



No Worse Enemy

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The sequel to The Empire's Corps, also available from Amazon Kindle.

Six months ago, Colonel Edward Stalker and his Marines were abandoned on Avalon, left to fend for themselves as the Empire withdrew from the Rim. Since then, Avalon has been isolated from the settled universe...until now.

As a mysterious pirate organisation attempts to take over Avalon, the Marines find themselves struggling against a shadowy figure with dreams of power, while a young civilian is kidnapped and press-ganged into a pirate crew. They're fighting to preserve something of the Empire's order in the wake of its departure, but the pirates appear to have far greater resources and a plan that seems unstoppable.

The Empire is gone. What will take its place?

No Worse Enemy Details

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From Reader Review No Worse Enemy for online ebook

Leather says

This second episode of The Empire's Corps is consistent with the first: it's a good Military Space Opera, entertaining, with a good general framework and good characters but with the same flaws. What a shame that the book is full of geopolitical and political reflections as useless as they are boring.

I can't stand anymore the hour long monolog of a character between two lines of dialogue!

And what useless repetitions, over and over!

To read for action scenes, some chapters are very good.

Cst says

I liked it better than the first book, but there were still some major problems.

Several characters are either newly introduced or get bigger parts in the narration, which makes the story more varied and smooths out many bumps the first book had. Unfortunately most of the character development is constrained on the none Marine characters, making the titular protagonists still dull but dashing.

The opposition is still Evil and mean, but their leader actually has some interesting traits that could make him a compelling villain and a counterpart to the Good Colonel. In fact there are several instances that could be compared to the events of the earlier book. But there is no introspection in these books and so the plot happily chugs along.

Which is where the problems arise. The first book had many compelling action sequences and in my case, these saved the book. In this book the action becomes repetitive, with phrases and sequences repeating and sometimes at least one happy coincidence to much.

Another problem is the author's tendency to pull things out of thin air. Materials, technology and in one case a minor plot point showed up without any hint or explanation to their existence and are forgotten the next moment. In case of the plot point I felt deceived, although I was fairly sure it would happen since it sets up the grand finale.

Finally one point that really surprised me:

This book deals with space pirates and this means quite obviously, there will at least a bit of space combat. I had first read the "Ark Royal" series and was shocked to realize, that the combat in this book does not work at all. Strange tactics, vague description and a complete lack of involvement make the few space combat scenes utterly forgettable. It does not really take away much of the book since it focuses mainly in the ground aspect of warfare, but I cannot help but marvel at the development the author made in the two years between these books.

Don says

I thought the novel was a little preachy, it was kind of hard to read through the evils of bureaucrats or the

failings of the 'empire' or how well trained the marines are. It actually detracted from the story a bit to the point where I had to stop reading part ways through a paragraph. Dialogue also felt cumbersome as after every spoken line there was a paragraph explaining why the character felt this way before saying another line.

Probably won't keep reading the series because of this.

Jason says

Having read the first Empires Corps – I had to read the 2nd, and I wasn't disappointed.

It basically picks up where the last one finished, but with a minor time difference.

Again, Christopher Nuttall has stuck to the same formula as the last – with the Easter Eggs (Still one of my favourite things!!), brilliant Characters, simply some of the best action sequences I have read in this genre, with clear concise descriptions, allowing the reader to feel involved in the battle, but not dragging it on for pages and pages so we get lost in it, and a fantastic plotline.

There are multiple new plot twists of course and this time, our heroic Marines, having flushed out the Bandits and the Crackers on Avalon and helped to restore a peaceful Government, are now faced with the imminent threat of no Empire. Worse yet, Pirates come and attack – and again – No Spoilers here – go read it – it's brilliant and worth the read!!!

'No Worse Enemy', as well as new plot twists, has had some changes to its characters as well. Whilst there is still the main character list that we all grew to love in the first book (apart from the Bandits of course, they are all dead...), this one sees the growth of several characters. Several of the Marines grow and mature in this book, and it was nice to see them take on these new roles. Nuttall makes a great effort to keep readers interested, not just with a good story, but by growing the characters as well, so that we can see them advance, and we don't get bored with them. Obviously it's not all about the Marines, and Nuttall spends significant time growing the other characters as well.

Nuttall continues to expand his universe as well, beyond Avalon to other planetary systems in this book, (I don't want to give too much away, so won't give too many details), but this adds a new depth to the book as well and sets up the series as well for future books. Nuttall is very clever and creative in his writing, making this series not only engaging, but very compelling – it's very easy to read.

Having said that, the 2nd book is very graphic in parts when the pirates arrive, and this book is not for those that are easily offended. The descriptions of the Pirate activities are not for the light hearted. Nuttall has gone for accuracy in his portrayal of how the Pirates, in all their glory, treat their victims, which isn't pleasant.

