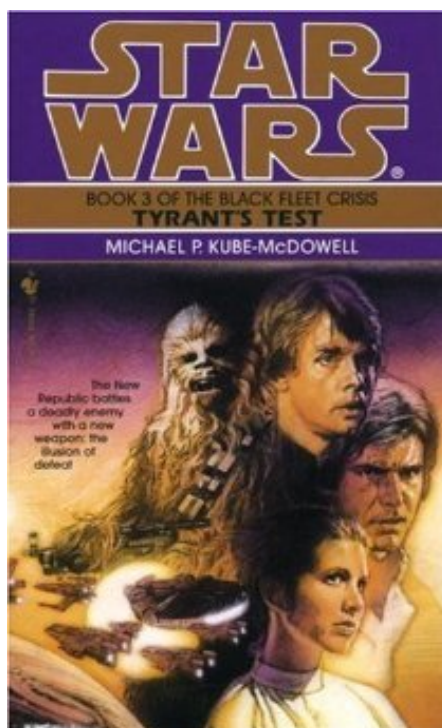




## Tyrant's Test

*Michael P. Kube-McDowell*

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## **Tyrant's Test** Michael P. Kube-McDowell

In the wake of a shattered alliance, the New Republic fights a relentless new enemy in an all-new adventure in the bestselling "Star Wars" saga...Faced with an alarming image of Han as a battered hostage of the Yevetha, Chewbacca takes on an urgent mission. Meanwhile, Leia calls upon the Senate to take a stand and eliminate the Yevetha threat--even at the cost of Han's life.As a former Imperial governor takes his battle to the runaway Qella spaceship, Luke's continuing search for his mother brings him dangerously close to NilSpaar's deadly forces. And as the Yevetha close in on the forces of the New Republic, Luke takes a desperate gamble with an invisible weapon...

## **Tyrant's Test Details**

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Author : Michael P. Kube-McDowell

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## From Reader Review Tyrant's Test for online ebook

### Brendan Pelto says

He is a really good author for this type of book, but it suffers from multiple endings syndrome, and some of those endings aren't very fulfilling. Leia is put to great use, and not disregarded as being inept as many post Thrawn trilogy authors have done.

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### Erik Akre says

Hey! A Star Wars novel written with genuine skill!

Kube-McDowell did things right compared to other writers in the vast miasma of Star Wars books. Here are two of them that stick with me:

He has an absolutely amazing handle on Star Wars technical information--way more than his readers can possibly have. The effect is that he draws the reader on through the great lexicon of starships and gadgets and technological realities of the Universe. The reader understands maybe two-thirds of it at most, but the reader ends up completely *trusting* the author. We are in good hands here, and we can settle in to a well-executed description of the book's world.

And character! Kube-McDowell's treatment of the familiar and unfamiliar characters goes at least somewhat beneath the surface, which is more than one can say about many of the other books. The author is skilled especially at dialogue--another rare feat among these novels--and the plot, which relies so heavily on the characters talking to each other, becomes clearer, easier to follow, more enjoyable, and better driven.

Although the attempt to tell several threads of plot at once becomes a little distracting and feels disjointed, despite the fact that they (mostly? anti-climactically?) come together in the end, this book is solid. I read it stand-alone, as a simple diversion from my real life, and now I'm interested in digging in to the rest of the series. Especially if it's written by the same author.

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### James Taylor says

It's been a bit of a slog to get through the series, but here I am at the conclusion to the trilogy. The three plot points essentially merge into two. Lando's plot is still irrelevant and should have been concluded in book 2. In the second book, the three plot points were addressed separately which was a good move, but now we are back to Lando's story being interspersed through the book.

The overall trilogy is about "The Black Fleet"; an almost unstoppable fleet of ships, but yet the Yethetha take over a few planets (only a couple are described, the rest happen behind the scenes) and so you don't get much action. You don't even get any build up, since this happens fairly early on in the series.

The main story in this book doesn't really get going until halfway through the book; so until that point, you have to read superfluous plot threads. Once it does get going, it is fine and better than the second book; but still incredibly disappointing.

## Crystal Starr Light says

"What has this all been about?"

