



Iron Fist

Aaron Allston

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They are the Rebel Alliance's ultimate strike force--sleek, swift, and deadly. For these X-wing fighters, no job is too dirty or too dangerous. Now they must rise to meet an impossible challenge: stop a powerful warlord by pretending to be his ally.

Against all odds, the controversial Wraith Squadron has survived its first covert mission. But now they are called upon to cheat death twice. This time Wedge Antilles sends them in to stop the warlord Zsinj and his Super Star Destroyer, Iron Fist. If Zsinj joins the Empire, it could turn the tide of war against the Rebels. The Wraith Squadron's mission: infiltrate the warlord's fleet and uncover his carefully guarded plans. To do so, they must pose as ruthless pirates seeking to join Zsinj's forces. And that means first becoming pirates in space lanes teeming with Imperial Navy patrols. If that isn't enough to get them killed, they'll have to pass one last test--a suicide mission for Zsinj.

Can they survive the test and turn the tables on Zsinj?

Or is this the end for Wraith Squadron?

Iron Fist Details

Date : Published (first published July 1998)

ISBN :

Author : Aaron Allston

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Media Tie In, Star Wars, Science Fiction, Fiction, Fantasy, Space, Space Opera, Science Fiction
Fantasy, War, Adventure

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From Reader Review Iron Fist for online ebook

L. says

Star Wars books sometimes suffer from life- and galaxy-shattering plots, to the point the they are often depressing, unbelievable, and sometimes just stupid. The Wraith Trilogy (Rogue Squadron: Wraith Squadron/Iron Fist/Solo Command) is almost the antithesis, injected with humor and life, even though the characters are self-professed screw-ups about to be washed out of piloting. Instead of being a lot about piloting and aerial dogfights, this unit is made up of commandos who are also great pilots. The characters are mainly new and untried, and desperate to impress their commander, Wedge Antilles, hero of the New Republic, who creates this unit to meet a real need. The Wraiths learn to trust each other, cheer together when they succeed and cry real tears when missions don't go according to their plan, and they lose friends and comrades. Though these stories were obviously conceived to dove-tail into "The Courtship of Princess Leia," they are great stories, with many funny lines and situations. Its not all comedy -- the unit helps one member through manic depression and career-ending insanity, another is a spy who ends up wanting to be just an honest pilot, another is a former slave who is forced to murder a squadron mate, yet another realizes that he is the killer of the father of one of his pilots, another seeks to contact a traitor to learn about his sister, etc. Heady and heavy stuff! Since none of these are main or film characters, there is no fear of contradicting continuity for the characters of this series.

Kelly says

Keeping a fantastic sense of humor in the takes-itself-incredibly-seriously Star Wars universe is a huge accomplishment. I loooove the Allston X-Wing books. Stackpole's are good too, but he gets bogged down in a whole lot of sci-fi techno babble that I don't care about, and he isn't funny, so these are better. Wedge Antilles is my hero.

David says

Allston continues his entertaining run in the X-Wing series. This book focuses on the Wraiths portraying pirates in an attempt to get close to Warlord Zsinj. Allston is able to again maintain his mix of entertaining characters and terrific space opera. A few quibbles on one of the new characters being made to be so obnoxious it was clear he was going to be killed off. Definitely a sad moment though when one of the fan fav characters was killed.

CJ says

The best in the series so far!

Aaron Allston is excellent in creating colorful and memorable characters. This episode in the series featured much more than just endless x-wing action as well. There were tragic scenes, hilarious scenes, and heartwarming scenes. Once again though, there was a small portion about 3/5's of the way into the book

where the plot completely lost me. This happened with #5 as well, and I'll say plotting is not Aaron Allston's strength. This book was definitely an improvement though.

The characters make this book worth it. There are plenty of jokes and I laughed out loud at least once every few chapters. Definitely an enjoyable read.

Ron says

3.5 actually. Good story.

The opening scene pushes credibility. If warlord Zsinj got that close to Wraith Squadron, he'd vaporize them, not work some hokey kidnap by fake MPs. In fact, he'd probably blow away a good chunk of Coruscant, just to be sure he got them.

Nice cover art; actually relates to the story.

P.Shull says

Star Wars: X-Wing, #6 is an exceptional book for Star Wars fans or just science fiction is general. My only criticism was that I was missing the original characters in Star Wars series such as, Han Solo, Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia Organa of Alderaan, Chewy, C3po, R2D2, Darth Vader, Darth Maul, Darth Sidous etc.

Matthew says

This is another excellent installment to the X-wing series. Wraith Squadron, now official and fully operational, sets off on the next step of their campaign against Warlord Zsinj. The Wraiths pose as pirates and conduct secret missions to seemingly align themselves with the Warlord, but then to ultimately try to take him down in conjunction with Han Solo's Mon Remonda task force.

This installment, like the previous one, featured fine character development as well as exciting missions. I have to be honest; two scenes in this book turned out to be slight tear-jerkers for me. Many other scenes caused me to laugh out loud.

