I'm not a bot



Given article text here After decades of minimal change, Warhammer 40k is evolving rapidly. Recent novels from Black Library are providing insight into these new developments in the lore. However, it's unclear how various stories fit into the timeline, and Black Library doesn't provide an official reading order. This list aims to clarify the 'new 40k' timeline by grouping recent books together. It's entirely unofficial, so take it with a grain of salt, as very few 40k stories have specific dates. I've grouped them for clarity, but there may be errors or omissions. **Essential Novels** The following titles are essential to understanding events on Terra and the Indomitus Crusade: - Chris Wraight: Vaults of Terra (Carrion Throne, Hollow Mountain) - Chris Wraight: Watchers of the Throne (Emperor's Legion, Regent's Shadow) - Gav Thorpe: Indomitus - Guy Haley: Dark Imperium (Belisarius Cawl: The Great Work, The Devastation of Baal), Dawn of Fire 1-4 - Graham McNeill: The Swords of Calth The novels of the Blood Angels series are intricately connected, making a chronological order challenging to define. To help navigate this complex web, Chris provided a list that I've adapted into a more readable format. While the original list is not meant to be definitive, it's clear that some events overlap, such as The Hollow Mountain and The Emperor's Legion occurring at roughly the same time. One alternative approach is to read the novels in publication order, which jumps between the two series: The Carrion Throne, Watchers of the Throne, The Regent's Shadow, and Vaults of Terra. For those interested in integrating recent Blood Angels stories with The Devastation of Baal, a recommended reading order is suggested. In addition to the novels, I've included Games Workshop background books and audio dramas to provide more context. This section delves into the events surrounding the Gathering Storm, a pivotal moment in the 40k setting that marks the beginning of significant changes. The three core background books – Fall of Cadia, Fracture of Biel-Tan, and Rise of the Primarch – offer a comprehensive understanding of this period. These novels are primarily written from an Imperial perspective, so that's where I've focused my analysis. However, for alternative viewpoints, readers can explore other sections. The Gathering Storm is a defining era in the 40k setting, characterized by the fall of Cadia, Ynnead's birth, and Roboute Guilliman's resurrection. A summary of the background books provides essential context for understanding the rest of the stories. If you want to see what's happening on Terra from an Inquisitorial viewpoint, check out "The Carrion Throne" by Chris Wraight. It's set just before the Great Rift, so it's more about giving context to this time period rather than revealing what happened. The story follows Inquisitor Crowl and Interrogator Spinoza as they navigate this complex world. Read my thoughts on "The Carrion Throne". "Vaults of Terra: The Hollow Mountain", also by Chris Wraight, is the sequel to "The Carrion Throne". It continues the story of Crowl and Spinoza after the Great Rift, with a focus on uncovering an ongoing mystery on Terra. Read my review of "The Hollow Mountain" or listen to my interview with Chris. "Dante" and "The Devastation of Baal" by Guy Haley explore the Blood Angels in the lead-up to the Great Rift. These books are well worth checking out, as they provide a detailed look at this period. However, their placement in the chronology is a bit tricky. If you want to be strictly chronological, it's best to read "Dante" before some background books. "The Devastation of Baal", specifically, covers the tyranid invasion of Baal and its aftermath. But due to time dilation caused by the Warp, its placement in the timeline is a bit more complicated than other events. Read my thoughts on both "Dante" and "The Devastation of Baal". Another Terra-focused book is "Watchers of the Throne: The Emperor's Legion", also by Chris Wraight. This one offers a different perspective on the same time period, following the Imperial Chancellor, a Sister of Silence, and an Adeptus Custodes member as they navigate this complex world. It features a large battle that takes place around the same time as "Rise of the Primarch". Read my review or listen to my interview with Chris. Finally, there's "Vaults of Terra: The Dark City", which promises to conclude the story started in "The Hollow Mountain" and left off where the previous book ended. and Spinoza delves deeper into the ongoing enigma. Although I haven’t perused it yet, I’m receiving overwhelmingly positive sentiments, and from what I understand, it concludes shortly after the events depicted at the conclusion of Watchers of the Throne: The Emperor’s Legion. As Guilliman embarks on his departure from Terra to liberate besieged Imperial worlds, the Indomitus Crusade inaugurates the ‘Era Indomitus’. For the purposes of this article, I’m employing this term as a catch-all for all books situated on or adjacent to Terra, entwined with elements of the Indomitus Crusade, or having a notable impact on the broader 40k narrative. Until recently, the crusade itself was only addressed in the Dark Imperium books, which occur towards the conclusion of the crusade. However, we’re progressively uncovering more information regarding this period (with additional content forthcoming). Avenging Son by Guy HaleyThe inaugural installment in the newly minted Dawn of Fire series, this effectively commences as the Indomitus Crusade begins. If you haven’t already perused Dark Imperium, this is undoubtedly an ideal starting point for the Era Indomitus narrative. There's a plethora of information regarding Guilliman and copious amounts of novel lore, but also diverse story arcs centered on the Imperial Navy, the Inquisition, and the Administratum. Peruse my review of Avenging Son or engage in my Rapid Fire interview with Guy. The Gate of Bones by Andy Clark Book 2 in the Dawn of Fire series, this depicts the subsequent stages of the early Indomitus Crusade. It occurs en route to Gathalamor as a combined force of Imperial soldiery – spearheaded by Shield-Captain Achallor of the Custodes – strives to safeguard the vital shrine world from Abaddon’s grasp. This installment is somewhat more action-oriented than Avenging Son, yet it remains an enjoyable read and expands the scope of the series even if it doesn’t serve as a