The crisis with the Koornacht cluster is on the brink of war. Leia's position as president is in turmoil and Han has been captured. Meanwhile, Lando and team are on the cusp of discovery and Luke is growing closer to finding the Fallanassi.

I Liked:

Kube-McDowell saves this series with the political machinations between the New Republic and the Yevetha. Leia is forced to choose between her tenure as president and her husband. This decision is tough and ugly, but it is realistic, and I appreciate an author who isn't afraid of putting an unhappy solution in a novel.

Lando's mission reaches an interesting climax when Lobot interfaces with the Vagabond, though I would be lying if I said I enjoyed the resolution of this plot line.

In the previous two reviews, I have been exceedingly critical of MKM, but I think he deserves credit for elevating Chewbacca above the sidekick role. Here, we get to see his family, how he behaves with his son, and his rescue of Han, one of the best things Chewbacca has ever done in the series.

I Didn't Like:

I can't help but echo Luke's thoughts: What has this [trilogy:] all been about? Why do we care about these missions, these crisis, these journeys? They bear no relevance on later books, they have no lasting impact. To illustrate, let me take the major plot lines:

Lando: So Lando learns the secret of the ship, but he and Luke, who comes whizzing to the rescue at the end in the only plausible tie-in to the rest of the trilogy, won't see any results of this three book long quest, because it takes 100 years for their efforts to "bloom". Wow, and why again was this mission so important that we needed to shoe horn it in with the Yevetha crisis?

Leia: So Leia's presidency is challenged and she declares war on the Yevetha. This could be the beginning of an amazing series...but it is promptly wrapped up with the appearance of Luke and the Omnipotent, Amazing, Peaceful, Wonderful, Godly Fallanassi. Thanks, MKM, for destroying a good story. You put us through one book that barely begins the conflict (I guess that's why it was called Before the Storm, yuk, yuk), another book that steadily rises the conflict to the next level, then rapidly, and hastily wraps it up in the last one. Talk about a waste of effort!

Luke: His whole reason for leaving Yavin 4 was supposed to be because he needed to be a hermit. But that lasted all of one chapter, for he spent the rest of the trilogy with Akanah, the worst girlfriend he has ever had (and proof positive that he is a diehard submissive). The most distrusting, untrustworthy, dishonest, deceitful, manipulative, oppressive, and demanding woman that supposedly was a "good guy" (Uh, huh, yeah, you really bought me on that one--not) proves her integrity by lying with Luke to get him to tag along with her. And I really don't know why. She found all the "clues" (i.e. big, huge, obvious arrow signs) and refused to listen to any of Luke's advise, resting solely on her "vastly superior" knowledge of this previously unknown force, the White Current. It is my personal belief that she is on drugs and what she sees during her psychedelic mind trips is the White Current. So, we (and Luke) trudge through this, supposedly to learn more about Luke's mom (which, those of us who have seen the prequels, know won't happen) only to come out with absolutely nothing. Luke returns to Leia with the always insightful knowledge that he ought to spend time with family. God, and we had to read three books with the worst chemistry, the worst female character ever to come out with this gem???

All in all, the only things we've come out through this tripe are the following:

- 1) Tie-ins with the most derided SW EU media, the Star Wars holiday special
- 2) Luke learning the value of family (cue sappy music)

3) Lumpawarrump becoming a man and killing his parents for giving him such a God-awful name.

Wow, I so couldn't live without that.

I've lambasted the plot and the characters (specifically Leia, Luke, and Akanah) to no end, but there is one thing I've forgot to mention in my reviews to the previous two books: Nil Spaar and the Yevetha. While there were some good aspects, I felt on a whole, they were just an excuse for an enemy, one that had absolutely no redeeming value (to human morality), so they could be wholesale slaughtered and no one would bat an eye. I never once sympathized with the villains or felt anything beyond disgust and revulsion. Even the Yuuzhan Vong from the New Jedi Order were better done. I could feel sympathy for Nen Yim and Mezhan Kwad, even for Tsvong Lah.

Dialogue/Sexual Situations/Violence:

Little to none.

Akanah and Luke share a room.

