

The background features a complex network of white nodes and connecting lines, resembling a constellation or a data network. The nodes are of varying sizes and are connected by thin white lines, creating a web-like structure. The background color transitions from a deep purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. Scattered throughout the network are small, faint white dots, some of which are slightly larger and more prominent than others.

# Redemption Ark

Written by Alastair Reynolds

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Published by griefconvention

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# Redemption Ark

By Alastair Reynolds

## Redemption Ark Book

Late in the twenty-sixth century, the human race has advanced enough to accidentally trigger the Inhibitors - alien killing machines designed to detect intelligent life and destroy it. The only hope for humanity lies in the recovery of a secret cache of doomsday weapons -and a renegade named Clavain who is determined to find them. But other factions want the weapons for their own purposes - and the weapons themselves have another agenda altogether...

i'm just going to copy and paste this from a group, because i'm lazy that way. okay maybe i'll edit it a little bit too. for kicks.

it was a good book overall, and i enjoyed it as much as its predecessor. lots of great concepts to digest and i'm still digging the basic idea behind the enemy threat of the Inhibitors. i also really liked reading about the Conjoiners, but then i'm a sucker for anything having to do with melding minds etc.

Reynolds still has his primary weakness: characterization. in i'm just going to copy and paste this from a group, because i'm lazy that way. okay maybe i'll edit it a little bit too. for kicks.

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Reynolds still has his primary weakness: characterization. in the last book, his characters were one-dimensional and often Byronic or Apollonian or Nietzschean or whatever, with very little nuance or shades of gray, and just rather unappealing. in this book he is clearly trying harder. no one actually comes across as inhuman as they did in the last book. unfortunately i think his goals outstrip his talent at building real characters (at least in this book; i presume he's improved). he spends a lot of time trying to make his characters three-dimensional (some of it works; some of it is, frankly, rather amateurish)... but then by the last quarter, it is almost like he gives up because he needs the characters to do certain things so that the plot can go a certain way, and then it's back to the same dire unreasonableness that all of his characters displayed in the first book. there was a last-minute decision by Captain Brannigan/the Ship 'Nostalgia for Infinity' that was rather excruciatingly nonsensical. in retrospect, i sorta prefer the first novel's static depictions of ruthless id because then the weird characterization matches the weird concepts. it's so far in the future that humans aren't even human anymore - people are just all different types of hyper-enhanced uber-asshole genius-sociopath. makes sense to me!

ah well, can't win 'em all. the book is pretty successful in many other aspects. the goth appeal of the first novel is not as present - which makes it all a bit less distinctive - but that is more than made up for by an

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involving and often tensely exciting narrative of the multiple-strands-coming-together variety. the science is interesting (if a little repetitious). besides the character meltdown i mentioned, the description and persona of this gigantic haunted house of a freighter-spaceship Nostalgia for Infinity being horribly combined with depressed, formerly homicidal Capt Brannigan into a kind of organic Lovecraftian nightmare-ship, constantly growing external spikes and oozing dark fluids and basically looking like a Giger-inspired fever-dream... now that was a source of endless fascination for me. i'd like to take a vacation there! and the characterization isn't all bad all the time, for the most part it's actually okay. i really liked the lead (conflicted military commander Clavain). a key supporting character (a kind of hermetic savant named Felka) was a rather ingenious creation - and very sympathetic as well. the author did a great job setting up the motivations for the novel's villain (Skade) and watching her various permutations was interesting. overall there are a lot of bright & shiny things to look at in Redemption Ark, and i was happily distracted whenever i picked it up. well maybe not bright & shiny per se - it's more like a strange, corroded kid's toy made out of rusty knives and old tire irons by someone extremely intelligent and not too into kids.

i'm looking forward to the 3rd and last novel of the trilogy. Pattern Jugglers! the (presumable) return of messianic psychopath scientist Whatsisname. and more Conjoiners & Inhibitors! ...more

## Redemption Ark Review

This is a very frustrating book to evaluate. There is a *\*great\** 400 page novel sitting inside this flabby 700 page slug.

Reynolds has a great imagination and is extremely thoughtful. This is fantastic hard sci-fi told on an epic scale. Well, almost hard sci-fi, he flirts (needlessly) with breaking the laws of physics, but for the most part we're sitting square in the "real world" here. He does an excellent job of thinking about the *\*consequences\** of his technologies and the way they would shape This is a very frustrating book to evaluate. There is a *\*great\** 400 page novel sitting inside this flabby 700 page slug.