This of course should not take away from the actual story, as the book is brilliant, it's just worth being aware. As with the first book – this is another exceptional book in an awesome series, and should not be missed.

Panos Panagiotidis says

Love these books. And a lot more to read, YES

Steven Allen says

I have enjoyed a lot of this author's work. Good characters that I actually am invested in and want to see prosper. Good combat action, with realistic outcomes.

Some typos and punctuation mistakes, but otherwise a great book. Looking forward to reading the rest of the series.

Mike Nemeth says

Christopher Nuttall has a grand vision of space colonization by the future human race. He's created a timeline in which humankind has populated the stars successfully. However, he's done this with historical perspective. What man creates often falls into ruin. Unlike Isaac Asimov, whose Foundation came after the decline, Nuttall starts at the beginning. The government is all consuming and all powerful. Yet, it's corrupt. Corporations in sweetheart deals seed planets with people and product, hoping to make money. Common man often finds himself in debt, unable to earn his way out of servitude. The system is deteriorating. "No Worse Enemy," book two of the Empire Corps series, again follows the exploits of Col. Edward Stalker, who has freed one world from corrupt officials. In this novel, Stalker faces an even greater threat, a well financed dictator in the making who wants to pick up where the Empire left off and start his own kingdom. He's ruthless and employs butchers. He must be put down. But Stalker has no ship. No resources. What he does have is a trained marine fighting force, and his soldiers have proved themselves many times over. Nuttall tells some of the most engaging narrative through Mandy, daughter of the professor who was punished for predicting the Empire's downfall. She's captured by the pirates who want to build a new empire. She avoids rape and slavery by joining their ranks. She works from within to take them down despite almost certain death if she's discovered. It's intense almost in the sense the reader feels part of the deception and on that nasty pirate vessel. I'm looking forward to working through the series.

Per Gunnar says

This book has more pirates than marines. Well, at least in terms of number of pirates versus marines. When reading the book it sure felt like most of the book were about the pirates rather than the marines but thinking about it afterwards there were indeed quite a bit marine action as well so maybe this was just my impression.

After managing to get some order on Avalon and have some hopes for the future a grouping of pirates rudely crash the party, abduct several people and tries to take control of Avalon itself. Needless to say the marines have some objections to this.

As it turns out the pirates are not just a group of pirates but have a surprisingly large organization behind them. The book alternates between the marines attempts to foil the pirates plans and the kidnapped people's, especially one of the kidnapped people, attempts to survive and ultimately free themselves. In the end the latter goals coincide with the marine's goals. A good chunk of the book depicts the life among the pirates, the struggle to survive and the implementation of the plans to break free. As I wrote it felt like this was really the main part of the book.

As usual with a book from Christopher Nuttall, at least the ones that I have read, the writing is good, the characters are well done as are the action. The main reason for me giving this book "only" 7 out of 10 stars is purely subjective. I am not a professional reviewer after all so you have to expect that some of my personal feelings are creeping into my reviews. As with the previous book the overall theme is a bit depressing with the empire's decline and everything going to hell. At the end of the last book there was some hope but this book kind of puts that hope on hold. There is little advancement towards the goal of building a sustainable

civilization and getting back on track so to say. Now, all of this is probably very realistic if it would have been a real situation but it still kind of subdued my mood a bit when reading. Also, I am not too fond of kidnapping scenarios. Again just my personal and very subjective opinion.

The book have a good enough ending but it also leaves a few loose ends. In particular, from where did the pirates get the funding? I guess we will see some tie-ins to this later in the series. If not I will be a wee bit disappointed.

Anyway, the bottom line is that this is a very good book, any criticism I have is purely subjective and the next one in the series have already ended up on my to-read shelf.

Frédéric says

Six month after the events on Avalon a new threat appears on the horizon. Pirates. Pirates led by a man with delusions of a new empire on the ruins of the one currently collapsing. It's up to Ed Stalker's Marines to save the day once again.

Déjà vu, eh? Yep, but that doesn't mean it's bad and it's actually pretty good if you're into Space Marines lit.

Nuttall has a good and clear style (some little redundancies here and there though) entertaining and easy to read.

The stakes are clearly exposed and the pacing is fast enough with a wee bit more character development than in vol.1.

Politics are still an important part of the background, with promises of interesting future volumes.

Just for the fun of it; it seems either Chris Nuttall has verbal tics or some of his characters have OCDs: Jasmine *rolls her eyes* every time she hears Blake and Joe arguing (and they argue a lot) and Ed Stalker *scowls* at least half a dozen times per chapter. Wonder what he does the rest of the time? He frowns maybe?

