



Of Treasons Born

J.L. Doty

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A gripping military science fiction adventure starring the hero of *A Choice of Treasons*

As a lifer in the Imperial Navy fighting in a war that has lasted for generations, York Ballin's only hope for an honorable discharge is the grave. But what events led up to his reluctant enlistment? What spawned York's almost fanatic loyalty to his friends--and his doubts regarding the imperial uniform he once wore with such pride?

York rarely recalls his childhood, which began with a mystery and ended at age eleven when he was given a harsh choice: Join the navy or face certain death on a prison asteroid. The navy has its own code of justice, but a youngster with curiosity and grit is able to rise in the ranks . . . if he's given a fair shot.

A few rigorous years later, as a newly commissioned ensign, York is assigned to the hunter-killer ship *The Fourth Horseman*. But when an unexpected foe kills his superior officer and leaves the crew stranded in enemy territory, the young ensign must do whatever he can to save the ship--even if it means he'll be court-martialed for treason.

Of Treasons Born is a novel of the Treasons Cycle; the series was written so that it can be read in any order.

Of Treasons Born Details

Date : Published April 5th 2016 by Open Road Media Science & Fantasy

ISBN : 9781504012089

Author : J.L. Doty

Format : Paperback 272 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, War, Military Fiction, Space, Space Opera, Military Science Fiction

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From Reader Review Of Treasons Born for online ebook

Caitlin says

I won a Goodreads giveaway of uncorrected proof edition of this book.

This book is about York Balling`s story on how he became a lifer in the navy and moved up the ranks. This is the second book, "A choice of Treasons" being the first. Of Treasons Born is a prequel. I have not read A Choice of Treasons But im greatly looking forward to it. I loved this book and could not put it down. J.L. Doty`s writing was great. I liked how you learn more about the characters through their actions then talking about what they are like. The characters had some weird names in a good way, not too over the top weird. I loved the story. York was working hard and I wanted to know what was going to happen next. He had some tough times witch he struggled through. I liked how the marines had there own code of justice. The one bad thing is the war is never explained. I dont know if it was in the first book. In this its dont talk about it, if you do you will be seen as treasonous by higher ups if you start going around asking why where fighting. I love military science fiction and space operas witch to me this book does good.

Martha says

This is an engaging sci fi - character profile. My Rating 4.5.

York Ballin was mostly raised on the streets. He was pressured by the wrong sort of friends and at age 11 he ended up with a conviction for murder. He is sentenced to a prison asteroid where he will no doubt be dead soon. He is surprised when he is confronted by naval officers who “offer” him a place in the space navy. It isn`t really a choice.

York has to start at the bottom swabbing floors – he learns they are called ‘decks’. He is smart and picks up quickly... if only someone is willing to train him. He learns that there are bullies in the navy too and he ends up caught in a bad situation again. He takes the punishment and is sent to the Marines for further discipline. They figure he is a loser who will wash out but soon discover that he learns quickly and is willing to take risks for others. Bit by bit York makes friends and shows himself as more than a loser.

He is sent to Naval Academy where he bunks with three others of totally different backgrounds. One comes for power, one from money and one from influence. They realize that York is the one from experience. There are superiors who feel that street kids have no business in the Academy – they aren`t smart enough to learn and not worthy of the training. These men make trouble for York but fortunately there are others who see the potential for leadership in York and want him to succeed.

I found this story very engaging. I liked how Doty develops York`s character and how friends and staff along the way contribute to that character. York is a sympathetic character who is able to rise through the ranks even when he doesn`t even know what the space war is all about. There is a suitable balance between the strong action and human elements. I have the next book in the series (although this was actually shown as book 2) and I am looking forward to reading/listening to more. I recommend this to fans of space military tales.

Audio Notes: Noah Michael Levine does a great job on the narration. The voices are varied and the inflections are conveyed to share the nuances of the situations. I really enjoyed the listen.

eyes.2c says

The saga continues to engage!

I said that I awaited the next of the Treasons cycle with bated breath. And every breath was worth it. Wow! The saga continues. This time we have the back story to York Ballin's journey into where how he came to be in the Navy and a lifer in 'Choice of Treasons'.

This is a gripping story that had me flipping through the pages.

I love Doty's writing. It's all here, the underdog with a mysterious background who works his way up through the ranks. Always there's a catch! He's the badly treated hero who still comes through, fighting a mindless war, controlled by the higher echelons of society, with lives being thrown away without regard to the fact that they are more than numbers on a tally sheet.

