



The Oncoming Storm

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In the year 2420, war looms between the galaxy's two most powerful empires: the tyrannical Theocracy and the protectionist Commonwealth. Caught in the middle sits the occupied outpost system Cadiz, where young officer and aristocrat Katherine "Kat" Falcone finds herself prematurely promoted at the behest of her powerful father. Against her own wishes, Kat is sent to command the Commonwealth navy's newest warship, Lightning.

Determined to prove she has value beyond her family name, Kat struggles to earn her crew's respect and find her footing as the youngest captain in naval history. She soon discovers the situation on Cadiz is even worse than anyone in power anticipated. War isn't just a possibility—it is imminent. Yet the admiral in position to bolster defenses refuses to prepare for a fight. Can Kat find a way to investigate the enemy, alert the Commonwealth, and whip an entire fleet into fighting shape before the Theocracy's war machine destroys everything she holds dear?

The Oncoming Storm Details

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From Reader Review The Oncoming Storm for online ebook

C.T. Phipps says

THE ONCOMING STORM is the first book of the ANGEL IN THE WHIRLWIND series, which I admit seems to be a little wordy for a series title. Especially since there's nothing wrong with calling the series the KAT FALCONE series or even C.S.S. Lightning series. It's a space opera series with obvious roots in the HONOR HARRINGTON series by David Weber but I don't think that's a bad thing as I cut my teeth on those books. I've also felt that series has gotten away from its central concept of a kickass female naval commander IN SPACE.

The premise is Kat Falcone is the youngest daughter of an extraordinarily rich megacorporation dynasty who tried to get away from her family's patronage, only to be unwillingly promoted to Captain at 29 due to those very connections. Now doubly determined to prove her worth when everyone knows she's benefited from nepotism, she gets her chance with the assignment of her superdreadnought to the planet Cadiz. Cadiz is a conservative world which basically amounts to being Iraq in SPACE and it's being incompetently run by a decadent Admiral who wants to avoid war at all costs. War is going to happen no matter what, though, because of the sinister Theocracy.

I must admit the politics of this book left me a bit cold. As the left-leaning anarchist that I am, using the War on Terror as a basis for a conflict between Good and Evil is something I have more than a few issues with. The Theocracy is composed of a bunch of boo-hiss villains who are just this side of ISIS and the Commonwealth is a heroic band of do-gooders out to defend their way of life. It leaves a bit of a sour taste in my mouth as I've lost friends in the war and had others traumatized. Nevertheless, I'm not a person to get bogged down in the politics behind a work unless it's morally repugnant. Besides, given the premise of "Cadiz was a ***** from beginning to end", I can't really can't say I disagree with said message.

Kat Falcone is a tremendously fun protagonist and easily the kind I could see being played by someone like Emilia Clarke as an action movie. She's supremely dedicated to her job but not the point of seeming inhuman. Kat is also someone who occasionally makes mistakes, though she succeeds more often than not. Accusations of her being a Mary Sue would fail, too, as she has a limited area of expertise. When she gets caught in a ground-side terrorist attack, she's able to handle herself but not to the point of somehow becoming a Marine.

I also appreciate how the book handles class as Kat comes from an incredibly privileged position but that causes as many problems as it solves. Her commanding officer, William, was passed up for a command position because of Kat's father pulling strings and justifiably resents her for it. He's a character she manages to win over, eventually, but someone who remains nicely prickly as a result. I also liked his relationship with his smuggler brother, even though I tend to side with Scott more than I do William. His brother left his homeworld because the town gave his girlfriend up to slavers in exchange for safety. I'd want to burn down my hometown and everyone in it for that.

The Oncoming Storm is full of action, suspense, and even more than a little intrigue. It has a great protagonist and decent supporting cast too. Not all of it makes sense from a naval perspective like Kat's not-so-hidden relationship with her Marine captain but I'm willing to make some accommodations for acceptable breaks from reality. I just wish the Theocracy wasn't such a collection of cardboard cutout villains.

Clare O'Beara says

This is a lively space warfare tale, pitting the Commonwealth against the Theocracy and showing us many individuals including some who are not strictly on either side.

There are echoes of classics such as Star Trek The Next Generation in the ranks, ship setup and other features, but we meet a newly appointed female captain from a wealthy family who thinks this is a better option than being a socialite. She's still obliged to attend balls and be diplomatic, even as war looms. Refugees are fleeing the oncoming Theocracy which we are shown as aggressive and inflexible, but later we meet a smuggler who makes good money from supposedly prohibited goods.

I liked a lot about the tale and I think the series might improve as it continues, because the initial setup always takes time and the battles have just begun. Those who enjoy military space opera can have a good time.

