



Razor's Edge: Star Wars (Empire and Rebellion)

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Times are desperate for the Rebel Alliance. Harassment by the Empire and a shortage of vital supplies are hindering completion of a new secret base on the ice planet Hoth. So when Mid Rim merchants offer much-needed materials for sale, Princess Leia Organa and Han Solo lead an Alliance delegation to negotiate a deal.

But when treachery forces the rebel ship to flee into territory controlled by pirates, Leia makes a shocking discovery: the fierce marauders come from Leia's homeworld of Alderaan, recently destroyed by the Death Star. These refugees have turned to pillaging and plundering to survive—and they are in debt to a pirate armada, which will gladly ransom the princess to the vengeful Empire . . . if they find out her true identity.

Struggling with intense feelings of guilt, loyalty, and betrayal, Leia is determined to help her wayward kinspeople, even as Imperial forces are closing in on her own crippled ship. Trapped between lethal cutthroats and brutal oppressors, Leia and Han, along with Luke, Chewbacca, and a battle-ready crew, must defy death—or embrace it—to keep the rebellion alive.

Razor's Edge: Star Wars (Empire and Rebellion) Details

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Author : Martha Wells

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From Reader Review Razor's Edge: Star Wars (Empire and Rebellion) for online ebook

Chris says

I received a free ebook ARC copy of this book from NetGalley. Thanks to the author, publisher, and NetGalley for the opportunity to read and review this book.

3 stars, but was almost 2.

I had some really mixed feelings about this book. At times, I enjoyed it. At other times, I just wanted it to be over.

I'll start with the cons:

1. Describe describe describe. This was heavy-handed. When every nut and bolt and widget is described down to the corners, the story loses momentum. Or never gains any. And while good description can help give a clear picture, this did the opposite. The more I read, the more I couldn't visualize anything.
2. The tone was dry. It didn't seem to have highs and lows. Even when the story should have, the tone remained the same throughout.
3. The pacing. It never seems to let up. While this was probably meant to give the narrative suspense, it just served to drag it on and on. And on. And. On. With no rest to absorb heavy descriptions, the pace moved along without any tonal changes, and there was nowhere to take a breath and figure out where we were. Or care.

Now for the pros:

1. The established characters. While a lot of the Star Wars humor and at times light-hardheartedness was thin, the characters themselves were pretty well represented. Leia was Leia, Han was Han, and so on.
2. The new characters. While I would have liked to see a bit more depth in learning about the supporting cast, I did like what I saw. A varied group of supporting players helped the story along, both allies and adversaries to the main group.
3. The story itself. It was engaging, and the concept behind it was sound. This was a realistic possible mission for the gang between Episodes IV and V, and had some nice twists and turns.

While typing the cons above, I nearly changed my rating back to a 2 again. But then I looked over the cons. How could I give a low rating for a book where I liked the plot, the characters, and the overall idea? The flaws were in the execution, but not the overall tale. So for that I'll stand by the middle ground 3 rating. Which means "liked it". No more, no less. I can go with that.

And that's no small moon.

Amanda says

So. Much. Fun. So much good old Star Wars fun! So refreshing for the Extended Universe, that has been bogged down by so many mediocre post-RotJ novels.

This novel (first in a trilogy) is set in between Star Wars and Empire. Being set in that 3 year time frame doesn't lend much leeway in how big the story can be and that's just fine by me. In fact, after decades of warlords, doomsday contraptions and resurrected Sith lords, this space pirate adventure is just what the EU needs.

Wells understands the SW world and she really gets these characters. I've never read a more perfect Leia. Han is the snarky guy we've just met but his vulnerability and kind heart starts to show where Leia is involved. Luke is Luke, and I mean that in a good way. He's still a farm boy just with a bit more confidence in sticky situations. And CHEWIE! It's been so long since I've read a novel with Chewie! It was great to see that fur ball again!

Considering when this novel takes place in the timeline, Wells still manages to make you wonder about their fates as the plot progresses. The story remains somewhat small scale but that takes nothing away from it. The stakes are raised just enough to make you worry the characters and think about just how are they going to get out of this one. I'm thoroughly looking forward to the sequel!

Thank you, Netgalley, for providing me with an advanced copy of this novel.

Rena says

That was a fun book. Not my favorite but it was fun.

Katie says

I've been meaning to read Martha Wells forever. This is so not where I would've expected to start with her, but WHY NOT?

I also never expected to get into Star Wars novels twenty years late for my generation, but, again, WHY NOT? Twenty years ago, I was all about Star Trek and read all of those books, and I guess that took over the sci fi portion of my brain. But I really liked The Force Awakens, so here we are!

And I enjoyed this. It's set between the first and second movie. It was maybe a little long, a few too many problems to solve, but it was a good Leia book, and you got more about Alderaan, and a lot of fun pre-ship stuff for Leia/Han. (Luke and Chewie aren't in this much.)

