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The Darkside War (The Icarus Corps Book 1) (English Edition)



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Par Zachary Brown : The Darkside War (The Icarus Corps Book 1) (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Darkside War (The Icarus Corps Book 1) (English Edition):

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur Aliens have conquered Earth, but they havent conquered humanityyet. A young army conscript battles for survival in this action-packed futuristic thriller that will appeal to fans of Halo and Inglorious Bastards. People used to wonder if we were alone in the universe. Well, were not. Not by a long shot. Aliens come in all shapes and sizes, and even the good guys are likely to haunt your nightmares. And oh, youll have nightmares, even after you leave the service. If you leave the service. Devin is a reluctant conscript to an alien-run army: when the Accordance conquered Earth, they said it was to prepare against the incoming alien Conglomeration forces. But as Devin travels to the dark side of the moon for boot camp and

better acquaints himself with his so-called allies, his loyalties are increasingly tested. Because the enemy of the enemy is not always a friend. Sometimes they're a far, far worse threat. Extrait Darkside War 1 I stood at attention. My boots dug into the sad, scraggly patch of open field that was all that remained of what had once been called Central Park, and I remembered standing in the middle of a baseball field here, once. A long time ago. Shit, I had to have been, what, three years old? Our ragged lines formed up between the organic mangrove-like legs of alien spires. The matte-black, treelike structures dwarfed the human-built New York City skyscrapers: our glassy, blocky, primitive efforts to reach toward the sky. A human sergeant in Colonial Protection Forces gray, a single red shoulder stripe marking his rank in the Accordance, walked up to face the lines of human recruits. Listen up, you useless maggots, he shouted, his voice amplified so much it hurt my chest and left my ears ringing. There are many aliens out there. They come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. You will probably fight beside creatures that will haunt your nightmares long after you leave the service, and they're the good guys. He paused a moment to let that sink in. Some of those good guys watched us from balconies that jutted out like dark thorns from the slender legs of their buildings, but from down on the ground they were just a collection of distantly tiny, odd shapes to our eyes. However, if you want to survive your first encounter with the enemy, there are five aliens that you need to learn to spot on sight. Pay attention now, you might live to see your mama again someday. The human sergeant held up a black-gloved fist. He raised an index finger. Drivers: They're cat-sized and scaly. Those pronged rear feet will sink into the flesh of your back and hook on. That pink ratlike tail? Once it plunges into your spinal cord, you're a brain-dead meat puppet at its total and utter disposal. Ever see a whole squad turned into zombies for the enemy? You will. Two fingers up. I shifted and wiped the sweat from my forehead. Something like cinnamon wafted through the cool air from one of the nearby portals leading inside. Trolls: Yes, they look like rhinoceros that stand on two feet. Either of which could stamp you into a puddle of human goo. That armor? Nothing short of depleted uranium gets through it. I've seen one of these flip a tank. Ever come face-to-face with one, you call in an air strike and run like hell. Three fingers. Raptors: Our enemies decided that a velociraptor with a brain, thumbs, and the running speed of a cheetah wasn't good enough, so they made cyborgs out of them. They also carry rifles. But they smell like chicken if you hit them with a laser. He smiled when he said that, and held up a fourth finger. Crickets: These insectile robots are the first wave. The winged variants provide air support as well. Shoot them to bits. But watch out, those twitching leftovers reassemble as needed. So make sure the bits are really, really tiny, and then shoot them some more. He uncurled his thumb. His voice changed. More serious. Lowered. I leaned in slightly. And lastly: Ghosts. They seem to be in charge, the masters of it all. We think they're covered in advanced adaptive camouflage. They stay out of the fight, and any nearby enemy forces will sacrifice themselves in a suicidal frenzy to protect a ghost. So if you see one, kill it. If you can. No one has ever survived a face-to-face with one; we just get the suit recordings afterward. A gaggle of civil servants in dark-blue uniforms spilled out of a portal and milled around in clumps, watching us. Three orb-shaped cameras flew overhead, hanging in the air as if gravity were just a minor annoyance as they recorded us. This was a show, and I knew it: Watch the recruits line up and get processed. I would be on any number of news streams and live shows. These are the enemies of the Accordance, the sergeant shouted. These are our enemies. They are the Conglomeration, and they seek to destroy us. So we must destroy them first. We will teach you how. Do you have any questions? Yeah, I thought. How long will any of us survive against that? The sound of chants and protest floated between the buildings: fifty or so licensed protestors in a permit-cleared free-speech zone on the edge of the Accordance Administrative Complex. Last week, there had been tens of thousands of them. ++++ The protest against alien occupation grew around the edges of the gnarled forest of alien structures. Summer heat beat down, refracting off the windows and buildings, and the determined, angry crowd smelled of sweat, body odor, and street food. Tents lined the sidewalk and spilled onto the street, creating a haphazard fabric city. Barrel fires filled the air with a sharp-tasting haze. Some thousand people had elbowed me in the ribs or stepped on my feet before I stopped, suddenly transfixed by a pretzel cart along the Harlem side of 110th. Four men in suits on the other side of the Harlem antiterrorist gates eyed me warily as I sidled up to the cart and breathed in the smell of fresh pretzels. Devlin? The voice came from behind a pair of protestors in gray hoodies holding up two halves of a broken globe and waving them in the air. Devlin Hart! I frowned. I knew the voice. I knew that the callers name started with a T. But I'd been in four different schools just in the last year and a half. My parents kept moving from safe house to safe house. Tristan, right? I asked. Yeah! Tristan ducked under the fractured globe easily and sidestepped people to get closer to me. We'd played soccer. He was a striker, I remembered. Up at the front, compact and fast. He