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But somebody get this man an editor! Of course, he has an editor, and I bet that person hates him. The prose tends to ramble around (you will read a paragraph and think "I wrote something almost exactly like that in High School") and there are scores of pages devoted to characters and side stories that are utter wastes of time.

And yet... the core is *\*so\** good! The ideas are big, the vision grand, the science fiction thoughtful and simultaneously plausible and utterly alien. When Redemption Ark is firing on all cylinders it is so good you can forgive all the dead weight. Ultimately, if you really like hard sci-fi, you pretty much have to read this series, even if you suffer through parts of it. Nobody said life was fair or easy. ...more

Caveat: this is not really a review, but rather a plaintive cry and is based on having read the previous book set in this universe in full (Revelation Space), an abortive attempt to read the non-series Reynolds book House of Suns, and finally the book in question up to page 236 (out of 694!)â€¦ hence no star rating.

Why won't you let me love you Alastair Reynolds? I *\*need\** some high quality space opera, preferably with various factions of humanity living on planets, in orbital habitats, and on space Caveat: this is not really a review, but rather a plaintive cry and is based on having read the previous book set in this universe in full (Revelation Space), an abortive attempt to read the non-series Reynolds book House of Suns, and finally the book in question up to page 236 (out of 694!)â€¦ hence no star rating.

Why won't you let me love you Alastair Reynolds? I *\*need\** some high quality space opera, preferably with various factions of humanity living on planets, in orbital habitats, and on space ships

with varying levels of (and relationships to) technology, physical modifications, and philosophical outlook. I want star faring ships encountering bizarre eco-systems, maybe some incomprehensible precursor alien tech, and some fine shading of cyberpunk in the background. I desire a virtual tour of the variegated human cosmos as it exists in this world with a bit of a peek at the variety and wonder that it offers, obviously with a large dollop of the bad, decayed, and criminal thrown in for good measure. Also, please have it written in some decent prose. You seem to be able to provide all of this for me, Mr. Reynolds but, butâ€™ you donâ€™t. \*sigh\*

I fell in love with these wonderful skiffy elements as presented in works like The Ophiuchi Hotline, Vacuum Flowers, and (the dearest of all to my heart) Schismatrix Plus. At least two of these are avowed sources for your own work Alastairâ€™ why then canâ€™t I love you?! Why do I always find myself struggling with your books? Why do I finish them (when I do) with a vague sense of dissatisfaction? Why do your worlds seem less real, less interesting, less perceptible to my mindâ€™s eye than those of other writers? Actually I think I may be able to pinpoint it to a few distinct areas:

First of all thereâ€™ areâ€™ tooâ€™ manyâ€™ words. What is it with fantasy and sci-fi these days needing to push the page count beyond 400, 500, even 600 pages (letâ€™s not even mention Peter F. Hamilton right now, ok)? Reynolds falls into this trap with verbose descriptions that manage to be both excessively wordy and complex and yet vague and difficult for me to parse into a real image. In addition while Reynolds is in no way a bad writer his prose is very, well, I guess Iâ€™d say workman-like. Iâ€™m willing to wade through high page counts and verbose descriptions, but you better have a way with words if youâ€™re gonna force me through it. A word to the wise Alastair? An editor could really help you out with that! Compress! Refine! Streamline! This over-wordiness conjoined with lack of clarity means that even when Reynolds has a cool idea it just fails to translate (for me at least). I canâ€™t inhabit your worlds when the words that express them keep me at armâ€™s length.

Secondly I have to admit that I donâ€™t find his characters particularly interesting or well developed. They arenâ€™t always bland (though they often are), but they tend to exhibit character more through narrative fiat than they do by action. Iâ€™m told what theyâ€™re like much more often than Iâ€™m shown it. There is also the niggling little aspect that even when they come from diametrically opposed human factions, supposedly based on completely different philosophies, technologies and even physiologies, they all seem pretty homogenous. When I hear the Conjoiners (members of a supposed hive-mind) Skade or Clavain talking neither of them really seem much different in outlook or attitude than the â€™Ultraâ€™ Ilia Volyova or the â€™normalâ€™ Ana Khouri. Also, isnâ€™t Felka supposed to be a brain-damaged semi-autistic Conjoiner unable to interact with others or read social cues? Why does she talk just like everyone else and seem to have no problem at all functioning when I see her in action, despite the repeated assurances peppered throughout the text that she is a broken human being who doesnâ€™t know how to relate?