Denise says

The galaxy's two greatest empires, the Commonwealth and the Theocracy, are headed for war, and the Cadiz system, right at the border and recently forcefully annexed by the Commonwealth, is likely to become a focal point - and that's exactly where newly minted Captain Kat Falcone, whose influential father's meddling got her put in command of the Commonwealth's newest warship despite the fact that she knows she's not ready for such a post, is headed. But turning down the promotion isn't an option, and as much as Kat resents her father's pulling of strings for his own ends that is bound to undermine her efforts to earn her crew's respect, she is determined to prove herself. With war imminent and the fleet stationed at Cadiz in a disastrous state of unreadiness and commanded by an admiral who is grossly incompetent at best, she's got her job cut out for her.

A good, action-packed series opener that kept me entertained all the way through. Kat is a likable character, and I'm looking forward to seeing her grow more into her role. I do rather wish her love interest (if she absolutely *must* have one) were a little more interesting, though.

Liviu says

fast, entertaining and what one expects given the blurb and the author; while most of his books have been independently published, this one is released under the 47 North imprint (Amazon sff) and even a cursory comparison with the original version (available free on the author's homepage under the same title - see link below) shows a book that is much tighter, better paced and with more powerful scenes

space opera with villainous villains, heroic heroes and a few in-between characters, page turner not to be put down and with book 2 due in January 2016 an asap

see here the original form of the novel:

Cathy (cathepsut) says

Formulaic space opera. Likeable, but bland characters. Sometimes repetitive, with certain points getting repeated over and over again. Very stereotypical gender roles. Uninspired world building.

I like Kat and William, but emotionally they are flat. I did not connect with them and any other characters are one-dimensional and undistinguishable. The roster of characters feels as if the author took the crew of the Enterprise and gave them new names.

33% into the story nothing much has happened but setting the scene. I am totally uninterested in what happens next. They arrive at the soon-to-be-front, with the navy and the planet in shambles and the place run by an inept admiral. I guess they will land in a major mess and at the end of the book save the day, become heroes and move on to the next book to save the galaxy. Sorry, don't care. DNF.

Free copy, provided by NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.

Miss OP says

love this series. I enjoy kat although i do want more from her. one of the big problems with this series is the author REALLY wants to write william .. when it's supposed to be more of kats book. which causes issues later on in the series. it gets to a point where you're like... i kinda dont care about Williamjust saying nice EXO wonder character.... but rather annoying stiff boring old dude and i kinda want to see more of kat since she's on the cover and the other reason i read this book. chick on cover sci-fi. this kinda thing seems to happen alot..... with male writers using a female lead. other than that..... lol good seires

Ove says

Great new military sf series with a strong female protagonist by one of my favorite authors. I can't wait on the next installment.

HBalikov says

“This isn’t a localized border dispute, nor is it a rebellion against tyrannical central authority. This is all-out war aimed at shaping the future of the entire galaxy. If we lose, the worlds we have sworn to defend will fall under the rule of a religious society intent on crushing all its rivals. We dare not lose.”

There is a lot to be said for following a successful pattern. Nuttall’s “Angel in the Storm” series follows many of the signposts put in place by space military series featuring Honor Harrington (David Weber) and Ky Vatta (Elizabeth Moon). These range from having attractive and smart women moving into positions of power or into a male-dominated role. They also deal with space navies and technology and the challenges of

pirates/privateers. Economic competition, oligarchy, theocracy and monarchy are also drawn from similar plots.

Can Nuttall make it work? On the basis of this first book in a series of four, I would say, it could work well enough. He shows some nice touches with technical stuff like gravity surges, hyperspace and energy storms. He likes his military fit and ready to rumble and when they do he provides sufficient detail for those in the military space opera fan club.

He has chosen a “tough sell” with rich and young Kat Falcone as a newly credentialed captain of a major naval vessel. He has to:

1. Make us empathize and root for her;
2. Make her tough enough but not experienced enough to avoid mistakes or we might not care enough about each incident; and,
3. Avoid or minimize just having a stereo-typical “bad-guy” empire and similar “bad-guy” individuals who show little or no nuance.

With point #1, I believe that Nuttall has succeeded.

With point #2, he starts out well, but I found that within a few months Kat was making the kind of hard strategic decisions that (in Nuttall’s words) many a seasoned Captain would hesitate to initiate.

With point #3, I already have some worries. He chooses to pit his oligarchy/monarchy against a theocracy. This isn’t, in itself, a bad move, but he borrows so transparently from recent events that it verges on a polemic rather than a plot. Let me provide his words:

“....who can dare claim to believe in God when they slaughter civilians merely to gain a slight advantage?”