The violence in this one is pretty darn heavy. Nil Spaar kills someone so violently, his head is severed. Han is brutally beat to a pulp and people think he is dead. The entire Yevetha society considers murder only a crime if a lower-caste member kills an upper-class member.

Overall:

Political intrigue aside, there really is no reason to read this series. Want a real threat to the New Republic that doesn't deal with the Empire? Go to the New Jedi Order. Want political intrigue? Try Cloak of Deception or Specter of the Past. Want to see Luke learn about his family? Er, guess you will have to keep waiting (Leia finds out about her dad, though, in Tatooine Ghost. Follow Obi-Wan's advice and just "Move along. Move along."

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## Joseph says

This book stunk!!! It was well written, but the plot and story line stunk. I had the first 2 books as 4 stars because I thought well not that great it was still better then some of the other Star Wars books. But reading this book moved them to 2 stars and this one gets a 1 star. The ending was lame and really disappointing. The only thing that was good was Chewie kicking butt. Everything had to go.

The author should have saved the readers time and money and gotten rid of the Luke and Lando stories and it would have been 1 book. They really didn't have anything to do with the overall story and it was a waste. Leia wasn't mentioned in the last 100+ pages and her character had some serious things going on. I am super glad I bought these books used and a total of less then \$7 combined.

I should have listened to one of my friends on this site and skipped it. I don't recommend.

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## Jennifer Hoey says

The plot dragged and it moved from one plot to the other without warning and no satisfying conclusion. Sadly I wouldn't recommend it.

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## Ron says

I really wanted to give this four stars, but the last hundred pages failed to pay off the build up of the preceding thousand. The only-tenuous connection of the "Lando thread" to the rest of the story and the inadequate resolution of the Han's and Luke's threads weighted down the otherwise excellent story telling.

It wasn't Kube-McDowell's fault that he wrote this before Episodes One, Two and Three movies were shown, but even so he kept the story within the bounds of "orthodoxy."

But how did the Empire find the White Circle if they could hide so well from everyone else?

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### **Kurtbg says**

The final book in this trilogy among a trillion of trilogies in the SW universe. There's some good story, but tries to do too much by weaving four story lines and trying to give the main characters all something. The establish Lucas paradigm is to have three story lines to pull at each other to build drama.

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### **Spencer Roberts says**

Again, just ok. I gave this whole series a 3/5 stars for each book. The "Luke looking for his mother" plot was not very engaging, and ultimately disappointing. The main plot was ok, but the Yevetha just didn't pose that much of a threat. And the Lando vagabond plot ended kinda cool, but as it says, it was more of an "interlude" and interruption and could have jut been done as its own separate novella.

Would suggest reading other star wars books, but if you have nothing left, then go ahead.

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### **Benjamin Thomas says**

"Tyrant's Test" is the third book of a Star Wars trilogy written by Michael P. Kube-McDowell. According to the "About the Author" page, this is actually the pen name of Michael Paul McDowell. I understand why authors use different pen names to keep from being typecast with a certain genre but I'm not sure how they came up with the mouthfull for this one. Oh well. This trilogy take place about twelve years after the "Return of the Jedi" and was written in the still early days of the first group of Star Wars fiction. Consequently, it suffers, I believe with having to rely on plot development, filling in the "what happened next" syndrome and just doesn't have to time to really expand on the characters. Most of us know a lot about Luke, Leia, Han, Chewbacca, Lando, etc. but do we really? The plot of this one is fairly straight forward. Each of the main characters I just mentioned plus some bad guys have their own sub plots and that's really too many to fully develop in a 350 page paperback book, especially when all of the sub plots need to be wrapped up. I thought Luke's plot was especially contrived because it turned out he was just being lied to the whole time and nothing came of it. But somehow at the end, that experience had substantially changed him and his outlook. Hmmm... Han didn't play a big role throughout the trilogy, just uncharacteristically being captured and having to be rescued. Didn't ring true.

All in all, this trilogy has some of the worst reviews I've seen for SW books. It wasn't that bad in my opinion but still, I am glad to see it come to an end.