Point three is kind of a mash up of one and two I guess: both issues seem to mean that even when Reynolds has, in theory, a really cool idea I just donâ€™t quite believe him when I see the execution. Case in point: the Conjoiners. Arenâ€™t these guys supposed to be a networked hive-mind? How come

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they all seem to have completely distinct personalities with little to no interface between them aside from the ability to talk ~telepathically~ to each other and a need to live in close proximity? Maybe I just have a too simplistic expectation of what a hive-mind is, but I got no real sense of how personalities might shade into each other, or be completely subsumed, in such an environment. Sorry Alastair, but Swanwick did it better. Another example: the Inhibitors. They're billed as ancient, semi-dormant, and incomprehensible aliens with a mission to destroy any and all sentient life in the galaxy. Sounds like a winner, right? All I can say is that if you want to read about the incomprehensible, and even non-sentient, coming to destroy humanity check out (view spoiler)[Blindsight or the story ~Swarm~ in Schismatrix Plus. (hide spoiler)] \*sigh\* I'm sorry I'm probably being a bit harsh here, but I just had such high expectations of you Alastair | what happened?! I know, I know, it's not you it's me. We want the same things | I just want you to give them to me in a way you're not prepared to | I guess it's just best if we part ways. I'm sorry. ...more

## Redemption Ark Wiki

Revelation Space was the first Reynolds book I read, I imagine it is the starting point for most Reynolds readers as it is his best known and breakthrough book. While I quite like some of Revelation Space I was not exactly won over by it. I found some of it quite hard to follow and the pace flagged from time to time. However, I understood and liked enough of it to try another Reynolds book. Happily that turned out to be House of Suns, a book now firmly ensconced in my SF Top 20 bookshelf, it is Revelation Space was the first Reynolds book I read, I imagine it is the starting point for most Reynolds readers as it is his best known and breakthrough book. While I quite like some of Revelation Space I was not exactly won over by it. I found some of it quite hard to follow and the pace flagged from time to time. However, I understood and liked enough of it to try another Reynolds book. Happily that turned out to be House of Suns, a book now firmly ensconced in my SF Top 20 bookshelf, it is a brilliant standalone book, though not part of the Rev Space series. A few months after that I read Chasm City (a standalone novel set in the Rev Space universe), and it was a case of "He Shoots, He Scores!" again.

My reservation about reading Redemption Ark is that it is apparently a continuation of Revelation Space, a book I did not like that much, and thanks to my sieve-like memory I have forgotten most of the details of the settings, events, characters names etc. Still, I really wanted to read it as it is Reynolds' highest rated book (in average score) on Goodreads. Fortunately I came across Cecily's excellent review where she mentioned that it could be read as a standalone, that is good enough for me, I'll do some Googling if I really need help. So here we are! Now, if you want to read a well written and intelligent review of this book head over to the aforementioned Cecily's review, on the other hand if you are in the market for a rambling, incoherent review you have come to the right place.

The events of Redemption Ark take place a few decades after the end of Revelation Space, the central plot concerns the search for "hell-class weapons" which - as the name implies - are basically futuristic super duper WMD capable of wiping out spaceships and probably whole planets with a single shot. They are needed to protect humanity from The Inhibitors (AKA The Wolves) whose mission in life appears to be the destruction of intelligent life wherever they find it (their motivation is more complex than that but that is spoiler territory). Fans of Reynold's mind blowing epic epicness will not be disappointed with the scale of Redemption Ark. The Inhibitors are playing an extremely long game here.

The book features a couple of characters from the previous book but the central character is Nevil Clavain a man who has taken it upon himself to save humanity and having a suitably miserable time of it, I mean whoever heard of a proper hero with a "joie de vivre" attitude?

As with all the Reynolds books I have read Redemption Ark is full of "sensawonder" inventions in an epic scale setting. This book is a huge improvement on Revelation Space in term of writing and characterization. One problem I found with Revelation Space is that the female characters seem to be badass Ellen Ripley types.

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(Ellen Ripley, she's the one on the left with the gun!)