moved through the crowd like he slipped between players on the field: quickly and efficiently. He held a quadcopter drone in one hand. What are you doing here? Tristan asked. And then he laughed as we grabbed hands, half shook. Right, I didnt mean here, at the protest. I meant here in this part of the street. Figured youd be near your family. I soaked up the moment of familiarity. Id liked the three weeks Id gotten to play on a team. Make some friends. Before my family had been forced to move and hide again. Were on a food strike. That sucks. Yeah. No one asked me if I wanted to join. I was just, it seemed, the son of Thomas Hart. He was the Great Planner. The leader of the closest thing humanity had anymore to a resistance. What was a little hunger compared to the Fight? The Fight to get humanity back out from under the thumb of the overlords that had descended from the skies before I was born. That from orbit had destroyed the cities of the world that rose up against them. Youre protesting? I asked. Recording. Tristan grinned. He held up the quadcopter. Watch. He threw it into the air. The four propellers buzzed and it hovered in place above us, waiting for instructions. Tristan circled it around overhead a few times using his phone to pilot it. A few friends of mine rented a room nearby; weve been flying these things and streaming the video all over. Drop a few ads in, weve been making some spare cash. Everyones curious to see who blinks first: protestors or Accordance enforcers. He nodded toward the nearby gate leading into Harlem, where the businessmen still stood and stared at the crowds. The gates slid down into the ground and under the sidewalk. Two struthiforms in lightweight armor walked out in front of the businessmen. Fast and dangerous, they looked like stoic ostriches dressed in ancient Roman armor. But the heavy Accordance-made energy rifles held across their feathered chests in scaly arms were nothing but serious. Jesus, I said. Usually the enforcers carried stun guns and prods for protests. These looked ready for war. The sound of the crowd changed around us. The chants and hive-like buzz of protest shifted, like a changing wind, and built into a low growl as people noticed the escorts. Go home, shouted a woman in baggy jeans as she shoved an Earth First poster with a hand-painted version of a simplified, almost cartoonish green globe at the two aliens. The suits behind the guards grimaced and stepped back slightly. The struthiforms moved their feathered hands into the oversize trigger guards of their rifles and stepped forward. The vendor slammed the windows shut over his hot plates, balled up his apron, and slid into the cab of the rolling cart. My stomach grumbled. The cart rolled away with a whine as the vendor piloted it gently through the crowd and down the crowded street. The woman with Earth First poster stepped right in front of the struthiforms, her placard high in the air as she blocked their way onto the street. Step aside, the struthiform on the left said, voice strong and authoritative via a translation collar on its spindly neck. I could just barely hear the hisses and clicks of its natural language underneath the human voice the collar projected. You have no right to order me to do anything. The standoff created an island of tense silence as people watched the birdlike alien confront the human protestor. The struthiform on the right hit her in the stomach with its rifle butt, forcing her to double over. Leaning back on one massive leg, the alien pinned her roughly to the ground with the other. The flattened talons grasped her waist as she struggled to get free. The struthiform aimed the rifle at her head. You will cease your obstruction, or face a penalty, the struthiform said. Members of the crowd shouted back, anger bursting into the air. More faces turned toward us. Quick, I hissed at Tristan. Buzz them. What? Buzz the drumsticks, before the crowd turns on them. Remind the enforcers theyre being watched. Live. Or theyll kill someone. They might come after us. Then give me your phone. No. No, Ill do it. Tristan swooped the drone down low, skimming above the crowd and stopping it just above the aliens. The fans blew air downward, ruffling the struthiforms feathers. They glanced up and the one on the left raised its rifle. A snap of light, pure energy leaping outward from the rifles barrel, melted the drone right out of the air. Tristan swore and looked around, ready to run. But the distraction broke the tension. The struthiform on the right let go of the woman. She wriggled away, leaving her poster on the ground and keeping her hands in the air, her defiance blunted by the show of force. The struthiforms took the moment to continue through the street, escorting the suited humans toward the midnight-black forest of alien buildings on the other side. Off to do whatever it was civil servants did for Accordance bureaucracy in there. Im sorry about the drone, I said, taking a deep breath of hot air tinged with smoke. I held back a cough. Tristan shook his head as if it were no big deal. But his hands shook a little as he rubbed them together. Its okay. Theyre disposable. I have a couple more. I swallowed. I can pay you back. I actually couldnt. Tristan shook his head. Im going back to get another one, but I dont think Im coming back out into the crowd. Its changing, isnt it? I want to catch it, live. But I should leave. Okay. The San Francisco riots had been put down bloodily, so I understood his reluctance to get caught in the middle of something going bad. The New York chapters had practiced discipline. Id helped train some of the cells. You had to convince people to not raise a finger in the face of violence, to take the

