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Halo: First Strike



*Par Eric Nylund
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Par Eric Nylund : Halo: First Strike before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Halo: First Strike:

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Description : Description du produitThe Human-Covenant war rages on as the alien juggernaut sweeps inexorably toward its final goal: destruction of all human life!Halo has been destroyed, and the threat it posed to sentient life, neutralized. But victory has come at a terrible cost for the UNSC. Thousands of valiant soldiers fell in the battle to prevent the alien construct from falling into the enemys clutches. Now, everything depends on the Spartan known as the Master Chief. Yet even with the aid of the artificial intelligence Cortana, the Master Chief will be hard-pressed to rescue survivors and evade the Covenant ships patrolling the remains of Halo in debris-strewn space. Ahead lies a dangerous voyage home, through a gauntlet of Covenant forces. For the sake of all, the Master Chief and his war-torn squad must not only survive, but take the fight to the enemy with a decisive first strike.This novel is based on a Mature-rated video game.Bungie, Halo, Xbox, the Microsoft Game Studios logo and the Xbox Logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. Used under

Prsentation de l'diteur Reach fell, and when hope seemed lost, humanity stood face-to-face with the possible extinction of all life in the galaxy and lived to tell the tale. But that was just one epic battle, and the war rages on . . . The Covenant shows no mercy as they continue to assault every human world they can find, but in their way lies humanity's great champion, Spartan-117, the Master Chief. Together with his AI companion Cortana and the last remaining Spartans, the fight continues on two fronts. One takes a crew of Spartans to the charred surface of Reach, the only planet they've ever known as home. But beneath the surface, Dr. Halsey has discovered an ancient secretone that could alter the course of the war. Meanwhile, Master Chief and Cortana head towards a gathering of Covenant warships because the UNSC's worst nightmare has come true: the Covenant has discovered the location of Earth and is forming a massive fleet to destroy it and all who oppose the will of the Prophets. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

Extrait CHAPTER ONE 0622 hours, August 30, 2552 (Military Calendar) UNSC Vessel Pillar of Autumn, Epsilon Eridani system near Reach Station Gamma. SPARTAN-104, Frederic, twirled a combat knife, his fingers nimble despite the bulky MJOLNIR combat armor that encased his body. The blade traced a complicated series of graceful arcs in the air. The few remaining Naval personnel on the deck turned pale and averted their eyes a Spartan wielding a knife was generally accompanied by the presence of several dead bodies. He was nervous, and this was more than the normal pre-mission jitters. The team's original objective the capture of a Covenant ship had been scrubbed in the face of a new enemy offensive. The Covenant were en route to Reach, the last of the United Nations Space Commands major military strongholds. Fred couldn't help but wonder what use ground troops would be in a ship-to-ship engagement. The knife spun. Around him, his squadmates loaded weapons, stacked gear, and prepped for combat, their efforts redoubled since the ship's Captain had personally come down to the mustering area to brief the team leader, SPARTAN-117 but Fred was already squared away. Only Kelly had finished stowing gear before him. He balanced the point of the knife on his armored finger. It hung there for several seconds, perfectly still. A subtle shift in the Pillar of Autumn's gravity caused the knife to tip. Fred plucked it from the air and sheathed it in a single deft move. A cold feeling filled his stomach as he realized what the gravity fluctuation meant: The ship had just changed course another complication. Master Chief SPARTAN-117 John marched to the nearest COM panel as Captain Keyes's face filled the screen. Fred sensed a slight movement to his right a subtle hand signal from Kelly. He opened a private COM freq to his teammate. Looks like we're in for more surprises, she said. Roger that, he replied, though I think I've had enough surprises for one op. Kelly chuckled. Fred focused his attention on John's exchange with Keyes. Each Spartan selected from an early age and trained to the pinnacle of military science had undergone multiple augmentation procedures: biochemical, genetic, and cybernetic. As a result, a Spartan could hear a pin drop in a sandstorm, and every Spartan in the room was interested in what the Captain had to say. If you're going to drop into hell, CPO Mendez, the Spartans' first teacher, had once said, you may as well drop with good intel. Captain Keyes frowned on the ship's viewscreen, a nonregulation pipe in his hand. Though his voice was calm, the Captain's grip on the pipe was white-knuckle tight as he outlined the situation. A single space vessel docked in Reach's orbital facilities had failed to delete its navigational database. If the NAV data fell into Covenant hands, the enemy would have a map to Earth. Master Chief, the Captain said, I believe the Covenant will use a pinpoint Slipspace jump to a position just off the space dock. They may try to get their troops on the station before the Super MAC guns can take out their ships. This will be a difficult mission, Chief. I'm . . . open to suggestions. We can take care of it, the Master Chief replied. Captain Keyes's eyes widened and he leaned forward in his command chair. How exactly, Master Chief? With all due respect, sir, Spartans are trained to handle difficult missions. I'll split my squad. Three will board the space dock and make sure that NAV data does not fall into the Covenant's hands. The remainder of the Spartans will go groundside and repel the invasion forces. Fred gritted his teeth. Given his choice, he'd rather fight the Covenant on the ground. Like his fellow Spartans, he loathed off-planet duty. The op to board the space dock would be fraught with danger at every turn unknown enemy deployment, no gravity, useless intel, no dirt beneath his feet. There was no question, though: The space op was the toughest duty, so Fred intended to volunteer for it. Captain Keyes considered John's suggestion. No, Master Chief. It's too risky we've got to make sure the Covenant don't get that NAV data. We'll use a nuclear mine, set it close to the docking ring, and detonate it. Sir, the EMP will burn out the superconductive coils of the orbital guns. And if you use the Pillar of Autumn's conventional weapons, the NAV database may still survive. If the Covenant search the