The two returning characters Ilia Volyova and Ana Khouri have matured a lot since Revelation Space, they now seem less like kickass sci-fi babes than believable human beings with flaws and insecurities. Nevil Clavain is a very complex and conflicted individual, even the villainous characters have understandable motivation, not to mention one or two sympathetic AI characters. Along the way there are passages that ruminate upon the meaning and value of sentience, even the idea of "love" is examined in intelligent non-saccharine terms. I am a sucker for characters redemption, I often feel moved when a character is convincingly redeeming himself / herself. As the title implies redemption is a central theme of the book. One particular chapter brought a lump to my throat and that is where the fifth star of the book's rating is earned. Every book that I rate at five stars made me feel something, like a wee touch at the emotional core. Such books are all too rare (which may be a good thing, otherwise I'd be an emotional wreck every time I read a book).

So once again He Shoots, He Scores!

My next Reynolds will be Doctor Who: Harvest of Time because Venusian Aikido is cool! ...more

Redemption Ark: Promising ideas ruined by excessive page-count

Originally posted at Fantasy Literature

Redemption Ark (2002) is the follow-up to Revelation Space, Alastair Reynolds's™ debut novel and the second book in his REVELATION SPACE series of hard SF space opera in which highly-augmented human factions encounter implacable killer machines bent on exterminating sentient life. The first entry had elements of Bruce Sterling's™ Schismatrix, Frank Herbert's™ Dune, Arthur C. Clarke's™ 2001: A Space Odyssey

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Redemption Ark is the middle book of main 3-book REVELATION SPACE sequence (Chasm City and The Prefect are stand-alone novels set in the same universe), and unfortunately this book shares the same weaknesses as the first book, which is why I settled on a 3-star rating. Despite lots of promising concepts and tantalizing glimpses of the remorseless and powerful Inhibitors, the majority of this very long book (694 pages) is wasted on the protracted conflict involving Nevil Clavain, a defector to the Conjoiners (telepathically-linked hive-mind humans who rarely act like it); Skade, a militarily-trained Conjoiner whose mission is to retrieve the "hell-class" weapons that have been stolen from them; Antoinette Bax, a Demarchist who allies with Clavain when he splits with the Conjoiners; Ilia Volyova and

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Ana Khouri, two carry-over characters from Revelation Space who control the Nostalgia for Infinity, a ship that has become fused with its captain John Brannigan after being infected with the nanotech Melding Plague; an autistic Conjoiner named Felka who comes in mental contact with the terrifying Inhibitors; and Galiana, the founder of the Conjoiners, who has been absent for decades on a deep-space mission but carries both an alien consciousness and (maybe, just maybe) some hints for human survival.

All the elements are here for a rip-roaring hard SF space opera, and perhaps with a much more ruthless editor this could have been possible, but instead we get a glacially-paced story much like the previous offering, where characters talk, debate, scheme, and speculate for about 70% of the book, with just 30% of real action and plot-progression. This is a common complaint of mine, but it seems like this has actually been SF readers'™ preference over the last decade or two, based on the book length of hard SF practitioners like Alastair Reynolds, Peter F. Hamilton, Stephen Baxter, Vernor Vinge, Kim Stanley Robinson, Dan Simmons and Iain M. Banks. So perhaps I'm in the minority here, but I don't see why brilliant SF ideas and characters can't deliver a great story in just 300-400 pages. I often wish I was given remit to edit these books down to that length, travel back in time, and read the trimmed-down versions instead. Just wish-fulfillment, alas.

In any case, what I found most frustrating about Redemption Ark (besides the generally unconvincing distinctions between various classes of post-humans who all seem to think and behave fairly similarly despite their supposed differences) is that at least 300+ pages are devoted to an interminable struggle to get control of the 'hell-class' doomsday weapons of mysterious origin. Supposedly made by Conjoiners sometime in the past, exact knowledge of who made them and how has been lost, what they can do is unknown, and no new ones can be created.

As Clavain and Slade chase each other across known space, continually trying to wrest control of the weapons cache by subterfuge or force, the reader is left wondering what the point of all this is. After all, we know at the end of Revelation Space that the ultra-powerful and utterly-remorseless alien machine-intelligences known as Inhibitors are intent on destroying all sentient space-faring races, having successfully done so countless times over hundreds of millions of years. So it's crazy that the various factions of super-intelligent humans hope that a handful of doomsday weapons can be used against them. But it doesn't take advanced neural implants and hyper-intelligence to know that these weapons are as likely to harm them as a sling-shot is to destroy the Deathstar. But that is exactly what they assume, even as the Inhibitors begin some very-ominous terraforming activity in human-occupied space that are obvious preparations for wiping out the human vermin they have been alerted to.