beating that would come when enforcers came out with stun guns. You had to drill them hard to stand in place, militarily, and not flinch. And despite the instincts deep inside you, you could not fight back. Because when you did, like they did in San Francisco, the Accordance had the excuse they needed to use more than nonlethal force. That discipline didn't come easily to human beings. We could get pissed and riot. We could murder each other. Blow things up and run away. Rage was easy. But calm defiance: tough. Tristan hesitated. Hey, if you want, I have some food back in our room. Not a good view of the protest, but we can launch drones. Want to come meet everyone? My stomach clenched and gurgled. The press of humanity around us had slipped from celebratory to hostile. Even just pushing through it to get back to the organization tents I was supposed to be hiding in seemed a little dangerous. If it turns negative, my mother had whispered to me after San Francisco, don't worry about me and your father. You get out before the enforcers start creating a line. Something neither of us had told my father she'd said. Our little secret. I was already on the fringe, why not get a little more distance just to be safe? And get something to eat. I'd never promised to be part of their hunger strike. And I half-suspected the hunger strike was bullshit. For a month we'd been huddled in a Yonkers slum, living in a tent not much fancier than the ones pitched on the street here. Since San Francisco, donations to the cause had dried up. We could barely afford food right now. Ill come, I said. We snaked out along 110th, ducked up one of the few un gated North Harlem streets, and got away from the dull roar and heat of bodies. The number of humans faded as we moved farther into Accordance space. A few more struthiforms in armor moved along the streets. Heavy Accordance security. Human cops in duckling-yellow uniforms followed the struthiforms like little hatchlings, as ordered. We steered clear. I followed Tristan up the stairs of an old brownstone converted into a hotel advertising housing for All Species. Two floors up, and then into a corridor where the doors seemed to lean slightly and the fluorescent lights flickered shadows onto the wall. He knocked three times on the door to room 305. The moment the door cracked open, Tristan bolted inside. What are you I ate the following words. Two struthiforms in full midnight-black armor stood in the empty room. They looked at me, dinner-plate-sized eyes not blinking behind their armored visors. I'm so sorry, Tristan said from behind them. You asshole! I shouted as he disappeared out the window and down the fire escape. I spun around to run and came face-to-face with the compound eyes of a carapoid. The horse-sized beetle of an alien didn't have any armor. It didn't need it. Its bony wings snapped out, filling up the corridor and knocking plaster from the walls. Surrender peacefully, it warbled. I scabbled backward. Another carapoid grabbed me. Its sticklike arms wrapped around my chest and protuberances dug hard against my ribs as it lifted me off my feet into the air. Cease struggling, a struthiform standing behind me shouted. The carapoid twisted and slammed me against the wall to make the point. Breath knocked out of me, my head swimming, I nodded and wiped blood from my nose. I'm done. The carapoid dropped me to the ground, and a struthiform put scaly claws to the back of my neck. Devlin Hart, you are to be detained under the Human Antiterror Act 1451-B. Resistance will be met with mortal force. The other struthiform roughly zip-tied my hands behind my back. Revue de presse "Good old-fashioned military science fiction, this first book in the Icarus Corps trilogy follows a young army conscript from a brutal boot camp, where they're taught that the Accordance aliens who have conquered Earth are better than the Conglomeration aliens with whom the Accordance is at war. So it's off to war and new realizations, with plenty of action." (Russell Letson Locus) "The Darkside War is a lean, calculated, knife-thrust of a book that provides a stellar entry-point to military science fiction." (SF Signal)