## Colin McEvoy says

I basically feel about *Tyrant's Test* the way I feel about the entire Black Fleet Crisis series: not without flaws, and there are certain aspects of the story I would have handled differently, but overall it was enjoyable enough and there's more that I liked than there is that I didn't.

So let me focus first on what I liked. There have essentially been three major subplots throughout this series: Lando Calrissian investigating (and being trapped upon) a mysterious phantom spacecraft, Luke Skywalker travelling with a mysterious woman and trying to learn about his long-lost mother, and Princess Leia trying to grapple with the threat of both the evil Yevethan species, as well as political foes attempting to remove her from power, not to mention the kidnapping of her husband Han Solo.

Throughout the series, Princess Leia's chapters have been the most interesting to me, while Luke's subplot has been the least interesting, and indeed, I thought Leia's story arc wrapped up nicely in *Tyrant's Test*. While in the first book of this series I found that author Michael P. Kobe-McDowell had made her character far too uncertain and weak-willed, in this final novel she seems much more like the Leia we all know and love. In the face of moral dilemma over whether to do what she believes is right for the New Republic or to throw that all aside to save her husband's life, the way she ultimately handles that decision feels truly in character for her, and it is a triumphant moment. (And it was nice to see Mon Mothma reemerge in a chapter to provide her some morale support!)

What surprised me, however, was how much I enjoyed Luke's storyline in this one as well. For the first two books (and especially the second one), I found myself extremely uninterested, and felt that Kobe-McDowell (as with Leia in the first book) handled Luke's character and personality *entirely* incorrectly in the second novel. In *Tyrant's Test*, however, he took what had previously seemed to me to be an unnecessary tangent from the main storyline and tied it surprisingly well back into the book's major conflict with the Yevetha. The Luke B-plot didn't sustain my interest for most of the series, but it won me back in a big way here.

On the flip side, the Lando subplot, which I have otherwise enjoyed for most of the season, kind of sputtered into its final chapters. The surprise revelation of what exactly this ship is was not a bad one in and of itself, but I was surprised that it ultimately had *nothing* to do with the main plotline of the series. The Luke story seemed that way for the first two books as well, but it ultimately tied back into it. Lando's story never did.

As with the other books, I also enjoyed the Yevetha (and especially its leader, Nil Spaar) as an antagonist, but I was disappointed with how the conflict between the Yevetha and New Republic came to an end. After three books of developing this species' culture and building up to a war between the two, they are ultimately felled in large part due to an unexpected betrayal by a character who had not even appeared in the series until the very end. It felt very unrewarding and a bit like a deus ex machina.

But again, there was enough to enjoy in *Tyrant's Test* to let me forgive its shortcomings. We also get Chewbacca back in the fold, after he had gone missing since the first book, and his side quest to recapture Han Solo along with fellow Wookiee family members is good fun, not to mention a nice little coming-of-age story for Chewie's son, Lumpawaroo. And Kobe-McDowell does a good job of developing little minor characters who will never be seen again after this series and making us root for them all the same, like Esege Tuketu and Skids (a pilot and bomber duo who we first saw in the first chapter of the first book, and who play a brief but important role in this one) and Plat Millar (the sole survivor of a deadly Yevethan raid who becomes a New Republic pilot and is desperate to contribute to strike a blow against them).

So yeah, in the end, *Tyrant's Test* and the Black Fleet Crisis may not be the best *Star Wars* books around, but if you like *Star Wars* books, you'll probably like them.

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### Darryl Dobbs says

Closing off the trilogy, the third book was as riveting as the others. That is to say - for the Han and Leia parts I was riveted, but the other parts not so much. The Luke area never really got going for me, not only because Akanah Pell (his lady friend) is annoying, but their search for her people (and his mother) was a pretty boring one. I've also made no effort to hide the fact that the only magic I enjoy in this series is the Force. Akanah uses the 'Current' and they apparently have the ability to hide items as large as spaceships and create illusions that are just as big. One good thing to come out of it though is that now Luke has that added ability (invisibility) which he was taught. This storyline did eventually tie into the Han and Leia tangent. So it had a point. That's something that can't be said about the Lando plotline.