There is also the matter of Daniel Sylveste, the scientist from Revelation Space who might have access to ancient alien knowledge that could help humanity to combat the Inhibitors. Well, despite almost 700 pages, we learn absolutely nothing about his fate. Ditto for the alien Shrouders and Pattern Jugglers, two fascinating species that play no role in this book. Clearly they are being saved for the final book, Absolution Gap, but I would have appreciated even a few teasers. At this point I am far too invested to

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give up, as I do want to know what happens to humanity against seemingly impossible odds, but I have little confidence that the final installment will improve on the weaknesses of the first two books.

I listened to the audiobook, which is narrated by John Lee, who does most of Reynolds's™ books. This time there were fewer scenes featuring characters with Russian or Eastern European accents, so it was easier to follow than Revelation Space. Still, I took a number of very long walks to finish off this book, and chances are I would have given up if I were reading it in print form. ...more

## Redemption Ark Audiobook

The plague ship Nostalgia for Infinity is back. 4 kilometres of machine melded into a cathedral of the grotesque that is part spaceship, part alien virus, part man, more than a bit creepy and 100% Awesome.

Nuff said...but wait, there's more

As if taking the concept of cyborg to the extreme isn't enough, Nostalgia for Infinity comes packing heat. Hell-class weapons. And they aren't call hell-class for nothing - each of them capable of unleashing Armageddon with a thought. And is the mind behind tha The plague ship Nostalgia for Infinity is back. 4 kilometres of machine melded into a cathedral of the grotesque that is part spaceship, part alien virus, part man, more than a bit creepy and 100% Awesome.

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As if taking the concept of cyborg to the extreme isn't enough, Nostalgia for Infinity comes packing heat. Hell-class weapons. And they aren't call hell-class for nothing - each of them capable of unleashing Armageddon with a thought. And is the mind behind that thought sane? Is it even human? Now that is a good question.

Of course, it takes more than one spaceship to make a space opera, and Reynolds serves it up from Lighthugger capital ships pursuing each other at near light speed, to space battles with heavy relativistic weapons spewing carnage over immense distance, to space pirates, to hyperpigs riding thruster trikes - (think choppers in space with guns and armour maybe with "Bacon Rules" splashed on the side).

This book we also get a close up look at the conjoiner faction. Humans who have taken neural augmentation to the point where thought is enhanced by nano machines. Communication is done directly mind to mind to hive via implant. Virtual telepathy.

And The Inhibitors are also back. Or rather, they are awake, thanks to Silveste poking where he should left well enough alone in Revelation Space. Machine intelligence programmed to detect and eliminate intelligence. Now they know we are here. They know we are sentient. They know we can traverse space. They want us dead, and they know how to make it so.

For those who read Chasm City before this we get a couple of major characters from that story making an appearance. It doesn't matter if you haven't read Chasm City - but it was pretty cool knowing their history and having that extra background to their motivations.

Also back for more are the Triumvir Volyova, Ana Kouri and of course "The Captain" (More or/and less).

The audio narration was good. If you are considering the audio book then I think you'll find John Lee

gives a strong performance and his voice has a quality that really adds to the gothic feel of the book.

If you've already started the Rev Space series and want to know if it gets better, I can tell you now, it does. So suit up, lock and load, pack some extra medicines because this one might fry your brains with an apocalyptic dose of cool.

4.5 stars

...more

I usually judge science fiction novels by the new ideas, technologies and concepts that are depicted. But this story just has too many. It felt to me that just about "anything goes". People are capable of just about anything, so there seem to be no limits.

In this story, people's memories can be erased, or transferred to an inanimate object. "True death" occurs when someone dies without their minds being transferred into storage. Weapons are conscious, and sometimes require reasoning with, before I usually judge science fiction novels by the new ideas, technologies and concepts that are depicted. But this story just has too many. It felt to me that just about "anything goes". People are capable of just about anything, so there seem to be no limits.

In this story, people's memories can be erased, or transferred to an inanimate object. "True death" occurs when someone dies without their minds being transferred into storage. Weapons are conscious, and sometimes require reasoning with, before deploying them. Your space ship may be conscious, and may in fact be the reincarnation of a rehabilitated criminal. The person in front of you might be a human, or might be an artificially intelligent proxy. Who knows?