This could stand for many eras ranging from the Crusades to the Mongols to ISIS, but it is hard to not believe Nuttall is giving us his views on certain elements of Islam by the following:

(about the growth of the True Faith) “The older faiths---Judaism, Christianity, and Islam---had all been too reliant on God’s help and support rather than doing anything to actually earn that support...In the end, the core of those faiths had died on Earth. But the True Faith had survived and prospered.”

And, in case we too dull to pick up on this thread already, the good guys’ Sixth Fleet is led by "Admiral Christian.”

Have I gotten on board? Yes, but not without some reservations. Whether I take this series to the end of the line will depend on how points 1,2, and 3 get developed in the next volume.

Online Eccentric Librarian says

More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>

My enjoyment of The Oncoming Storm was hampered by two issues: an incredibly miscast Audio book narrator and a plot that somehow managed to not bring anything new to the genre of military sci fi. As such, the story is serviceable and packs enough adventure to keep readers/listeners invested. But at the same time, this is a somewhat unsatisfying snack, leaving one hungry for more substantial fare at the end.

Story: Cat Falcone enlists in the military fleet in order to make her own life independent of her noble and extremely powerful father. But that same father will pull strings, get her a premature ascendancy to captain,

and a mission to investigate problems at the Cadiz world outpost. With a former lover leading her marines, a highly experienced but overlooked non-noble executive officer under her, and a fanatical religious government set to declare war, she will get far more than she bargained for at Cadiz.

The premise is fairly simple and rather topical - aristocratic government versus religious fanatics in space. Nuttall smartly steers clear of making the zealots related to any particular current religion - they are an amalgamation of several monotheistic fundamentalists including tight control over citizens, lack of women's rights, and the usual 'God is on our side' rhetoric. Subthemes on the power of the aristocracy over those born outside of nobility (think ancient Rome and citizenship) as well as military ineptitude and corporate greed are also covered. Perhaps because all the topics are timely that this book feels almost dated - contemporary religious fundamentalist struggles but with a heroine reminiscent of Honor Harrington or Kris Longknife (especially). I can't help but feel Jack Campbell did it all a bit better - and tighter.

That aside, the story flows smoothly enough though hampered a bit by characters making the same obvious conclusions over and over again. In that regard, I wish the editor had been a bit tighter and sharpened the focus more. Some observations were made so many times, I would have started counting them for a future drinking game if reading on Kindle (e.g., "take a drink every time the XO notes that Kat makes a non-self serving command that impresses him she's not like the other captains). The book feels overly long in that regard.

The Audible narration was truly bad and I had a hard time getting into the book because of the bland, staccato, over enunciated, narration. The narrator seems much better suited to a YA book like Twilight than military science fiction, to be honest. At one point, it was difficult to continue because I'd cringe every time I had to start Audible and listen to the dull reading.

eyes.2c says

a new space opera!

Ok, I really enjoyed the beginnings of this space opera. A tad midshipman Honor Harrington meets a young Herris Serrano.

I know the plot is somewhat familiar but that didn't lessen my enjoyment one iota.

It's 2040 and war is on the horizon for those with eyes too see between two empires, the protectionist Commonwealth, a loosely democratic empire espousing free trade, and the Theocracy governed by religious fanatics whose main object is to convert the masses to their religious beliefs at any cost including of course mass death and destruction. (Nuttall's comments on social engineering were illuminating.)

Katherine 'Kat' Falcone, daughter of a powerful industry magnate has fled the family trappings to carve out her own destiny as a naval officer. Kat suddenly finds herself in command of the navy's latest warship 'Lightning' having been leap frogged over others higher up the rung by her father's machinations. Her command is being sent to Cadiz, a nation recently annexed by the Commonwealth for its own protection from the Theocracy. Before leaving Kat's father has secretly given her data about the situation at Cadiz. What she finds is chilling. The naval battalion stationed there is in virtual stand down and not at all battle ready thanks to incompetency or the deliberation of the assigned Admiral.

Kat has to lead her ship, convince her officers that she's capable of command, look for a way around the Admiral to bring the stationed battalion up to scratch, and investigate the battle readiness of the Theocracy's fleet. Of course things quickly go to 'hell in a hand basket' and Kat is faced with huge command decisions that might see her drummed out of the service--if she survives.

I am certainly wanting to see how things evolve and the forthcoming challenges that face Kat and her crew.

A NetGalley ARC

Per Gunnar says

I have to say that I am quite amazed at the productivity of Christopher Nuttall. With *The Oncoming Storm* he has managed to start yet another great book series. I am actually quite concerned that he is going to overstretch himself sooner or later. So far however, he has managed to keep up both his frantic writing pace and the quality of his books.