Pointless. The story got worse as it went on. And in the end it had nothing at all to do with the other story threads.

Besides the interesting Han and Leia story, I also enjoyed the Chewbacca tangent. He caught wind of Han being captured by the enemy and he immediately dropped everything to go rescue him. It was good enough to salvage a novel that Lando's 'adventures' almost ruined.

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### JediKnight26 says

The Tyrant's Test was a very disappointing conclusion to a trilogy which simply did not live up to its potential. First, the final showdown with the main protagonist was anticlimactic. Then, Leia was underutilized in her story arch. And Luke's story arch really accomplished nothing at all. It sort of contributed to his development as a Jedi, but overall Luke's arch was much to do about nothing. Han was also underutilized. Finally, Lando's story arch with the vagabond starship could have been totally removed from the book. It's a totally separate story, which is not that interesting, and it was not integrated very well with the main story arch. The best part of the story involved Chewbacca's rescue operation, which was great. As a Star Wars fan, it saddens me to say that I would not recommend this book or this trilogy.

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### FP says

Con este libro cierra esta trilogía de *Star Wars Legends* (no creo que me vaya a acostumbrar a eso de *Legends* algún día...). Las tramas vuelven a estar mezcladas, aunque al menos esta vez reconocieron lo desconectado que está Lando del resto, ya que ahora no son capítulos sino sólo "interludios".

Debo decir que me decepcionó un poco el cierre de las tramas más dispares de la serie: la trama de Luke termina tal como podíamos haberlo adivinado cuando leímos el nombre de la que se supone era su madre en el primer libro, haciendo que todo eso se sintiera inútil; peor aún, él podría haber estado ayudando a su hermana todo ese tiempo, pero en su lugar andaba cazando nubes espaciales. Tratan de compensarlo al final haciendo que él haga algo por ayudar a derrotar a los Yevetha al final, pero para ser más honesto, el imperio hace más que él en ese aspecto. Para hacerlo aún peor, R2-D2 siempre ha sabido el verdadero nombre de la madre de Luke y podría haberle dicho que no perdiera su tiempo buscando a una mujer equivocada (o, más bien, habría hecho unos ruidos agudos que C-3PO le habría traducido), salvo el hecho de que R2 estaba

atrapado en la trama de Lando. Y Lando, por su parte, llega a una conclusión con respecto a la nave, que puede o no ser satisfactoria, pero el problema es que la verdadera conclusión... ¡se la da Luke, una vez que los dos se reúnen al final! ¿Qué pasa con eso?

La trama principal de Leia es lo que se puede presumir, pero tiene algunos puntos positivos adicionales, como la entrada triunfal de Chewbacca (a quien sacaron casi como si fuera un trámite de los dos primeros libros) en todo estilo héroe. Lo que sí extrañé fue una especie de cierre para la trama principal de Leia, puesto que las otras dos sí tuvieron las suyas.

¿Cómo resumir la serie? Tom Clancy en el universo Star Wars, tres androides y Lando, Luke demasiado todo poderoso y haciendo muy poco por la trama e historias inconexas. Honestamente, el autor podía haber sacado la trama de Lando por completo y haberla publicado como un libro solitario, mientras que a la vez habría hecho la serie más corta (sólo dos libros, probablemente).

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## Scott Rhee says

"Tyrant's Test" is the third and final book in Michael P. Kube-McDowell's Black Fleet Crisis series. Highly enjoyable, fast-paced, and written with intelligence and respect for the Star Wars universe and characters created by George Lucas, this series is a must-read for Star Wars fans.

In this one, Leia makes a tough but necessary decision as President of the New Republic in the war against the Yevethans.

Meanwhile, Chewbacca, and several of his Wookie relatives including his son, Lumpy, decide to make a dangerous attempt at a rescue mission to save Han from the Yevethans.

Also meanwhile, Luke discovers Akanah's secrets, which may be used as a secret weapon against the Yevethans, if she agrees to it.

Also also meanwhile, Lando and the droids, still stuck on the vagabond ship, discover its real purpose as it arrives at a seemingly long-dead planet that still harbors life deep beneath its frozen surface. Bravo, Mr. Kube-McDowell!

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