The book seemed overly long. It took a very long time to understand what was going on. I felt lost, to tell the truth, and I wondered if the fault was simply mine, that I had not followed the storyline through lack of attention. As a result, since I was kept in the dark for so long, by the time the overall plot was unwrapped, I was lost, and I didn't care about any of the characters.

And--I didn't read it. I listened to the audiobook, and the narrator, John Lee did not help me to understand the storyline better. He has a pleasant, British accent, but he makes very little effort helping the listener to know who is speaking. He does little if anything to differentiate men's voices from women's. So, I definitely do not recommend the audiobook. ...more

## Redemption Arc Meaning

This was a hugely satisfying read for me. Every thread was brought to its logical conclusion and there were just enough new nuggets dropped to make me want to read the next one. I don't know if I like this or Chasm City more, I like them both for different reasons, but one thing that is cool about this series is that I'm three books in and while there is an overall larger story being told each one is totally self-contained. For the last week this has been the kind of book that talks to me while I'm trying to do other things. If I'm watching a movie it's saying "c'mon this movie sucks, come read thirty pages." When I'm at work it's like, "remember how cool it was when this thing did that one thing to that thing, remember that?" Or when I'm trying to go to sleep and it sends concentrated shots of adrenaline to my brain to keep me up for another chapter, yeah it's that good. Big ideas, a gigantic story, and a sincerely massive and awesome finale, big time recommended! ...more

Number two in the Revelation Space trilogy; you could read it as a standalone story, but it's better to read in sequence, and it helps if you've also read Chasm City (<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>).

This is a long treasure hunt for super weapons, conducted by two competing factions (though both have the same intention), with a life-or-death deadline. Although that is true, it does it an injustice because there is far more complexity and intrigue than that implies. Reynolds has really thought out his technology, worlds, people and how they interact and evolve over very long time periods. Number two in the Revelation Space trilogy; you could read it as a standalone story, but it's better to read in sequence, and it helps if you've also read Chasm City (<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>).

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In fact, deceit and integrity are the main themes, with many characters living a lie (or several) and double-dealing, though it is never confusing.

The context is a power struggle amongst the Conjoiners (also known as Spiders), who are winning a war against the Demarchists (democratic anarchy), while The Inhibitors are trying to destroy intelligent life once it embarks on interplanetary travel. This creates plenty of threads to the story, keeps it exciting and prevents it being a simple, butch shoot 'em up or war story.

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The ending (always tricky in the middle of a series) is particularly good balance: semi-satisfying if you have to wait a while before reading the final installment, but tantalising enough to make you keen to read on.

## Interesting ideas:

\* The practicality of a hive mind. The Conjoiners are a human group who have developed the ability to link minds, but also, and crucially, to limit it to some extent. There are some wonderful descriptions: "Skade peered into his mind, glimpsing a surface slurry of recent experiences and emotions... Beneath the slurry were deeper layers of memory, mnemonic structures plunging down into opaque darkness like great drowned monuments... Down at the very deepest level, Skade detected a few partitioned private memories... she was tempted to reach in and edit the man's own blockades... Skade resisted; it was enough to know that she could." And it affects emotions too, "He felt Skade's irritation bleeding into his own emotional state." When shutting it out/off, "he felt the million background thoughts of the Mother Nest drop from his mind like a single dying sigh".

\* Accelerated neural processing, which means someone could "watch an apple fall from a table and compose a commemorative haiku before it reached the ground."

\* Space wars are fundamentally different from those on Earth: "no element of surprise. But there almost never was in a space war... war in space was a game of total transparency. It was a war between enemies who could safely each assume the other to be omniscient."

\* Issues of extreme longevity. If you live for hundreds of years, should marriage be for life? Should youthful crimes taint later life or is it right to declare "There is no need for us to be puppets of our past"?

## Random quotes:

\* "In zero gravity, heads did not loll lifelessly... in space the dead were often difficult to tell from the living."

\* "The growths [melding plague, on a ship] had a mad artistry about them, a foul flamboyance which both awed and revolted... There were places where some major structure had been echoed and re-echoed in a fractal diminuendo, vanishing down to the limit of vision."

\* "For the galaxy, as much as it was a machine for making metals, and thereby complex chemistry, and thereby life, could also be seen as a machine for making wars."

