

## **The Story so Far**

### **Halo**

It is the year 2552. Humanity has long been at war with the terrifying alien civilization that collectively calls itself The Covenant. This monstrous conglomerate of warlike species sees Humanity as a form of heresy against their religion – a religion based in the single-minded belief that a Great Journey awaits its faithful and that this Journey can be embarked upon by activating an array of vast, ring-like artifacts scattered throughout the Galaxy.

These vast, terraformed rings are called *Halos* and have been long-abandoned by their mysterious and long-vanished creators, *The Forerunners*.

The war with the Covenant has reduced humanity to ragged tatters. A once-sprawling network of planets is now almost entirely destroyed. Human populations have been decimated and world after world reduced to lifeless rock.

This conflict, terrible and destructive though it is, has been complicated and compounded by a series of cascading events. One of these artificial worlds, these Halos, was discovered and subsequently destroyed by human forces, led by Spartan 117 – the Master Chief – the last fighting member of the legendary Spartan II military program and humanity's last, best hope.

A conflict at a second Halo installation became a galaxy-spanning conflagration, as civil war erupted *within* the Covenant, driven by revelations that the Covenant leadership, The Prophets, had been deliberately deceiving its populace for millennia.

In truth, these Halos would not take the Covenant on a Great Journey, but rather eradicate all sentient life in the Galaxy – created by the Forerunners as weapons of last resort against the most terrifying menace the Galaxy has ever known – and a menace the deluded Covenant has reawakened for the second time in a hundred thousand years. That creeping horror will engulf the Galaxy unless some way can be found to stop it once and for all.

That horror is the Flood – a sentient, all-consuming parasite that makes monstrous puppets of those it kills and will not stop until every last thinking creature is absorbed into its ferociously intelligent plan.

The second Halo has been activated, putting all of the remaining installations in a dangerous state of emergency standby – *they are primed to fire*. Worse still, the Covenant has discovered the long-hidden location of Earth and crushed almost all human resistance, as it seeks vital clues to the nature of the Halo array – some of which may have been hidden under our very feet for untold millennia.

Even with our newfound allies, the Elites, and the leadership of their valiant and honorable leader, The Arbiter, we are still hopelessly outnumbered, as the Prophets

set their wills against us - and forces *greater* than the Covenant, wheel malevolently into place.

As the Master Chief hurtles Earthward in a Forerunner spacecraft, he may be our last chance to stop the Covenant, the Flood and the ticking time bomb that is the Halo network, before every last soul in the Galaxy is destroyed. The stakes have never been higher. It's time to finish the fight.

## **Character Bios**

### **Spartan 117 - Master Chief**

A tenacious, driven soldier, known primarily by his rank, the Master Chief is the last of the Spartan II soldiers. An elite group of genetically superior, highly trained super-soldiers, Spartans stand nearly seven feet tall, and in Mark VI Mjolnir powered assault armor, weigh almost 1000 pounds. Spartan 117 is expert in all weapon and combat systems, can run faster, jump higher and hit harder than any normal human. He is the perfect weapon, honed by years of battlefield experience and has an unparalleled natural talent for war. He is our last and best hope.

### **The Arbiter**

The disgraced Commander of the Covenant *Fleet of Particular Justice* was stripped of his rank and privilege and forced to don the ancient Armor of The *Arbiter* - a traditional Elite custom, where a warrior is sent on a final suicide mission to reclaim lost honor in death. In the pursuit of this mission, the Arbiter discovered that the Covenant's Great Journey was a lie, and he subsequently led a rebellion - a civil war that has shaken the foundations of the Covenant. The Arbiter's people, the Elites, have joined humanity's struggle against the rest of the Covenant. It is a strange and strained alliance.

### **Cortana**

The UNSC's most sophisticated AI, Cortana is the onetime shipboard intelligence of the Halcyon-class cruiser, The *Pillar of Autumn*. Cortana, like most UNSC artificial intelligences, represents herself in holographic form when communing with her human colleagues. After helping destroy the first Halo by downloading herself into the Master Chief's armor, she formed a closer bond with him - but was wrenched apart by events on the second Halo. Her last known location was aboard the Flood-infested Covenant capital ship, High Charity, in the thrall of the Flood hive intelligence - the Gravemind. But Cortana is the only link to the incredible secret of Halo - and if she cannot be saved, the Galaxy will fall with her.

## **The Prophet of Truth**

The deluded and possibly insane leader of the entire Covenant civilization, this demented pontiff is leading his civilization down a suicidal path. He intends to activate the Halo array at any and all costs, and is happy to sacrifice his culture to do so, secure in his knowledge that he and his immediate cronies will be safe. The Prophet believes that he can follow the Forerunners to their mysterious final destination, and there, share their ancient and unlimited power. He literally believes that activating the Halo array will secure a path to Godhood. And he knows that the secret to this power may lie in the ancient sands of Earth.

## **The Gravemind**

The virulent Flood organism spreads by murdering and absorbing sentient creatures. When it reaches a certain critical mass, it develops a centralized intelligence, which calls itself a *Gravemind*. This is the Flood personified, and it carries with it the genetic memory of millennia of slumber. The thing was stopped once before by the Forerunner activation of the Halo weapon, but it will not be stopped this time, by a weak alliance of ruined humanity, and the deluded obsessions of the Prophet of Truth. The Gravemind intends to achieve its ultimate purpose – to consume and absorb every thinking creature in the Galaxy. The Gravemind has escaped the shackles of its Halo prison, and now roams free in the Covenant city-ship, High Charity.

## **Sgt. Major Avery Johnson**

The battle-hardened Sergeant is the longtime cohort of the Master Chief. He's an excellent soldier and unmatched marksman who's seen more than his fair share of combat, and internal UNSC military intrigue. No other human knows the Master Chief as well as this capable and brilliant marine. Sgt. Johnson is that most singular of soldiers – a professional who's never more at home than in the thick of battle, and a loyal, fearless warrior who will do anything for his men, and his homeworld.

## **Commander Miranda Keyes**

The daughter of the late Captain Jacob Keyes, Miranda Keyes now finds herself the Commander of Earth's tattered, broken ground forces. The Commander proved her worth and her mettle by following, and then helping assassinate the Prophet of Regret at the second Halo. Now, effectively leading a guerilla army against the marauding Covenant occupation force, Miranda must pull together a fighting unit

with the weaponry, personnel and supplies that survived the devastation of the Covenant invasion.