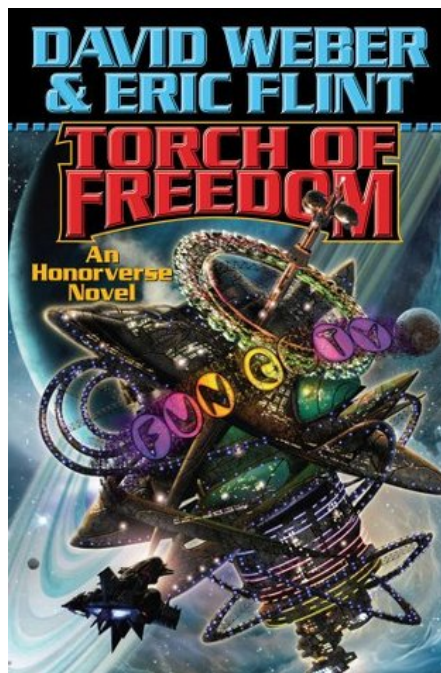




Torch of Freedom

David Weber , Eric Flint

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The Direct Sequel to *Crown of Slaves*. Two *New York Times* Best-Selling Authors Again Join Forces in a New Novel in David Weber's Honor Harrington Universe.

As the slavemasters of Mesa plot against the Star Empire of Manticore and the newly liberated slave planet of Torch, Anton Zilwicki and the notorious Havenite secret agent Victor Cachat set off on a dangerous mission to uncover the truth concerning a wave of mysterious assassinations that have been launched against Manticore and Torch. Most people are sure that the Republic of Haven is behind the assassinations, but Zilwicki and Cachat suspect others of being the guilty party.

Queen Berry of Torch was one of the targets of the unknown assassins. The former head of the Ballroom slave liberation organization, Jeremy X—now one of Torch's top officials, but still considered by many the most dangerous terrorist in the galaxy—calls in some past favors owed to him. In response, a security officer from Beowulf arrives in Torch to take charge of Queen Berry's security—a task made doubly difficult by the young monarch's resentment of bodyguards and the security officer's own growing attachment to her.

Meanwhile, powerful forces in the Solarian League are maneuvering against each other to gain the upper hand in what they all expect to be an explosive crisis that threatens the very existence of the League itself.

Torch of Freedom Details

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Author : David Weber , Eric Flint

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From Reader Review Torch of Freedom for online ebook

Leather says

Maybe the worst book ever of the Harrington universe. Unbelievably bad. Two thousands points of vue, two billions characters, a crazy mindless dribble which never stops.

John says

No stars. A novelette's worth of plot in 600+ pages, padded out with chapter after chapter of people sitting around talking about past events, delivering historical infodumps, stretching out conversations or analyzing events at tremendous length. There is: one battle (p. 500 or so), one spy mission, one assassination attempt against Good Guys and one against Villains, and that is it! The rest is filler--particularly for readers of previous Honorverse episodes, who won't need long introductions to most of the characters, societies or agendas.

I just don't understand how this got published. MEMO TO SELF: NO MAS!

Steven Lee says

I have read all the Honorverse books prior to this one.

This is a complicated book with many different characters and perspective operated in coordination and against one another. This book, more than any of the others, is focused on the Mesa conspiracy. Mesa, the central antagonist populated by neo-eugenicists and genetic slavers, is fleshed out for the first time. A number of characters are Mesans, and pleasingly some they are actual human beings and not just moustache-twirling villains.

Structurally, the story resembles an espionage novel. A disparate group from different star systems come together to go undercover on Mesa to uncover the truth behind a recent series of assassinations. Aside from the intrigue of infiltrating the Mesan underground and the Mesan Alignment conspiracy the story goes off into rather strange direction. A few chapters shine a light onto the personal life of Queen Berry and her dating life and interest in a local ice cream shop, or the thrill of space roller coasters and the strange clan that dwells in an abandoned amusement park.

In my opinion this book is overburdened by trying to go too many different directions at the same time. It lacks focus and so it feels a tad chaotic. I will add that I am not really into the Anton Zilwicki and Victor Cachat stories in this universe. They seem too perfect. They are both so capable and so moral that they feel boring to me.

I like the world-building in this book quite a bit. Mesa is fleshed out substantially and suddenly it feels far more understandable to me. It seems like a net of contradictions and I have to imagine as the conflict between Mesa and other star nations escalates it may unravel entirely. Torch is explored much greater than in the previous novel. I like how things that clearly Torch is laying on traditions and precedents that will shape it in years to come. The former slaver compound is evolving into a palace and the city around it, Beacon, is becoming a real centre for freed slaves.

