

The Third Internecion: Tale of Infidels, Book 3

Erik A. Otto

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The Third Internecion concludes an epic fantasy trilogy with ruminations on the human condition.

In Erik A. Otto's trilogy-concluding, introspective fantasy *The Third Internecion*, a land divided comes together to stop the end of the world.

After one hundred days, the Third Internecion has finally arrived in Matteo's lands. The world has already shifted upside down and back again, but a more immediate threat arises from an unexpected quarter. The Cenaran army marches, replete with enormous beasts of war. Previously their country was thought to be populated by savages, but it was a ruse that paid off. No one suspected the threat wouldn't come from the heavens or even a military country but instead from the backwater Cenara, seeking to cleanse the world of its enemies.

This final book of the trilogy focuses on three new characters: the General, the Commander, and the Purveyor. Six characters from previous books also play pivotal roles: the Imbecile, The Traitor, the Truthseeker, The Good Son, The Naustic, and the Jailor. All nine have grown and changed over the last hundred-plus days, with some experiencing surprising developments. The buildup and payoff for all nine characters is earned; the three new characters offer an interesting payoff.

Jumping right into the action, the book answers simmering questions in between two major battles. The truth behind strange mounds of flesh and bone that jut up from the ground, massive gargoyles contained in abandoned ruins, and infrequent corrective precipitation is revealed, leaving a thread for a future book or series to expound upon while offering a satisfying wrap-up to the previous book.

The three new anchor characters help to keep the narrative for the final arc focused. Connections are established between them and behind-the-scenes mysteries. The Jailor, Zahir, who is known for his ruthless command of his prisoners, shifts from a reviled captor to a dedicated caretaker, helping to layer in intrigue regarding the world at large, particularly in regards to its political strife.

Characters' voices and tones vary. Educated characters speak in a fluid way; rough-and-tumble ones adopt more colloquial and informal tones. Conversations stay relevant to the situations at hand. One character, Darian, has a tic, emulating and repeating other characters with perfect replication. When his mental state is off-balance, this tic is exacerbated, and the resultant snippets of overheard conversations function as if in a language in their own right.

The book resolves most of its narrative threads. The two prophecies have come and gone, the mysteries are resolved, and the political landscape has shifted. A revelation in the conclusion feels even more shocking because of the intense world building that led up to it, but it rewards attention to detail.

The Third Internecion concludes an epic fantasy trilogy with ruminations on the human condition while leaving the door open for more adventures.

JOHN M. MURRAY (August 27, 2019)

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