The story of this book definitely falls into the “my cup of tea” category for me. It is a true space opera with two (so far) space empires going head to head. It has a strong and likable lead character. It is as well written as one has come to expect from the author. There are a fair amount of action of course. There are also a fair amount of political BS and utterly incompetent naval officers. Well, there are actually mainly one utterly incompetent real hole in the rear end of a horse but he is, unfortunately, in a position to make a substantial amount of damage.

I guess people will be quick to make comparisons with David Weber’s *Honor Harrington* series and sure, you can find similarities but it is almost impossible to write a space opera about a female naval officer slugging her way through the cragmire of political nonsense while trying to save her empire without there being similarities. Having similarities is not the same things as being a blatant copy and this book is definitely a Mr. Nuttall style book and not a Mr. Weber one.

As the book blurb states, Kat Falcone’s new posting is not what it first looks like and apart from the not so slight problem of acquiring the confidence of her crew she has to deal with an Admiral who’s stupidity would fill a book by itself. Luckily Mr. Nuttall did not fill the book solely with the Admiral’s blunders. Kat manages, not surprisingly, to discover the hammer that is about to fall on Cadiz, and a few other planets. That does not mean that all goes well though, far from it, but at least the war did not end with the first book and both parties in this conflict got to take a healthy bite of the shit-sandwich that was served.

Although Kat is undoubtedly the lead character she is not alone. There are several other characters, like her XO, that plays important roles in the story and these characters are as well done as the lead character. As usual Mr. Nuttall’s writing is a mix of adventure, action, character descriptions and world building including the political power plays and their, often disastrous, effects both in the past and the present.

One thing that I like with this book is that it is much more of an adventure in a positive spirit, if one can say that about a war-story, than some of his book series like, for instance, *The Empire’s Corps* which pretty much is based around the concept of the empire and our civilisation going down the drain. In this book the bad guys do not manage to destroy everything and the good guys do manage to land a few good punches.

As I wrote, this is a great start of a new book series. Mr. Nuttall has done some nice world building for future adventures in this war and I am certainly looking forward to read the next instalment. I just hope that Mr. Nuttall is not taking on too much because there are several other book series from Mr. Nuttall where I am eagerly awaiting the next instalment. I would say to Mr. Nuttall, take your time and do not let the pressure make you churn out the books too fast. I much rather have quality before quantity.

Lexxi Kitty says

Solid science fiction/military fiction/space opera about a young officer who unexpectedly finds themselves as the captain of a space-ship (unexpectedly as in, she hasn't been captain before, and the level of spaceship is several levels higher than her first command should be).

I acknowledge noticing certain 'issues' similar between this first book in a series and the first book in the Honorverse series and note that there are also major differences.

Jean says

This is a new series from Nuttall. Our protagonist is Captain Katherine “Kat” Falcone. She is similar to other space opera heroines such as David Weber’s Honor Harrington and Mike Shepherd’s Kris Longknife. I enjoy this type of Sci-Fi so another heroine series is great for me.

Kat has been assigned the command of the Commonwealth’s brand new warship HMS Lightning and sent to the frontier outpost of Cadiz. A war is pending between the Commonwealth and the Theocracy Empire of religious fanatics that had been exiled from Earth long ago.

Nuttall is developing the characters and basic background of the story to set up the series. The story is narrative driven and the narration is smooth. The book has action, political intrigue and humor. It appears a good editor has worked over the story as compared to some of the other books by Nuttall. I read this as an audiobook downloaded from Audible. I am having a bit of a problem adjusting to the style of the narrator Lauren Ezzo. She is a new narrator for me. I feel some of her dialogue is flat. I think she is attempting to do the concise clipped delivery of the military but it is not coming off very well. Hope she improves in the next book. This problem with the narration may just be my having to adjust to a new narrator. Overall I enjoyed the book and am looking forward to book number two.

Koeur says

<https://koeur.wordpress.com/2015/09/0...>

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Publisher Description: In the year 2420, war looms between the galaxy's two most powerful empires: the tyrannical Theocracy and the protectionist Commonwealth. Caught in the middle sits the occupied outpost system Cadiz, where young officer and aristocrat Katherine "Kat" Falcone finds herself prematurely promoted at the behest of her powerful father. Against her own wishes, Kat is sent to command the Commonwealth navy's newest warship, Lightning.

Review: This read like a LARPing rehearsal for ConQuest.... "Lord Vansooth from the Trulax Star System and Vice General Habbard were long in their dislike of the mannered realms.....". And, really you could make it up as you write like I just did, and be pretty close to novels content. There was a lot of info-dumping as well, which made it hard to get through, which I thankfully did not. DNF.

Dan says

Not bad..