\* "I need to have a word - a serious word - with weapon 17." (I like that because it echoes the wonderful

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film, "Dark Star".)

\* "The symbols and sinuous indentations of the programming language resembling the intricately formalized stanzas of some [Vogon?] poetry."

Inevitably, there are irritations, but they are minor, especially when you consider the length of the book.

\* There are a couple of sections where there is too much backstory in too short a time, in too unsubtle a way.

\* There is plenty of detail about all the many characters and yet most of them still lack personality. For example, although there are strong and significant female characters, they could be men, if it weren't for their names and the use of her/she.

\* In other books, I had wondered at how little mention there was of relationships (not that I want gory or slushy details in sci fi). This book demonstrates that Reynolds is best avoiding them. Antoinette and Xave's love scenes are awful and the sexual tension between a couple of other characters is just banal.

\* Characters make Biblical analogies (the Promised Land, the Lamb, the prodigal son), though I'd be surprised if they would be understood so far away in time and space.

\* There is an implausible reliance on paper documents and pneumatic tubes on Resurgam, even allowing for the fact it is a relatively poor and backward planet. Similarly, a doubt about paternity in a more advanced community could be easily solved (even with current technology).

\* Too many dead people aren't really dead, or only slightly and/or temporarily so. I don't object in principle but it gets irritating when done to excess.

Overall, another riveting Reynolds. (My Revelation Space review: <http://www.goodreads.com/review/show/....>) ...more

## Redemption Ark Reynolds

Better and even darker than the previous one. And so realistic written that it gives you shivers. The action may take place in 27th century but the time scale references spans over 3 billion years. There are concepts which are simply too big to comprehend:

"The grand story of life in the Milky Way - across the entire local group - might just be one thread in something humbly vast."

Can't wait to see how it will end...

PS: and here you have Nostalgia for Infinity (isn't she beautiful?) :)

I have been cruising along with this series, pretty much sitting on the fence on whether I really liked it. Then a third of the way through this book it all clicked together and I was hooked. There is no defining moment or change in the writing style, it really just starts to bring the whole epic story together and you suddenly become aware of the sheer scale of story.

Redemption Ark is brilliant writing. The technical sci-fi stuff is still there, but didn't seem as grandiose as in book one, but I have been cruising along with this series, pretty much sitting on the fence on whether I really liked it. Then a third of the way through this book it all clicked together and I was hooked. There is no defining moment or change in the writing style, it really just starts to bring the whole epic story together and you suddenly become aware of the sheer scale of story.

Redemption Ark is brilliant writing. The technical sci-fi stuff is still there, but didn't seem as grandiose as in book one, but it seemed to fit better with the overall story in its description. The characters really begin to shine through out this journey and some favourite members of book one make an appearance and their personalities have a big impact on decision making, that not only affect the locals, but humanity as a whole.

There is a much bigger focus on the Conjoiners in this story and it is well thought out and completely believable. I think that Reynolds has done a masterful job of these splinter groups of humans that have formed their own species. Conjoiner, demarkists and Ultras are all easily definable in their growth as sentient races and the way they are all personally and later as a whole learning to deal with the threat of the inhibitors has me utterly transformed from a fence sitter to a fanboy.

This is probably one of the biggest epics I have read. I thought the reality dysfunction was out there in epicness, but the basis of the story was quite small and Hamilton surrounded it with many branches. Revelation is huge in its base story and as Reynolds starts to leak more and more of the 'real' story behind the inhibitors you begin to feel dwarfed by the sheer scale of it all. One of those, "ok, so picture what your universe is actually inside. I think that is why Reynolds is giving us the story slowly, if he

Redemption Ark

dumped on me, what I know now, I think my head would have imploded.

I am so HAPPY that I stuck with this story, from a three star 'not sure about this' reader I am already looking forward to reading the first book again.

