bots but I got a good feel for what the combat and piloting them must be like.

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### **Clint says**

Boringtech. Man, Stackpole sure wrote some thick Battletech tomes back in the day! And that's not a good thing. This book is boring to the extreme. It could easily have been cut by half. There is way too much time spent with nothing happening.

Case in point: the entire first third of the book. You can skip it all, because nothing happens. Only when the clans start invading (finally!) does the action pick up the pace a little. But not by much. Reading this is a real slog.

There are also way too many characters and POVs to keep track of mentally. None of these characters are all that different from each other, which makes it harder. And it is constantly switching back and forth. I finally figured out who is who toward the end of the book.

The main characters have a lot of weird names. Here is a brief bio of each:

Feelin' Kell - He pines for his old girlfriend a lot, then becomes a prisoner of war. After that, he follows the time-honored "Dances with Wolves" storyline where he slowly builds grudging respect with his captors and then later becomes one of them. Gets a clannie girlfriend first, of course. It always starts with the girlfriend...

Kai Mallard-Layo - He too pines for his girlfriend. He's a Solaris 7 guy. Mostly he just doubts himself a lot, or so we are told. He gets a Moment of Awesome(TM) in the book. Then he spends the rest of the book whining about it.

Shin Yo'mama - Has a great appreciation for ancient Japanese architecture. He also spends a lot of time doing cool, ninja-ey Japanese stuff, and talking about honor and dragons and such. Is REALLY into tattoos.

Victor Steiner-Davion - Doesn't do anything the entire book.

There were a lot more characters but those seemed to be the author's faves.

Reading this, I'm kind of struck by how thin the Battletech universe really is. There were a couple of things that stood out to me.

For one, you never really get a true sense of the size and scale of this universe. We are talking about hundreds of populated worlds here. But in the story, it's like each entire world only has one city. And it's usually only one small mech battle to capture an ENTIRE planet. I don't think this is realistic at all. You can't capture a whole nation with just a few tanks. Scale it up to Battlemechs, and even a thousand of them wouldn't be enough to conquer every city on an entire planet. The scope of a true planetary invasion would be enormous! And it would be extremely costly in terms of ships and manpower. This is never depicted realistically in any Battletech book.

Another thing is just exactly how goofy the whole Battlemech idea really is. I mean, we have ships here who can nuke an entire planet's surface from orbit. Surely something that dangerous could easily target an enemy mech on the ground and annihilate it from space. The ramifications of having that much power, and what it would really mean in terms of a war, is barely touched on in this book. It's touched on, but pretty much sidestepped. With ships like that, mechs would be useless. All you would need is marines to take the ground.

I don't know. I'm just getting too old for this kiddie stuff I guess. I loved Battletech back in the day, but these books for the most part seem really lame. I've become used to good science fiction like things written by Ian Banks and William Barton. This Battletech stuff is just empty filler, like eating a bag of potato chips. Oh well. I'll press on. I've bought the kindle books and am curious how it all ends. We will see!

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### **Collin says**

Normally I skip past the shelf in the bookstore where all of the RPG tie-in books live: you know, the law firm of "Salvatore, Hickman & Weis". There was a time in my life when I read all of those books, and enjoyed a great many of them, but I've never felt a compelling need to swim in those waters again. That said, every once in a while you will find a story that is truly well done. One series that stuck with me from my childhood was the "Blood of Kerensky" series by Michael Stackpole. It's a favorite I come back to every couple of years.

Stackpole was a stalwart of the RPG writer scene before becoming a novel writer, having worked for a time at Flying Buffalo/FASA (which is how I originally became acquainted with him). The "Blood of Kerensky" books are set in the Battletech universe which, for those of you who don't know, is a post-diaspora-to-the-stars, future war concept with different political factions duking it out in giant robots called "Mechs". It's ground that's been well traveled in Japanese Anime but here it's given a western, military sci-fi flavor.

Stackpole, to his credit, plays this material straight, keeping it action forward with strong but simple characters. You don't care that it's a bunch of guys in robot suits because after a short while you are interested in their personal lives, their successes, failures and relationships.

A few related books followed the original trilogy but they never quite live up to the level of Stackpole's writing here. I wish he had explored this world a bit more fully, because he was very well suited to it.

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### **Trevor says**

The Clans broke the tabletop game, but make for great storylines/even a in the Battletwch universe.

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### **Olethros says**

-Nueva generación, nuevo enemigo.-

Género. Ciencia ficción.

Lo que nos cuenta. En el libro Herencia mortal (publicación original: Lethal Heritage, 1989), la Cuarta

Guerra de Sucesión de la Esfera Interior terminó hace varios lustros y una camada de jóvenes decididos comienza a buscar su lugar entre las Casas y los regimientos mercenarios. Pero la llegada de un enemigo exterior, con capacidades y tácticas nunca vistas antes, lo cambia todo e incluso podrá forjar alianzas inesperadas con tal de conseguir frenar la amenaza: los Clanes. Novela que forma parte del universo Battletech y primer libro de la trilogía La Sangre de Kerensky.

¿Quiere saber más de este libro, sin spoilers? Visite:

<http://librosdeolethros.blogspot.com/...>

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### **Doc Opp says**

Even though this is the first of a trilogy, it is not the first of a storyline. There is a trilogy that precedes this, so this really should be marketed as a book #4, not a book #1. The result is that there are many references to shared knowledge that readers may not know, and plot twists that are probably pretty cool if you've read the first series, but don't mean anything to somebody like me, who has not.

The writing varies in quality from chapter to chapter, generally improving as the book progresses. But especially early on as ideas and concepts are being introduced there is a lot of exposition that reads in a rather stilted/awkward manner. The author is much better at action sequences and suspense than at character development or set up. So, I wouldn't recommend this if you haven't read the previous trilogy, but if you have and liked it, then if you pick this up, know that it gets better than the first 100 pages would lead you to believe.

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### **Vojtech says**

Brought back memories of playing Battletech universe tabletop and video games back in the days. I really wanted to like this book more, but unfortunately there are just too many factions and characters to really care about anyone. Then again, this book is probably just setting the scene for an epic series. I am not sure I have the time or will to follow along, but who knows - maybe at some point in the future. Definitely not as good as I remember Saga of the Grey Death legion to be - but hey, that's probably almost 20 years ago now :-)

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### **Kimball Newton says**

Epic undersells the scale of which the story moves. Following the many characters and following the development between in the inner sphere. I love Stackpole's style and how he takes the characters to a different height through their actions.

Everything feels so real and lifelike, even the deadly clans seem to have a real lifelike driving force. Start of the trilogy that got me back into reading. Blood of Kerensky is one of the best written and greatest stories in the entire BattleTech series.

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