Several of the characters in the series are teens or young adults. I found them not to be particularly well-written, or perhaps merely not very sophisticated. They seemed primarily motivated by their sex drives and interest in thrill-seeking. These characters could have been simply hurt by the fact that they didn't have a lot of time to develop.

Ultimately, this was an Okay book in my opinion. It has the benefit of giving perspective to the wider plot and situation in the galaxy, sadly I think the characters in this story, outside of a handful of Mesa, are too thin to carry the book on its own.

Kevin Connery says

Honorverse: Torch 2. Drier and drier, with a cast of zillions--only a few of whom were interesting. Had to force myself to finish, as I DID want to know what happened, but it was more of a "had to" than "want to" feeling.

Scott Holstad says

I loved Torch of Freedom! Not five star loved, but definitely four star loved. This is the second book in the Honorverse: Wages of Sin series that follows the ex-slave planet of Torch, led by newly crowned Queen Berry Zilwicki and her Manticorian spook father Anton and his Havenite spook colleague and friend, Victor Cachat, as they travel to the evil slaver planet of Mesa to snoop around and try to find out what Mesa is up to. They find out a lot, find a high-level scientist defector who is ready to leave with a high-level security defector too, who gets caught. Before he actually falls into Mesan security hands, he blows up a nuke and nukes Mesa's Gamma Center, headquarters to their R&D, leaving them and everyone else to think Zilwicki and Cachat did it and died in the process. Later, we find out that they escape and make their way to Haven to turn their defector over to the authorities, where he can prove Mesa was responsible for starting the war between Manticore and Haven and where Haven's government will try to end the war with Manticore.

Eric Flint adds some nice stuff to this book, including some humor and dialogue, as well as some good plotting elements. This book is also truly essential if one wants to learn details about some of the later Honor Harrington books in which these details are kept out. I'm already reading the third one; the series is that good. Like I said, not the best Weber. But pretty good, quite entertaining, and easily a four star book. Recommended, if reading the Honor series.

Alex Shrugged says

"Torch of Freedom" is book #2 of the Wages of Sin series, in the Honorverse. It is a story from a different point of view, more or less concurrent with At All Costs, and Storm from the Shadows. You should probably read those two books before you read this one.

The Story: Torch is the planet where genetic slaves have found their home of refuge. The evil bioengineers of the planet Mesa have been creating them for centuries but now they have broken free and established a home. While there, they discover hints of a plot against the Star Kingdom of Manicore and the Republic of Haven so the super-spies Zilwiki and Cachat head for Mesa to find out more. It is one heck of an adventure.

Any problems with the novel? Well... I'm sorry to say there is a child in danger and it is obvious from the moment the character is introduced. I can't say more than that without spoilers. There is violence throughout. It is not gratuitous, but it does happen. Sexuality is discussed frankly. It is not discussed in detail but it is part of the story and it is not avoided.

Cursing is involved. It is in context. The F-word is used. Just so you know.

The genetic slaves are following some form of Judaism. Like all religions in the universe of Honor Harrington novels, religions have only a passing resemblance to the religions we know today. This book takes place over a thousand years into the future when religions, nations and races have become a mish-mosh. Thus the planet of Torch is like the nation of Israel, but not really, and the author doesn't beat the reader over the head with the idea.

I like the idea of expanding on a side-story told only briefly in *At All Costs*. It gives needed context to what will happen next in the main line novel coming next, *Mission of Honor*.

I've read this book a couple of times and will probably read it again.

Kat says

I'm running out of ways to say I enjoy this series. So I'll just say it.

Guy says

Good, but not up to Weber's usual standard. The main problem is that this book is out of order: it describes events that happened before the most recent books in the main Honorverse sequence, and makes cross-references with minimal explanation to other events described in other books. So you either have to have a superb memory, or you are likely to become a little confused at times. In addition there are some editing errors, a couple of plausibility fails, and the quality of the writing is sometimes not as good as I've come to expect from Weber (probably because those parts were written by his co-author Eric Flint). All in all, worth reading if you are a Weber fan, but you should probably read everything else he has written before reading this book.

Kathy Davie says

First read February 7, 2011.

Fascinating reading as ever in this installment in the military sci-fi sub-series, *Torch* which is part of the Honor Harrington Universe series, which is a set of side stories revolving around the Honor Harrington series.

Essentially, *Torch of Freedom* fills in all the background on what's been happening in *At All Costs* (HH, 11) during a whole lotta Battles.

Cathy and Anton Zilwicki are at the tail end of their visit to attend Queen Berry's coronation (Anton's adopted daughter) on Torch---although, they did make a quick trip back to Manticore to kick Georgia Young out and burn the North Hollow files---YEAH!!!