...more

## Redemption Ark Characters

this is my second Alastair Reynolds novel and the second of the trilogy. I am blown away by the level of realism, depth, and structure of this series. Throw in some incredible characterizations and you have a premium sci-fi series. It also does not hurt the science when the author is a rocket scientist. There are strong protagonists here that make you believe in them. The antagonist is your typical science fiction type of "Grey Goo", mass of tiny robots that are threatening life as we know it. E this is my second Alastair Reynolds novel and the second of the trilogy. I am blown away by the level of realism, depth, and structure of this series. Throw in some incredible characterizations and you have a premium sci-fi series. It also does not hurt the science when the author is a rocket scientist. There are strong protagonists here that make you believe in them. The antagonist is your typical science fiction type of "Grey Goo", mass of tiny robots that are threatening life as we know it. Even though this is a very long novel, you will have a difficult time putting it down. I cannot wait to read more. If you are a science fiction fan, Alastair Reynolds should not be missed. ...more

¿Cuál es la misión de un escritor? Pues sumergirnos es su mundo, que durante algunas horas vivamos las historias y aventuras de unos personajes que se convierten en carne y hueso, descubriremos mundos y universos desconocidos. Y a fe mía que Alastair Reynolds lo consigue con 'El arca de la redención'.

Mientras lea este libro, habrá momentos en que levantaba la cabeza para cerciorarme realmente de en qué "mundo" estaba. Reynolds tiene un imaginario propio muy original y atractivo, su prosa es sencilla e hipnótica. Pero eso no quiere decir que sea fácil, ya que él es astrofísico y nos explica los fenómenos y situaciones desde esta óptica, es decir, sabe de lo que habla. Estamos ante una space-opera hard. Aunque la mayoría de hechos sean ficción, podrán ocurrir en un futuro lejano, y Reynolds teoriza sobre ello. Pero también es una lectura de aventuras y emociones. La imaginación de Reynolds es portentosa, en un tour de force increíble, nos hace viajar por su propio universo, el mismo de Espacio Revelación, que da nombre a su saga. Hay otro escritor con el que lo compararía, y este es Iain M. Banks, pero con una diferencia, y es que Reynolds es más oscuro y siniestro en sus historias, y en este sentido lo emparentaría con China Miéville.

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Hablar de qué va este libro será muy largo, complicado y poco conveniente. Hay que disfrutarlo y descubrirlo por uno mismo. Sólo diré que los protagonistas de esta novela son los Inhibidores, una raza de máquinas alienígenas cuya misión es descubrir y destruir vida inteligente, pero únicamente

## Redemption Ark

aquella que ya ha descubierto lo que son los viajes interestelares. Atención sobre todo al más todo destructivo que escogen. Después tenemos a los Combinados, humanos modificados, que han descubierto esta amenaza y traman un plan para hacerle frente. Y es Clavain, un combinado, quien es asignado para una misión, conseguir las armas infernales. Y mucho más... El único pero que le pondría al libro es el final, que me parece demasiado precipitado, en apenas un par de páginas lo deja más o menos resuelto. No sé, debería haberse extendido un poco más. Quizá es que ya le parecen demasiadas páginas y estaba pensando en la continuación, 'El desfiladero de la absolución'.

Lo dicho, si queréis leer alguna de la mejor ciencia ficción que se está escribiendo actualmente, no os perdáis este libro. ...more

# 1

The characters felt so much better in this one than in Revelation Space. That should lend the story more urgency (since the characters are trying to avert disaster, because they obviously care about people and humanity...), but gosh this is long. I love the plot, I love the tech, I love all the things about the worldbuilding, but I had to take a star off for how bloated this began to feel. At 80% I was still waiting for that convergence of all the plotlines that happened about 50% through Revela The characters felt so much better in this one than in Revelation Space. That should lend the story more urgency (since the characters are trying to avert disaster, because they obviously care about people and humanity...), but gosh this is long. I love the plot, I love the tech, I love all the things about the worldbuilding, but I had to take a star off for how bloated this began to feel. At 80% I was still waiting for that convergence of all the plotlines that happened about 50% through Revelation Space. This one has more characters, more side stories, more tangents, and more exposition, and it needed to be leaner and stick to the point more.

For example, I really liked Antoinette and Xavier. Their side story was very good. But it felt like a standalone short story shoved into this novel when it really shouldn't have been.

Looking forward to the conclusion in Absolution Gap though. Even if it doesn't go out with a bang, I'm eager to read some of Reynolds' other books that are highly recommended. ...more

The surreal hyjinks continue in Reynold's apocalyptic epic. Adding propaganda dreams, fetus cops, hyperpigs, orwellian governments, and the terrifying inertia engines(trust me this is true horror), and a doomy cosmic scope. Some how five hundred pages is riddled with tension. Don't compare with pieces of crap like Orson Scott Card, rather Mieville,M.John Harrison, or Swanwick