Jason Braida says

I really enjoyed this book. A single company of Terran Marines stranded on the planet Avalon, a backwater planet in a backwater sector on the edge of the Terran Empire, find themselves cut off from that Empire when it starts to collapse under the weight of own internal corruption. The characters are believable, the action sequences well written, and the socio-economic / political implications are fascinating: the characters are left with the task of building a new society out of the shattered remains of the old while at the same time attempting to avoid the pitfalls that led to the destruction of the original empire.

The one reservation I have about this book is that I sometimes wonder if Mr Nuttall's novels are works of speculative fiction or rather an attempted indictment and criticism of the world in which he lives. The suspicion that this is his intention is seemingly confirmed when, in an afterword to this novel he explicitly links the decay of the fictional Empire in his novel with what he views as the decay of our modern Western World. This seems to me to be a trend in contemporary science fiction in which authors seek to not only entertain but also editorialize using their characters to illustrate and exemplify the qualities of citizenship which they view as desirable. All I can say to this is that it is the lot of every generation to believe that they

are living in an age of decline and that in the end we must content ourselves with simply muddling through the events and trials that life and history thrusts upon us. In the end it is history that will judge us and our generation. It is history that can take a politician such as Winston Churchill, who many viewed at the time as being a political opportunist and carpetbagger who changed political loyalties as easily as one might change a shirt, and judge him as being one modern history's preeminent statesmen. While this may not be particularly inspiring, it has always been the way of things. I too long for a world that rewards resilience, independence, rugged individualism, and service to one's country and community.

The good news is that Mr Nuttall's editorial zeal does not get in the way of his story telling and I strongly recommend his novels and I look forward to reading the next in his series.

Dan says

Another good read, in a very enjoyable series.

Scott Brady says

As good if not better than EC #1.

Billie says

Your standard military science fiction. Pretty good battles. Based around Marines. Second in the series.

So this book is much more focused around pirates and space, rather than rebels & ground fight rebels like the first book.

The plot was okay, however I nearly gave up a few times due to the authors obsession with rape over all other forms of torture and violence. He just goes on and on about it, and barely mentions any other bad things.

He also seems to have a bit of an obsession with female slaves. They're everywhere, so much so I do wonder how exactly the pirates and other "baddies" in this series actually manage the logistics of transporting them around.

The enemies also have pretty bad motivations, and poor explanations as to why their societies manage to exist in a horrific statis. For example the pirates are supposed to knifing each other and performing coops all the time. But there's only 200 of them in a ship, and the ships are supposed to be fairly small... so surely you'd run out of people, or most of them would want to leave.

Also the pirates actually have commodities that they could trade and do what they're doing without all the violence. It was never really explained why they needed to keep terrorising everyone all the time.

I just struggle to see how the society could continue to exist.

It also feels a bit like the author is attempting to say something about society as a whole. Generally this comes across as poorly constructed straw men, about "them kids" being taught rights but not values in school, and them being lazy... very Grumpy old man.

I think the first book had a bit more politics and empire building, which made it a little better, and gave the book a context in the overall universe. This book seems to lack that.

Anyway. The fighting bits are pretty good. Everything else. Meh.

Mike (the Paladin) says

Ah, the second installment in our space faring slightly brain candy yet also political adventure. Don't worry, not nearly so much discussion of what's happened to civilization/Earth/the Empire here. No we've got...are you ready???

SPACE PIRATES!!!!

Doesn't everyone ;love space pirates? And it's not just space pirates. No, no, no...this is space pirates vs. the Marines!

What more needs to be said. If you like action its here. If you like space opera it's here. If you like military science fiction it's here...really.

Recommended, enjoy.

By the way, yeah I intend to follow the series. I mean you get brain candy along with a bit of meat...cool.

Jean says

This is book two in the Empire Corp Series. Colonel Edward Stalker and his marines are left to fend for themselves as the Empire withdraws from the rim. After managing to obtain order on Avalon in the first episode, the people of Avalon and the Marines hope for the future is in peril when a mysterious pirate organization attempts to take over Avalon.

The book is divided into two plots, one between the Marines and the pirates and the other plot about the kidnapped people by the pirates. The story does focus on one kidnapped victim and her attempts to survive and escape from the pirates.

The writing is good; the characters are well done as is the action. There is lots of action, suspense and the story moves at a fast pace. The book has a good ending that leaves enough questions to provide for the next episode. Nuttall has an easy to read writing style. The book kept my attention and was enjoyable to read. I read this as an audio book downloaded from Audible. Jeffrey Kafer narrated the story.

