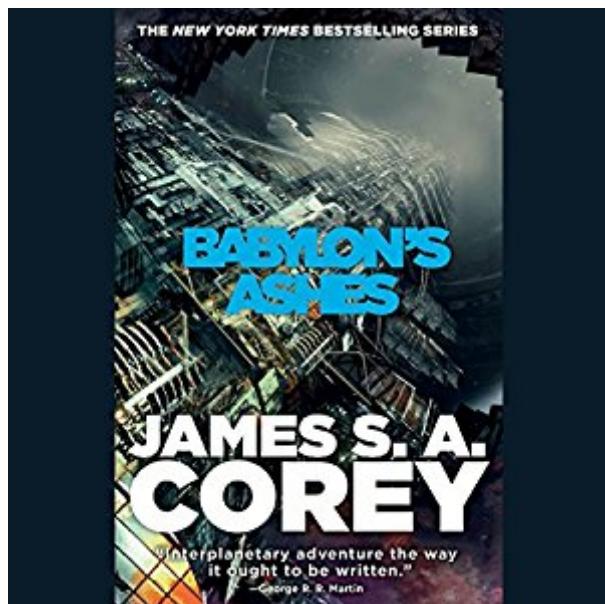


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Babylon's Ashes: The Expanse, Book 6



Synopsis

The sixth novel in James S. A. Corey's New York Times best-selling Expanse series - now a major television series from the Syfy. A revolution brewing for generations has begun in fire. It will end in blood. The Free Navy - a violent group of Belters in black-market military ships - has crippled the Earth and begun a campaign of piracy and violence among the outer planets. The colony ships heading for the thousand new worlds on the far side of the alien ring gates are easy prey, and no single navy remains strong enough to protect them. James Holden and his crew know the strengths and weaknesses of this new force better than anyone. Outnumbered and outgunned, the embattled remnants of the old political powers call on the Rocinante for a desperate mission to reach Medina Station at the heart of the gate network. But the new alliances are as flawed as the old, and the struggle for power has only just begun. As the chaos grows, an alien mystery deepens. Pirate fleets, mutiny, and betrayal may be the least of the Rocinante's problems. And in the uncanny spaces past the ring gates, the choices of a few damaged and desperate people may determine the fate of more than just humanity.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When Frank Herbert wrote his massive Dune series, there were a couple of books that felt like they were holding operations until the NEXT big book. The action was sometimes perfunctory and the characters were not very well developed with the concepts remaining the glue that bound the series together. Likewise, the last book by George R.R. Martin that pushed the Game of Thrones series forward had long sections with characters that weren't well developed and, frankly, many that we

didn't care about with the plot moving forward at a sluggish pace. I mention both of these because of the well developed universe of "The Expanse" series and these two are, largely, in the same category of a well developed universe with characters that we care about. With the latest book in "The Expanse" series "Babylon's Ashes" does propel the over all story arc for the series forward but also feels padded out with unnecessary subplots and secondary or even third string characters that had very little to the series except for minor subplots that, honestly, get in the way of our main characters and their goals. Like some others here I felt that the Free Navy (set up in the last book) is a villain that doesn't hold much promise particularly after the villains in the previous books and the introduction of the protomolecule. The mystery at the heart of who developed the molecule, what happened to them and why it was developed (and even more importantly, who they were afraid of) take a backseat here. While the development of the various human factions continues to be interesting, I'm less interested in them taking center stage and more interested in the protomolecule story line and where that was headed after the last novel where humans landed on a planet that was the staging ground for the creation of the aliens behind it. As others have noted, the authors have been great about telling their stories from multiple point-of-views and, often times, this adds to the suspense of the novels. Here, however, it has an effect of diminishing the suspense and many of these newer characters just don't hold my interest quite as well as those developed in the first three books of the series. The resolution of the story lines also isn't handled quite the way I had hoped (or was hinted at) in the book. That's not to suggest that this is a bad book. It just isn't the story I was interested in reading or, at least, the way I had hoped this one would develop. If you are committed to the series, you'll still enjoy the book.

This book neatly wraps up A LOT of story arcs. It also takes the approach of the last book and gives you a ton of viewpoints. I personally do not care for this. I feel it is more clever when a story is written so that you can experience it from less eyes rather than, hey this person's POV would be cool during this battle, lets write about it! That said I loved the fifth book, maybe because the fourth book was such a huge deviation from the their typical style. Regardless, if you are reading this series, I doubt one terrible book will stop you and this is still a pretty decent novel. I love this series, beyond specific writing choices or flaws, the authors have managed a very approachable science fiction series while still maintaining a decent amount of realism and faith to actual principals of science. Read this one, smile as they close several plot threads and then keep waiting for more information about the aliens. From the way this one ends, I have a feeling the next one will finally get back to them.

I will be completely forward and say that I initially had a hard time getting into this book. I have loved this series fairly consistently but for some reason it just didn't grab me. At least initially. It's generally a slow build toward the inevitable. And the climax could be described as suspenseful but its resolution is fairly abrupt. Having said that, I suspect that what we have in store for the next book will be pretty epic. Thus, Babylon's Ashes could be described as pretty much a setup for things to come. I would also argue that it was necessary. Otherwise we would have had just more of the same and even that is at risk of becoming stale. Still, as always, it's well written and you really get to know more about our favorite, and not so favorite, characters. The crew feels like a family more than ever and I can't wait to see what's in store for the crew of the Rocinante in the future. I recommend it. :)

Babylon's Ashes is Book 6 of The Expanse Trilogy by James S.A. Corey. I LOVE these books! (How many times can I say this?) The cast of characters, their trials and tribulations, and the deft story-telling of this author team are addictive. Book 6 takes us into the aftermath of the Free Navy's reign of terror over the inner planets. Earth is on its knees after multiple asteroids have impacted on its surface. Food, medicine, and energy are in scarce supply as people on Earth try to survive in the hellish nightmare that has become their existence. The Free Navy leads a devastating campaign against the combined fleets of Earth and Mars while the crew of the Rocinante and my favorite foul-mouthed politician, Crisjen Avasalara, struggle to outwit the leader of the Free Navy, Marco Inaros. Babylon's Ashes is yet another fast-paced tale of politics, intrigue, space battles, and high-flying action that leaves the reader on the edge of their seat. Highly Recommended!

Great to see the series really evolve. I'm excited for the next volume. Ending was maybe a little less grand than I would have liked, at least in terms of how the multiple book plot resolved. ***SPOILERS AHEAD**** I guess I was just hoping for a more personal resolution to the central conflict with the Free Navy. Though the ending was clever, it just felt anticlimactic. This series has such great characters that it's a shame to see major ones (Marcos in particular) killed off in such a way. THOUGH this does open the possibility to Marcos, Fillip, and everyone else to find a way out of "limbo." They technically aren't dead, so I'm curious to see how this plays out in later volumes. The threat of the Free Navy is not 100% gone.... so there's that....

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