direct sequel to the first book. The Wolftime by Gav Thorpe I haven’t perused this instalment, the third book in the Dawn of Fire series, thus I can offer limited insight into its nature. From what I gather, however, it shifts the focus of the series away from Imperial forces battling Chaos and onto the Space Wolves confronting the greenskin menace led by the legendary ork warlord Ghazgkhull Thraka. Throne of Light by Guy HaleyAnother instalment I haven’t yet reviewed, but this is Dawn of Fire book 4. The synopsis suggests it deals with Kor Phaeron’s Word Bearers targeting Black Ships, and Inquisitor Rostov searching for the Hand of Abaddon. Knights of Macragge by Nick KymeOne of the most intriguing Space Marine character arcs in post-Great Rift 40k is that of Cato Sicarius, and this book explores what transpired to the heroic captain of the Ultramarines’ 2nd Company following his disappearance in the Warp after being dispatched by Guilliman to ensure the safety of Ultramar. It's challenging to discern the precise temporal context, but somewhere around here feels like an opportune location for it to occur. Ideally, peruse Assault on Black Reach, Fall of Damnos and Veil of Darkness first. Read my review of Knights of Macragge or engage in my Rapid Fire interview with Nick. Watchers of the Throne: The Regent’s Shadow by Chris This series of novels continues the story of the Imperium, with some books taking place during the Indomitus Crusade and others focusing on key characters. The Regent's Shadow features Guilliman, while Indomitus details a conflict between Ultramarines and Necrons. Ephrael Stern: The Heretic Saint by David Annandale ties into the Psychic Awakening arc, though it's not essential reading. Graham McNeill's The Swords of Calth brings Uriel Ventris' story up to date with the 40k timeline. Guy Haley's novels, Dark Imperium, Plague War, and Godblight, are set in the current 40k era, focusing on Guilliman's battles against Mortarion and providing information about the state of the Imperium. Belisarius Cawl: The Great Work by Guy Haley combines story threads from his previous books to delve deeper into Cawl's character. Horus Heresy Audio Dramas and Character-Focused Stories The Horus Heresy audio dramas and character-focused stories offer a continuation of the story beyond the two Dark Imperium books. These tales delve into individual character arcs, providing insight into the aftermath of the Great Rift. The Scythes of the Emperor series is an essential read for fans of the Horus Heresy. The Cadian Honour and Traitor Rock novels explore the characters Minka Lesk and General Bendikt as they cope with the loss of their world and the impact of Cadia's fall on their identity. The Eye of Night and Hand of Darkness audio dramas feature key characters from the Gathering Storm stories, including Inquisitor Greyfax and Yvraine. Our Martyred Lady is a four-part audio drama that follows Inquisitor Greyfax's story after Eye of Night, with excellent performances from Katherine Tate and Emma Gregory. Mephiston: Revenant Crusade and City of Light are set post-Great Rift, providing insight into the Blood Angels' story. Darkness in the Blood explores the events following The Devastation of Baal, while Spear of the Emperor delves into life in Imperium Nihilus. This fantastic book showcases the consequences of overextending a Space Marine Chapter on the brink of collapse. It offers thought-provoking ideas alongside its gripping storyline. For an in-depth review and further insights, check out Spear of the Emperor or the Rapid Fire interview with Aaron. Exploring different viewpoints The majority of the discussed events are from an Imperial perspective. However, some books offer alternative perspectives on the 40k universe. These stories take place after the Great Rift occurred. Shroud of Night by Andy Clark One of the first novels to delve into post-Great Rift events, this Alpha Legion story features a mix of big-name characters and small-scale special forces operations. It's an entertaining read that explores the Alpha Legion's reaction to Primaris Marines and the state of the galaxy. For more information, see my review of Shroud of Night. The Lords of Silence by Chris Wraight In this narrative, the Death Guard take center stage as the protagonists, offering a unique perspective on Chaos Space Marines in the aftermath of the Great Rift. It's a relatively small-scale story that provides valuable insights into life from the 'bad guys' viewpoint. Check out my review of The Lords of Silence or the Rapid Fire interview with Chris for more details. Ghost Warrior and Wild Rider by Gav Thorpe Gav Thorpe's Rise of the Ynnari series currently consists of these two novels and a few accompanying short stories, focusing on the Ynnari, the newest Aeldari sub-faction. The key character Yvraine features heavily in this narrative. For more information, see my review of Ghost Warrior or the Rapid Fire interviews with Gav about Ghost Warrior and Wild Rider. Other Black Library stories There are numerous other post-Great Rift Black Library stories worth exploring, including the other Space Marine Conquests novels, John French's The Horusian Wars series, and standalone novels like Robbie MacNiven's Blood of Iax and The Last Hunt, featuring Ultramarines and White Scars respectively. Rachel Harrison's Mark of Faith offers a gripping Sisters of Battle story, while Rites of Passage by Mike Brooks delves into the Navigator Houses for the first time. Celestine: The Living Saint provides a companion piece to Our Martyred Lady. If you're looking for even more content, you can always revisit earlier events in the Shield of Baal and War Zone: Fenris background books or explore Aaron Dembski-Bowden's Black Legion series for in-depth context on Abaddon's character (set before the 'present' 40k timeline). While some details are a bit unclear regarding their placement within the current 40k timeline, reading these resources will provide a more comprehensive understanding. Hopefully, this article will serve as a helpful guide to pinpointing specific areas of interest. I'll strive to keep this updated with new book releases. Feel free to share your thoughts or questions in the comments below or on Twitter. If you appreciated this article and wish to support Track of Words' content creation efforts, consider leaving a tip on my Ko-Fi page.

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