An unusual ploy, having as the second book as virtually the prequel for the first in the series, relating how York Ballin arrives at the point of being in the navy in 'A Choice of Treasons'. Can I connect this treatment of the storyline to that of The Norman Conquests by Alan Ayckbourn where the same weekend is viewed in three different rooms? It seems to me that Treasons is giving us three different timelines and perspectives of Ballin's life from which to read. We've had two. I am looking forward to the third. I really like this technique. I immediately reread 'A Choice of Treasons' just to place both aspects of Ballin's life so far side by side.

What we do see is that Ballin is not only a survivor, but there is something innately good about him, that puts him apart from others

Another exciting facade of York Ballin's story that's as mysterious, as heart wrenching on occasion, as it is bold.

A NetGalley ARC

John Purvis says

"Of Treason Born" eBook was published in 2016 and was written by J. L. Doty (<http://www.jldoty.com>). Mr. Doty has published 10 novels, with this being the first in his "Treasons Cycle" series.

I categorize this novel as 'PG' because it contains some scenes of Violence, Mature Language and Mature Situations. This Science Fiction novel is set in the far future where mankind has spread through the stars.

The primary character is York Ballin. The story begins when he is a pre-teen. After being caught with older boys who accidentally kill a woman when they attempt to mug her, he is offered (forced) into Naval service as an alternative to certain death on a prison asteroid.

The Imperial Navy has been fighting a war that has lasted generations with the Federal Directorate of the Republic of Syndon. The Imperial Navy after decades of war has evolved into a structure and life similar to that on 19th century British ships of war. Ballin begins his naval career at the lowest level of duty.

The story tells of how young Ballin grew up in the Navy and advanced. Certainly he has more than one mis-step in his progress. By odd circumstance Ballin is constantly being reassigned to spacecraft headed towards the front lines. Along the way too he is pulled from the ranks and sent to military college. By the time the story wraps up, Ballin is an Ensign serving aboard a small hunter-killer vessel.

I thoroughly enjoyed the 6.5 hours I spent with this 272 page novel. I had already read the sequel "A Choice of Treasons" and had enjoyed it. Ballin is a character that starts life with many challenges, yet not only survives, but turns into a very fine officer. I give this novel a 5 out of 5.

Further book reviews I have written can be accessed at <https://johnpurvis.wordpress.com/blog/>.

Joe says

Great Science fiction

We follow the path of a 10 year old murderer to his development of a space pilot. Many adventures in growing up . Loved the book.

Viva says

Fantastic! This book was very easy to read and get into. I was hooked once I read a couple of chapters.

This is part of a sci-fi series. The blurb in the back goes as far as to compare it to Hornblower. I wouldn't say that as the styles are completely different. Hornblower is much more of a character study, this definitely has the air of a young adult book.

Though it's relatively short at 259 pages, a lot is packed into it. The story starts with the protagonist York as a 12 year old sentenced to the Navy. He starts off as the lowest of the low and we follow him to petty officer to the Naval Academy and the lowest commissioned officer rank. During the way we watch him overcome adverse conditions, numerous battles and make friendships.

The book goes fast. I wish the author had slowed down a bit as there's definitely enough material in this book for 2. It's the opposite of books like Harry Potter where the author explores the universe of the books intricately and draws out the storyline. Nevertheless, I'm hooked and I'll be checking out to see what else this author has written.

I got this as a free ARC.

Mark says

I received this book free through a Goodreads Firstreads giveaway.

Overall this was an enjoyable, quick read. The author is quite talented with the action moving along at a good pace and the narrative maintaining a logical, consistent track. It was reminiscent of Heinlein's "Starship Troopers," (the book, not the movie) both in story arc and feel although I also sensed a little of Patrick O'Brian's "Master and Commander" as an influence.

The story follows York Ballin as a young boy of eleven being sent into the Imperial Navy (the starship kind, this being science fiction after all) after being convicted of accessory to murder. We follow York as he struggles to learn what it takes to make it in the Navy, literally learn to read and master the life in the military, and shed the distrust of others he picked up as a younger boy. He moves from raw recruit to experienced Marine gunner and pilot. He is a quick learner and has the incredible luck that seems to be the requirement in any SF protagonist worth his salt.

Throughout there are hints at deeper mysteries surrounding young York. There are shadowy agencies behind the scenes that seem to exert forces on his situation. One such turn puts him at the Imperial Naval Academy, loosely modeled on the US Naval Academy as explained by the author in the appendix. (As an aside, the author described the feel of the USNA pretty well based on my vicarious experience through a daughter who graduated relatively recently. It wouldn't surprise me if the author also had either personal experience there or through a close acquaintance.)