Haven has implemented Operation Thunderbolt and there is a mention of the proposed summit on Torch between Queen Elizabeth and Pritchard. In this story, we see the attempted assassination of Queen Berry through Torch eyes which sends Zilwicki and Cachat to surreptitiously visit Harrington with Eighth Fleet.

Torch has a new "unexplored" wormhole light minutes away that Manpower is making "plans" to ensure they never do explore. Then the Battle of Monica takes place followed by the Battle of Manticore.

At this point, Zilwicki and Cachat infiltrate the planet Mesa and, finally, the truth of their deaths is explained. While a whole lot of truths the Mesans would prefer no one ever know is about to explode all over the universe---oh man...when is the next installment going to appear!!!

The major ending is the Battle of Torch between the mercenaries hired by Mesa---the People's Navy in Exile and, surprisingly, an honorable ally who defends Torch with hellacious losses from a violation of the Eridani Edict. The prisoners from that are going to be very useful...

The minor ending is a budding romance between Hugh, an ex-labor slave, and Queen Berry. A romance that Jeremy X has been promoting... Another minor bit of tension that's driving me nuts is...are Victor's spying days over??

Robert Scott says

All about the Detweiler plan to manipulate Mesa, Manpower, the Audubon Ballroom and the Kingdom of Torch in their grand plan to take over the entire human race in order to make all of them better by genetic improvements and in the process diminish the powers of the Republic of Haven, the Kingdom of Manticore and the planet Beowulf. Central characters are: Queen Berry Zilwiki of Torch, Anton Zilwiki her adoptive father and Manticoran spy, Victor Cachat RoH spy, Jeremy X Torch's secretary of War, Elfriede Margarete (Ganny) Butry, Rear Admiral Luiz Rozsak of the SLN, Hugh Arai of the Beowulf's Biological Survey Corps, the Detweilers: Albrecht head of the family and CEO of the Mesan Alignment, Isabel Bardasano 2nd in command of MASEcurity, & Jack McBryde chieff of Security, MA's Gamma Center and don't forget Brice Miller and his teenage pals.

Calisto says

Now, I do like Weber more often than not and have really enjoyed the Harrington Universe. I also enjoyed the first Torch book. I love space operas. They hit all my buttons and when they have kickass females that just takes it up a notch.

The thing that I really love about space operas is the epic feel of the story. How all the side stories somehow come together and make sense, but oh holy hell, this book needed an editor that was not so indulgent. Cast of thousands? Yeah, pretty much. That wasn't the problem as much as we got so much filler for so many of those characters. I really felt that some sections did nothing but pad the word count instead of moving the story along.

Having said that, I still like the universe and all the characters. This story really makes more sense if you are already familiar with the Honor Harrington universe and what is going in the main series and should not be read separately.

Meg says

There's something about the name Berry that makes me want to inflict harm on the book!
So what kind of berry? I went with raisin as a slight improvement. So in this book, Raisin has a romance. Why are the heroines always young, attractive and unattached? Raisin would never be old, wrinkled and a bit past it. Okay, maybe I should have gone with grape? So Grape makes wine with her bodyguard, whines a bit, and wins. Pity, as by this point, I rather wanted the bad guys to pop them in a blender and make a smoothie.

Dan says

2018 re-read. Very good.

heidi says

Ok, you need to understand that I would probably buy collectible trading cards in this franchise. It's a spinoff of the Honor Harrington series, now with Eric Flint flavor.

When a plotty multi-character author works with another plotty multi-character author, and neither of them is unduly repressed by an editor, you get a book 826 pages long with a cast of thousands. It's kind of epic, by which we mean "Like Tom Clancy was writing space opera".

That's not to say it was bad. There were some actually interesting character bits, very Flint-y. The revulsion of the particular to the general, the development of Queen Berry and many fine other people. Swashes were buckled, mysterious agents were agenty, and the engineer was right. I enjoyed it and ripped through all 826 pages in about 5 days.

Read if: The spunky adventures of our favorite spies, teenage queens, and some random kids from a abandoned amusement park seem awesome to you. If you would buy collectible playing cards from the Honorverse. If cast of thousands does not intimidate you.

Skip if: You stopped reading Stephen King when he stopped getting edited. Casts of thousands make you itch. You haven't obsessively read every previous book at least twice.

Barb in Maryland says

Well, what a pleasant surprise. I have to give all the credit to Eric Flint, who managed to inject humor into the typical Weber space opera. This was very much a character driven story and I have always been fond of Victor Cachat and Anton Zilwicki. There were the usual Weber weapons info dumps but they didn't overwhelm the action like they sometimes do.

The action of the book overlaps At All Costs and Storm from the Shadows. So we now have all the pieces in place for the big action of the forthcoming Mission of Honor.