Note for ebook readers: This ends at the 68% mark (the rest is excerpts from other Star Wars books). This seems to be the case for many of the Star Wars ebooks.

Wendy says

Speculation continues to fly as news and rumours permeate the internet about the new Star Wars trilogy. Meanwhile, the books and comics have suspiciously returned to the past. The Star Wars expanded universe is vaaaaaaast, yet, surprisingly, very little of it has explored the ins and outs around the original trilogy.

Razor's Edge takes place shortly after A New Hope with the rebels in desperate need of a new secret base. Leaked information puts their attempt to set up on Hoth in peril, and we find Leia and Han in just such a situation at the beginning of the book when their ship is attacked by Imperials. But there is more to the aftermath of A New Hope that this book addresses: Remember that planet Darth Vader and Moff Tarkin blew up in A New Hope? Well that was Leia Organa's home and she has taken its destruction entirely onto her own shoulders. And there happen to be other survivors who deal with the destruction of their world in various ways.

That isn't to say this entire story is about Leia and the displaced Alderaanians going to PTSD meetings, but the weight of their despair remains a strong aspect of the story that the movies didn't have time to address. Leia is more than irked when she discovers an Alderaanian ship has opted to go pirate rather than join the Alliance and is drawn into conflict with its captain, Metara.

With Leia as the focus, we are reminded of just how strong of a character she is. She is more than just a symbol to her people. She is a born leader and it's implied that she sometimes has to fight harder with the higher ups to be allowed to lead as opposed to simply being the Alliance poster girl. Proving herself to them means all the more to a perfectionist who hates making mistakes. Her wisdom, intelligence, sense of responsibility, courage and stoicism sometimes make it difficult to remember that she's barely into her twenties.

Wells introduces some interesting new species, something I expected after reading her world and culture building talents in The Cloud Roads. She also introduces several new characters, but they are not much more than devices - red shirts, if you will - who mostly serve as targets for Han's snark. Even Luke, Chewie and the droids play only a minor role. This isn't a bad thing though, with the focus so heavily on Leia and subsequently Han. These two are my original OTP so I was quite happy to spend all this time with them and enjoyed their attempts to not admit their mutual attraction.

Beyond or underlying all of the above is typical good old fashioned Star Wars adventure that should please fans.

With thanks to NetGalley and Del Rey Spectra for the opportunity to read an advanced copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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Wealththeow says

Shortly after A New Hope, Princess Leia and Han Solo are on their way to negotiate for resources from a smuggling cabal when Imperial warships abruptly appear and attack. The rebels just manage to escape, but they've lost several crew members and are shaken to realize that someone on board must have passed information along to the Empire. They don't even get a chance to deal with this before they come across a crew of Alderaanian pirates attacking a merchant vessel. Leia is horrified that any survivors of her destroyed planet would turn to piracy, and tries to convince them to stop...which gets her embroiled in a whole pirate

adventure.

I love the way this book conveys unresolved tension between Leia and Han. At this point they've worked together sufficiently to have amusing banter and trust, but they also each yearn for something from the other one that they're not sure how to deal with. Luke and Chewie get a few scenes in, but this is mostly Leia's book. And wonderfully so--I love seeing her in all her tough, supremely competent rebel glory. The plot itself feels a little episodic, as first one crisis and then another pops up, but that's my only possible criticism. Definitely a fun read.

Bailey Marissa says

A wonderfully in-character book that finally addresses Leia's guilt over Alderaan.

Suggest at least 12 or older for some language, and a few sensual scenes (but thankfully they both act like the adults they are and stop the thoughts before it gets too inappropriate)

Alejandro says

As exciting as a "Star Wars" story should be!

This is the first novel part of a "Star Wars" book event called "Empire and Rebellion".

The event will consist of three books, each one centered heavily on each of the "Big Three" of the original "Star Wars" saga, Princess Leia on this very novel, later Han Solo on a book expected for early 2014, and finally Luke Skywalker on a novel announced for 2015. However, due Disney's buying of Lucasfilms, this trilogy-like books got separated in the sense that Leia's and Han's are now considered "Legends" (Non-Canon) while the one about Luke is the only part of the new Canon.

LEIA RULES!

I was really excited to read this book since it was said that Leia will be the main character here. On almost any *Star Wars* book featuring the "Big Three", you have quite a lot of development on each of them, but while Luke was being portrayed on some books, even with his name on the title, and Han has two trilogies without counting other books with him as the main hero, in the case of Leia, you don't get much of her as the main character and that's a shame. So, realizing that she was going to be the main heroine here, it was too much to resist to read the book.

I liked it a lot!!!