Finally, author Aaron Allston puts in his two cents on the "hyperspace ram" controversy (the book was published, of course, way before Episode VII). Quoting from page 262 of my epub (context: Solo on the Mon Remonda MC80b is trying to cut off Zsinj's Iron Fist's (Super Star Destroyer) escape vector), "He [Solo] continues correcting his position to be more and more precisely in our path," said Melvar. "We can't be sure of his intent until we're past the point of no return. Then, either he moves out of our path and we can get through and go to hyperspace . . . or we hit Mon Remonda and both vessels probably perish".

Crystal Starr Light says

Bringing down Warlord Zsinj

Wedge Antilles and the Wraiths continue their charade as pirates to get closer to Warlord Zsinj and take him down.

NOTE: Based on audiobook and novel.

I Liked:

Last book had a lot of point of views and/or character moments from Kell Tainer and Tyria. This time, we get pov's from a new set of the Wraiths (such as Face and Lara Notsil). I liked this because we get to learn more about the "lesser" members, we don't get bored with the same characters, and we get to grow attached to all the Wraiths.

One thing Allston is brilliant at is humor. The Ewok joke makes a return; the antics of the Wraiths can be hilarious. I like a light-hearted approach to something that could be so heavy.

Under Allston, Warlord Zsinj isn't your stereotypical power-hungry, maniacal, wild Imperial junkie. I mean, he still somewhat resides in the Imperial stereotype, but I could actually believe that he was a menace.

I Didn't Like:

I am beginning to come to the conclusion that the audiobooks of the X-Wing series are badly done. Half the time, I have no clue what is going on; it seems they cut and read random scenes from the book (for instance, what is the point of Runt's dancing hall scene?). Keeping track of the characters is nearly impossible and the story gets lost behind the dogfights.

But by far the most groan worthy moment was "Lara Notsil"'s character arc. Here we have yet another supposedly "highly trained", 15-year veteran Imperial Intelligence agent that spends a day with the Wraiths and suddenly leaves the Empire because of the "addictive" sense of "belonging" to the Wraiths. Oh, please! The tacked on "parent's mysterious treason" (she hadn't thought of that fifteen years ago?), the lack of build-up to her leaving (she changes her mind literally in one scene with no hints earlier), and the hokey one time "Oh, Warlord Zsinj had these men die dishonorably" line (geez, haven't YOU done some dishonorable deeds?) made me totally disinterested in the whole character and even the whole book.

Dialogue/Sexual Situations/Violence:

Star Wars or minor da** & he**.

Tyria and Kell are a couple. There are a few others too.

Dogfights, betrayals, subterfuge, and one of the Wraiths dies.

Overall:

If you've been keeping up with the X-Wing series, I would definitely recommend you continue. I had issues with this book, more than the others in the series, but I had to wonder: was it me? Was it the audiobook? Or was it actually the book? So, while instinct wants me to hit it with a three, I will assign a 3.5 rounded to 4, partly to allow for the audiobook's faults and partly in memory of the good predecessors.

Jordan Bethea says

Quick read, fast paced action through a fun plotline. Characters are just compelling and interesting enough to like them and be interested in what they're doing, and not bog down the plot too much. There is good character development and growth, action movie style, and there are actual consequences for the characters.

The characters are pretty much all original creations, which means they can actually be interesting.

Jerry says

It's easy to see why the *X-Wing* series is among the best-loved in the Expanded Universe.

Amy Wishman Nalan says

A next level Star Wars story with legitimate literary merit. This book is so well written. The writing, the character development, the plot: all excellent.

Somesuchlike says

I feel incredibly geeky for admitting that this book made me cry. But it's true - when reading a letter one character leaves for his best friend to read once he's dead.

It's also rather amusing, though. The last line of the letter is him demanding that his friend take care of his pet glass prowlers (insects), because they are cute, and cuteness should be preserved.

I prefer this one to *Wraith Squadron*. It properly introduces Gara/Lara/Kirney (she goes by many names), and the romance between her and Myn Donos, which is... awkward, to say the least. Then there's Castin, who's rather interesting story arc is cut off very, very abruptly. Then there's Dia, who becomes Face's girlfriend (they're an awesome couple).

The only way I'd like it better would be if Castin had been around for longer.

J. says

I'm of two minds when it comes to this book. I think that some of the hurdles presented in the previous installments have been corrected and as such the story is able to move forward without those nagging hindrances. That having been said it felt a bit boring in contrast with it's predecessors and even though it's the shortest of the series thus far it never really seemed to pop the way the others did.

It's hard to write a review for a book that is neither great nor terrible. It's harder still for me to specifically pinpoint what makes the book feel like it fell short. It's better written overall than Allston's first installment and the story is compelling, with the subterfuge of a previously staunch Imperial agent having to navigate her new life as a pilot for the Republic. Those story beats alone make the book worth reading.

Perhaps it just felt a little bit too much like filler. I can't say for sure. I wasn't truly disappointed in the book, it simply didn't connect with me the way that I was expecting. I think it fits well in the overall scheme but does little else. And maybe that's okay.

Johnny says

[This one sticks with the Wraiths as they add Lara Notsil, a refugee from Zsinj's posse, and several other new cast members to the squadron. La

Shaun says

Allston has done a great job continuing the X-Wing series. I have grown to love the characters of Face, Kell, Runt and the others. A fun Star Wars novel. Allston does a great job giving life to his characters.
