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Into The Dark (Alexis Carew Book 1)



Synopsis

At fifteen, Alexis Carew has to face an age old problem - she's a girl, and only a boy can inherit the family's vast holdings. Her options are few. She must marry and watch a stranger run the lands, or become a penniless tenant and see the lands she so dearly loves sold off. Yet there may be another option, one that involves becoming a midshipman on a shorthanded Navy spaceship with no other women.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There are two things that other reviewers have mentioned that I want to touch on: 1. This story and series is "sailing ships" in space - and it's clear this author has a love of the age of sail novels such as the Hornblower saga or Master and Commander. I'd even go so far to think this author has some experience with actual sailing ships or sailboats. Some reviewers have found it hard to wrap their minds around the transition of sailing to space ships, yet this series is not horribly different than David Drake's RCN series featuring Daniel O'Leary. I've read that series and this book compares very favorably; in fact, I'd probably give the nod to this story being a more faithful adaption of life on a man of war of the age of sail taken into space. Whatever the case may be, the other thing this

author does well is that there is consistency in the science fiction universe, which is also one of the things that sinks a lot of authors. Casually disregarding the laws of physics or space travel as you posit them is a big no-non and that doesn't happen in this story. Maybe it's hard to conceptually visualize "sailing" in space, yet there is consistency and order in this universe.² The other thing other reviewers have commented on is the story telling - and it's superb and tight. The book starts fast, grabs you with a very compelling and likable character in hard circumstances and doesn't stop until the end. There's no unnecessary "fluff" that frequently bloats other stories by thousands of words and you really don't want to put this book down. Which in fact, I didn't. I started reading the story and finished it that night. I've already pre-ordered the second book in this series the next day and am really looking forward to publication next month.

This is one of these books which I really find difficult to rate. I found the book blurb interesting enough to have a go at it and the cover picture with sails in space enough of a put-off to wonder if I should really buy this book. I think that pretty much sums up my opinion of this book as well. Very split. The story is a good one and it is fairly well written and implemented. Unfortunately this is really science fiction without the science. Now I could live with that if it was not so that the concepts introduced are so ludicrous. Sails in space? Okay, sailing on the solar winds is still a half plausible idea but then the author goes to great lengths to make everything feel like some old sailing ship in space. They have people running up and down masts putting up and down sails because it saves weight compared to doing it with machinery. Seriously? I was not impressed by these parts of the story. It borders more towards fantasy than science. The core story is a good one though and one that I would probably have liked a lot more if the background setting would not have been so ludicrous. I really liked following Alexis Carew through her initiation into the Royal Navy and her adventures. I was afraid that there would be an enormous focus on the gender bit and it is of course quite present but in reasonable doses. Alexis earns the respect of her fellow crewmates rather quickly. On the whole a quite well done book which unfortunately loses a star due to the science part as far as I am concerned. I am still quite split whether or not I will pick up the next one. I could probably live with the absence of any form of reasonable science.

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