wreckage they may obtain the data. True, Keyes said and tapped his pipe thoughtfully to his chin. Very well, Master Chief. We'll go with your suggestion. I'll plot a course over the docking station. Ready your Spartans and prep two dropships. We'll launch you. He consulted with Cortana. In five minutes. Aye, Captain. We'll be ready. Good luck, Captain. Keyes said, and the viewscreen went black. Fred snapped to attention as the Master Chief turned to face the Spartans. Fred began to step forward but Kelly beat him to it. Master Chief, she said, permission to lead the space op. She had always been faster, damn her. Denied, the Master Chief said. I'll be leading that one. Linda and James, he continued. You're with me. Fred, you're Red Team leader. You'll have tactical command of the ground operation. Sir! Fred shouted and started to voice a protest then squelched it. Now wasn't the time to question orders . . . as much as he wanted to. Yes, sir! Now make ready, the Master Chief said. We don't have much time left. The Spartans stood a moment. Kelly called out, Attention! The soldiers snapped to and gave the Master Chief a crisp salute, which was promptly returned. Fred switched to Red Team's all-hands freq and barked, Let's move, Spartans! I want gear stowed in ninety seconds, and final prep in five minutes. Joshua: Liaise with Cortana and get me current intel on the drop area. I don't care if it's just weather satellite imagery, but I want pictures, and I want them ninety seconds ago. Red Team jumped into action. The pre-mission jitters were gone, replaced with a cold calm. There was a job to do, and Fred was eager to get to work. Flight Officer Mitchell flinched as a stray energy burst streaked into the landing bay and vaporized a meter-wide section of bulkhead. Red-hot, molten metal splattered the Pelican dropship's viewport. Screw this, he thought, and hit the Pelican's thrusters. The gunmetal-green transport balanced for a moment on a column of blue-white fire, then hurtled out of the Pillar of Autumn's launch bay and into space. Five seconds later all hell broke loose. Incoming energy bursts from the lead Covenant vessels cut across their vector and slammed into a COMSat. The communications satellite broke apart, disintegrating into glittering shards. Better hang on, Mitchell announced to his passengers in the dropship's troop bay. Company's coming. A swarm of Seraph—the Covenant's scarab-like attack fighters—fell into tight formation and arced through space on an intercept course for the dropship. The Pelican's engines flared and the bulky ship plummeted toward the surface of Reach. The alien fighters accelerated and plasma bursts flickered from their gunports. An energy bolt slashed past on the port side, narrowly missing the Pelican's cockpit. Mitchell's voice crackled across the COM system: Bravo-One to Knife Two-Six: I could use a little help here. He rolled the Pelican to port to avoid a massive, twisted hunk of wreckage from a patrol cutter that had strayed too close to the oncoming assault wave. Beneath the blackened plasma scorching, he could just make out the UNSC insignia. Mitchell scowled. This was getting worse by the second. Bravo-One to Knife Two-Six, where the hell are you? he yelled. A quartet of wedge-shaped, angular fighters slotted into covering position on Mitchell's scopes. Longswords, heavy fighters. Knife Two-Six to Bravo-One, a terse, female voice crackled across the COM channel. Keep your pants on. Business is good today. Too good. No sooner had the fighters taken escort position over his dropship than the approaching Covenant fighters opened up with a barrage of plasma fire. Three of the Pelican's four Longsword escorts peeled off and powered toward the Covenant ships. Against the black of space, cannons flashed and missiles etched ghostly trails; Covenant energy weapons cut through the night and explosions dotted the sky. The Pelican and its sole escort, however, accelerated straight toward the planet. It shot past whirling wreckage; it rolled and maneuvered as missiles and plasma bolts crisscrossed their path. Mitchell flinched as Reach's orbital defense guns fired in a hot, actinic flash. A white ball of molten metal screamed directly over the Pelican and its escort as they rocketed beneath the defense platforms' ring-shaped superstructure. Mitchell sent the Pelican into the planet's atmosphere. Vaporous flames flickered across the ship's stunted nose, and the Pelican jounced from side to side. Bravo-One, adjust attack angle. . . . Presentation de l'diteur. Reach fell, and when hope seemed lost, humanity stood face-to-face with the possible extinction of all life in the galaxy and lived to tell the tale. But that was just one epic battle, and the war rages on . . . The Covenant shows no mercy as they continue to assault every human world they can find, but in their way lies humanity's great champion, Spartan-117, the Master Chief. Together with his AI companion Cortana and the last remaining Spartans, the fight continues on two fronts. One takes a crew of Spartans to the charred surface of Reach, the only planet they've ever known as home. But beneath the surface, Dr. Halsey has discovered an ancient secretone that could alter the course of the war. Meanwhile, Master Chief and Cortana head towards a gathering of Covenant warships because the UNSC's worst nightmare has come true: the Covenant has discovered the location of Earth and is forming a massive fleet to destroy it and all who oppose the will of the Prophets. At the Publisher's request, this title is

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