Luke and Han have their own moments on the novel, especially Han, but it's undeniable that this is a story centered around Princess Leia Organa.

REBELS UNITE!

The plot is set between the events of *A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back*, which it makes an excellent time to develop a story about Leia. Due that Luke is still way young and untrained about the Force and Han still isn't believing in the Rebel cause and he collaborates mainly for the rewards.

So, Leia is the strong character here of the three, she is the surviving leader of all her remaining people after Alderaan was destroyed by the Death Star, and she is a pivotal member of the Rebel Alliance Council.

Leia isn't a character looking for being in command of the situation but she has the grit on her to take command of it in a split second and starting to give the right orders without hesitation.

FILLING A RELEVANT VOID

Other important detail of this novel, *Razor's Edge* is that, by the moment, is the strongest option to read for people looking for a solid adventure oriented for adult readers, linking between *Episode IV* and *Episode V*. Since if you look the list of books in "chronological" order in the time setting of the saga, the other books are the sagas of *Rebel Force* and *Galaxy of Fear*, that both are oriented for young readers. Then you have *Splinter of the Mind's Eye*, that it's still a really good reading but sadly, it can't fit well in the continuity due to changes made on the following Episodes on films. *Scoundrels* is about a heist plan. *Allegiance* and *Choices of One* are about Mara Jade's motivations. *Tales from the Mos Eisley Cantina* is a collection of short stories set there. And *The Ruins of Dantooine* is a tie-in with the MMORPG *Star Wars: Galaxies*.

So, returning to this book, you can see that *Razor's Edge* is an ideal novel to read if you want something "in-between" of Episodes IV & V with the feel of an adventure that can link the events of both films.

LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR FAR AWAY...

The Rebel Alliance is desperately looking for a new base and they need materials to construct it, so General Willard took Leia, Han and a crew to make a deal with smugglers who have just what they need to make *Echo Base*, a reality. However the things started to go wrong and the fear and suspicion of traitors and spies in their midst make even more dangerous and complicated this mission. Also, Leia faces a situation hard to assimilate: A former Alderaanian military vessel has turned to piracy as its mean to survive after the loss of their home planet. Leia is forced to lead a mission having pirates in one side and Imperial forces in the other and everybody with their targets on her.

Highly recommended!!! The Force is strong in this one!

Ashley says

Razor's Edge is the first in a loose trilogy of books commissioned in the Star Wars Expanded Universe*

designed to let bigger name sci-fi authors play around with the characters in this world, and also to spotlight each of the 'Big Three' in their own novels. Each novel can stand on its own, but they all take place in the time between *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back*, after the destruction of the first Death Star. *Razor's Edge* is Leia's novel, and while I thought it did a nice job with highlighting Leia herself, I think it could have been better overall.

**The first two books in the trilogy (the second written by sci-fi superstar James S.A. Corey) were released before Disney killed the EU, so technically the first two are no longer canon, and are relegated to 'Legends' status, while Kevin Hearne's book Heir to the Jedi is official in the new EU. I get the feeling it won't matter, though. Hearne's respect for Star Wars probably means it can be read with either canon in mind, although I have no idea what, if anything, was changed in his book after the EU was, ahem, forcibly retired.*

It's been about a year since the Death Star was destroyed at Yavin 4, and the Rebellion is trying to leverage as much as they can out of their victory, even as the Empire increases its efforts to put them down. What they really need in order to push the rebellion to the next stage is a base, where necessary maintenance and training can occur safely and secretly. But to build a base they need supplies, and funding. This where Leia's most recent mission comes in. She and select rebels (including Han Solo, mmmmmm, not ashamed) have headed off for a clandestine meeting with potential financiers, but they are waylaid, first by an Imperial ship that has obviously been tipped off to the location they were to exit hyperspace, and second by a band of rogue Alderaanian pirates. Leia, Han and a couple of others board their ship to talk, and end up at a giant haven full of dastardly space pirates, with the Alderaanian crew that is waaaaay over their heads.

This is where Leia takes over for the Alderaanian captain, trying to negotiate and navigate the complicated terrain of pirate politics, and free the Alderaanians from a contract they never should have taken in the first place. There is also a subplot about Han and some of the other crewmembers trying to rescue captured merchants about to be sold into slavery, and a second subplot involving the spy that sold them out to the Empire.

I enjoyed this book. Leia is wonderfully competent and take-charge. She knows when to hit and when to run, and navigates the tricky terrain of the pirate base with impressive ease. Even Han (who is busy fighting his attraction to her, and vice versa) admits often that her strength and feisty attitude are two of the reasons he is so drawn to her. Wells does a nice job with their dynamic, and with the dynamics of the other characters as well. The heart of this book is Leia's inner conflict over her loyalty to the Alderaanians as survivors from that doomed planet, and her duty to the Rebellion. I actually wish there had been more of that, and maybe a little less with Han and the other rebels, although I get why they're in there. Wells's style is also very simple and straightforward, maybe too much so, as I think she missed several emotional hotspots in her narrative that would have made the book pop. There was too much focus on the machinations of her plot, and not enough on the thing that makes the plot important in the first place: the characters.