The camaraderie in the fleet is described in detail and it is easy to envision the realities aboard a combat ship and in a combat squad. The science is also well done and while there is a reliance on an invented jargon it is easy to believe and is not forced. Enough detail is given to satisfy the hard SF types but not so much as to make it tedious for the casual reader.

Most of the book is spent with York in the enlisted ranks. The time at the Academy goes quick. I would have liked to have seen a more even split here, I felt his years at the Academy were glossed over too much with the last year in the Academy taking up less than half a page (I measured). The stress that an institution like the USNA puts its cadets through is real and intentional. The author used that as character development here but this could have been expounded on more, I thought (I may be biased).

Still, an entertaining read with lots of potential as a series. Clearly this was set up as an intro to York Ballin with enough hints and open questions to supply more than a few sequels.

Definite recommendation for military and hard SF fans.

Jo (Mixed Book Bag) says

found the story to be typical of Military Science Fiction. There is a war that has gone on for years. York Ballin, the hero, has not had an easy life. His past is full of bad choices. At 12 he is pressed into the Navy and after some trial and error finds a place where he belongs. Even in the Navy he faces some very dangerous challenges.

There is action, tension, and danger as we follow York during his first 10 years in the Navy. There is a mystery in his past and we only get hints. The war is never explained it just is so it was hard to connect to why they were fighting.

The characters were stock but interesting. The main purpose of the book was to explain York's background and while it did a good job at that at times it did seem to just drag on. This is part of a series. I plan to read A Choice of Treasons to find out more about this world and how York fits into it.

Rob Ballister says

Really enjoyed J.L. Doty's first book in his Treasons cycle. The characters are well developed, the action is well portrayed, and the story is interesting.

In a war that has been going on seemingly forever, and with no end in sight, the Imperials have taken to pressing children into the ranks of it's space navy and marines. One such youngster finds himself pressed into the navy at age 11 and soon is forced to grow up quickly. In addition to being a great sci-fi combat book, it is

also both an interesting look at some societal norms as well as a commentary on privilege and entitlement.

Without giving away anything, I will say that the author's build to the climax involving a possible mutiny is among the best I have ever read. I felt like I was right there feeling everything as the main characters worked through to the conclusion. Doty knows just how long to make the reader wait before unleashing the final actions.

As good as David Drake or the Honor Harrington series. Fans of Sci-Fi combat will enjoy.

Joe says

Good book kept me engaged.

Helen says

Story: Nothing particularly novel or gripping about this, but a nice coming of age story with some interesting military quirks (strong classism, corrupt system); but I've seen it done better elsewhere (eg Midshipman). But enjoyed it nevertheless.

Audio narration: the narration was OK - certainly not the worst I've ever listened too, but far from the best. The narrator. kept. clipping. all. of. his. words. which spoilt the flow of the story for me, and kept "dropping me out of the story". I got used to it as the book went on, but I'd think twice before listening to this again. Which is sad, as his range of accents was really good, with the exception of the women who all "spoke" with the same voice.

Scott says

Damn it, I only wish it were longer.

Sadie Forsythe says

This started off fairly well, with an 11-year-old sentenced to life on a mining asteroid for a crime he was coerced into participating in. Thus starts York's lifetime of being strong-armed into things.

The book progressed well for a while, as we watch York find his feet in the adult world. But then, about halfway through, the whole pace and tone of the book changed. Suddenly, where we'd followed the day-to-day minutia of York's life, whole months and then years passed in mere sentences. "The next year he X, Y and Z," for example. Until the book ends at one seemingly random point. Yeah, there'd been a little bit of an upswing in action and down-shifting in pace, so we followed one actual event for a while, but no questions were answered. No conclusions come to. The book doesn't culminate into anything.

I'm curious enough to want to know the mystery of York's birth and why he was being singled out. But I'm annoyed to have to read more for ANY answers. Come one, throw readers a little bone to keep us reading!

The fact that nothing was even addressed (York doesn't know there is a mystery), let alone answered, left this particular book feeling anachronistic and random.

Ron says

“Victory was never sweet; it was merely a relief.”

Better than average space opera. Hard science fiction. Run Silent, Run Deep meets Starship Troopers.

“His emotions were all sharp edges and angry corners.”

Good feel of shipboard operations. Decimal time reminds the reader of the otherness of this era.

“Only when he got back to the edge of death did he feel alive.”

Quibbles: Like most faster-than-light space sagas Doty forgets the impact of time dilation. It would next to impossible to synchronize so many actors and movements. The best laid plans” can't be synchronized. Twice uses “auspiciously” when he means “ostensibly.”

“For them it's over. For us it goes on.”