Overall, glad I read this, but it's not the best, especially now that I'm halfway through Corey's Han Solo adventure, and his style is so vivid and unique, and is written with such obvious pleasure that this book pales in comparison, sadly.

[3.5 stars]

Bob Milne says

Okay, so we all know that stories within the Star Wars expanded universe can be hit or miss. In fact, Timothy Zahn is about the only author I've found to be consistently entertaining, which is why I was excited to see some big name authors stepping in to explore the universe.

First up for the Empire and Rebellion saga is Martha Wells, with her Princess Leia focused novel, *Razor's Edge*. As a vehicle for exploring Leia's character, it works rather well. We really get to see her as a leader, as a political force to be reckoned with, and as somebody suffering under a lot of pressure. Wells bravely tackles the guilt that comes with the death of Alderaan, and even more bravely wades into the awkward quagmire that is her romance with Han Solo.

Beyond that, though, I didn't feel the book really offered anything new or significant. As nice as it is to revisit old friends, there are only so many stories to be told in the gaps between movies, especially since it's hard to generate any real drama when you know everybody makes through the next movie alive. There are some great action scenes, and some fun moments, but it felt like Wells tried too hard to maintain the frantic pacing of the movies. It's just one climax on top of another, until you're numb to it all.

This was by no means the worst Star Wars adventure I've ever read - there's a flair to Wells' writing not commonly found in tie-ins, and I am still eager to read more of her work. I can certainly appreciate Leia getting her chance in the spotlight, but if Hayden Christensen and Natalie Portman taught us anything, it's that Star Wars needs to move beyond the story we already know, and start contributing to a new one.

Originally reviewed at Beauty in Ruins

Rebecca ♥ Warner, Kishan, Magnus ♥ says

Just realized that I never reviewed this book, and didn't even rate it! I wonder how I could have missed that. I remember finding it a rather pointless side adventure. I don't really care about Star Wars novels that aren't closely connected to the movies. But I decided to try this one because it is by Martha Wells. **2.5/5**

Althea Ann says

I received this book through Goodreads' First Reads program! Thanks to Goodreads and the author!

This was the first Star Wars tie-in book I've read since the original Alan Dean Foster ones, *Back In The Day*. But I'd heard good things about Martha Wells and was curious to read something by her.

What most struck me about *'Razor's Edge'* was how well Wells captured the Star Wars characters. You could definitely vividly 'see' and 'hear' Leia, Han, Luke, &c.; it was all very true to the films.

However - I felt a lack of urgency in the book. I didn't feel the need to rush to finish it, at all. I don't think this is the author's fault - I think it's an artifact of it being a tie-in, relating an incident wedged between *'Star Wars'* and *'The Empire Strikes Back'* - we already know that no matter how dire the situations the main characters find themselves in, everything will be OK (for the time being), and there's no room for any change in the dynamics of their interpersonal relationships.

However, that aside - this is a fun, action-filled book, with Space Pirates thrown into the conflict between Imperial troops and the Rebel Alliance. Good fun.

Miriam says

Good stuff! Now I feel like watching "Star Wars" again.

Tony says

Pretty boring. I think there were too many characters that I just didn't care about and I couldn't really keep track of who was who. It would mention a character and I would have to stop and try to remember if that was a Rebel member or a pirate. I knew that pretty much all of the characters would have no long term significance so I wasn't invested in them.

Alex Ristea says

My first foray into the Star Wars Expanded Universe could have gone better.

This book wasn't terrible, but it wasn't anything special either. Honestly, I read it because I'm looking forward to the other two books in this series by James S.A. Corey and Kevin Hearne (though I've heard many good things about Martha Wells and have been meaning to read her original fiction, too).

First, the good things:

- Female author, female protagonist, female narrator. Fuck yes.
- The sound effects were off-putting at first, but added to the story once you get used to them. Not only blast doors opening, and lasers firing, but C-3PO's voice modulation and plenty of Chewie growls
- Leia is a fun and capable character which I enjoyed reading. This book also fleshed out the relationships between her, Han, and Luke, which I enjoyed.

Why it didn't rock my world:

- The writing served the story, but nothing more. So, don't read this for literary merit—read it because you want more Star Wars in your life
- The overall story felt too small and not that exciting
- I thought there would be more world-building and exploration of the Star Wars canon
- No lightsabers
- The minor characters weren't that memorable or distinguishable

Overall, a decent Star Wars read, but with nothing else in the EU to compare it to, I was underwhelmed so far.
