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Nathan Lowell

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Academy graduate Natalya Regyri stood first in line for her pick of Engineering Officer jobs, until, at the graduation party, a classmate turned up dead. Now, betrayed by her friends and framed for murder, she must flee beyond the reach of the Confederation...and any semblance of civilized society.

With a damaged second-hand ship and TIC interceptors dogging her step, she nets a smuggling contract that might just get her back on her feet and in control of her destiny. But only if she's willing to make an ore run back to the place she's wanted for murder, and into the arms of the authorities...
...who somehow know she's coming.

Milk Run Details

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From Reader Review Milk Run for online ebook

Sam Mazzuchelli says

Gentle Swashbucklers

This is a terrific series. Haven't been disappointed yet. The details covering management issues, tactics, strategies, and of course, failures plays to my acutely left brained self. The setting is rich and intriguing. The story lines are straightforward with very little politics. These are solid and soothing reads.

Steve Pritchard says

A great start to a new series in the Solar Clipper Universe

While not my favorite of Dr. Lowell's Solar Clipper novels. This brings us a whole new look at the SC universe, but from the shadowier side known as Toe-Hold Space. And being a namesake of a character in the novel is icing on the cake! I'll leave it up to you to make what you will of him (no spoilers!).

If you've enjoyed ANY of the Golden Age stories, check this one out. It sounds like something big is afoot in the SC universe!

Shane says

Three and a half stars. Maybe I am being a little harsh because I am such a HUGE fan of Nathan Lowell's other works. The pacing was steady through most of the book but became very rushed towards the end. I know Lowell did this in both Full Share and in Owner's Share but it seemed even more condensed in this book. I also wonder about the 'working the ship full time' aside which was just left hanging. Was this a hint at the future of this series, or was it a justification for the premise of In Ashes Born.

When I first read Nathan Lowell, I was drawn in by the depth and richness of each of his characters. I know many complained "nothing happens" but there is a great deal that goes on, just in small steps (sort of how real life works). Lowell's books are not about action, they are about ordinary people doing both ordinary and extraordinary things. "Milk Run" seems to focus more on what is going on than who is doing it and it leaves many, many soft cliff hangers unresolved. A good read, but not Lowell's best.

Topher says

Set in the same universe as Ishmael Wang (the Share and the Seeker's Dilemma series), featuring a few of the same side characters. Unfortunately, it's been long enough that I feel like I should have recognized a few of the side characters (Inky, for one) but couldn't place them. A good story about two people, framed into doing something that one of them likely would have done without the framing. In fact, that's my only real dis-satisfaction with this book. At the end, there were plot reasons why something about that framing should

have come up, but didn't. I'll be curious to see how that works out for the next two books in the series.

Patrick Barnes says

OK adventure

The story is OK but there are plot holes that are too big to ignore. The two main characters are chased out of "civilized" space in a setup and for no reason by a character (an instructor, I think) who is supposedly respected.

Then they get a job on a cargo ship, which only makes one three month long trip a year. Somewhere along the line the intelligence service recruits them but makes only one half assed contact. There has been wholesale theft of high value replacement parts for an indefinite time but the sharp cutthroat owner hasn't noticed happening on his one ship for years. The captain hasn't noticed the theft. The second officer hasn't noticed for years.

The two twenty something graduates discover the theft. The captain has no urgency discovering the thief, the amount of theft, the manner of the thief and yet one of his officers has to be responsible.

There is finally an appearance by an intelligence agent but no followup. The owner makes no changes, the cadets get no reward and the villains who are part of the gang that were not arrested, are searched out and dealt with.

It feels contrived and if the writer hadnt listed all these awards I don't think that I'd read the second volume, even though I like the main characters.

Dan says

Quite good, the start of a new series, in the Solar Clipper universe. I look forward to more.

Jason Kivela says

After so many novels focused on the fleet, it is great to get more into the shadier side of the Solar Clipper universe. The beginning was startling and different than most of the other books and grabbed my attention right away. It has a great new group of characters and I'm seeing an over arching plot connected to the new Wong books. Ending seemed very abrupt, but that just means more of the deeper plots will carry on to the next books in this series, I'd expect.

Adriel Wiggins says

Although I am a huge fan of Nathan's Tanyth Fairport Series, I am even more ridiculously a fan of the Solar Clipper series. I was introduced to them via John Ward, the great collector of interesting people, who

suggested the Quarter Share podcast to me. A couple years later, and not only have I thoroughly enjoyed devouring the entire series on a regular basis, but I've also roped my family into the fandom as well. I'm pretty sure my mother has listened to the first six books at least a score of times. I'm not kidding. My children have listened in rapt attention to Quarter Share at least five or six times. We use them as road trip entertainment. They're published in series of three, each trilogy focusing on a different phase of Ishmael Horatio Wang's life.

Milk Run is the first in the Smuggler's Tales companion series. It's our introduction to Natalya. Here's the derring-do Ward wanted. Or, so says Adriel. I loved this in-depth look at Toe-Hold Space, from the viewpoint of someone that grew up in it, verses Ish's outside perspective.

To read my review on every book in the series, check out my full review at adrielwiggins.com/solar-clipper.

Alec says

I have very much enjoyed The Golden Age of the Solar Clipper since I listened to the first book. I have become quite attached to Ishmael and his journey. This book opened a new universe - though really an extended universe. If you have not read any of the Trader's Tales in advance of this book - go and read them. This book won't make sense without the background.

I enjoyed reading the latest book in the series, but I thought the ending was a bit abrupt. Lots of unanswered questions. Yes I know this was book two of three - but still seemed to go from the heat of battle to everything mopped up in just a few pages. Still - looking forward to the final book in the series.

marz says

Good story, but didn't get attached to characters as quickly as I did with Quarter Share.

Julie Davis says

In a lot of ways Nathan Lowell's books hearken back to the Golden Age of science fiction when authors just wanted to tell a good yarn. I find another fascination in how he always manages to have some element of business always be a key plot element. In this one, it turns out to be the importance of good inventory stock. Twist! Betcha didn't see that coming! Granted it is in smugglers' space, on the run from murder charges, with a surly crew of misfits - and that's where the fun comes in.

This book has a couple of unanswered plot holes, young leads who shoot to a bit too much importance with too few real impediments, and seems possibly a bit rushed to the finish. But all in all, it was good fun, just like so many of the Golden Age adventures we remember so fondly.

Laz the Sailor says

Nathan Lowell has a very comfortable writing style. It is smooth but not bland. His plots are straightforward, and you learn about the characters quite slowly, but in a rewarding fashion. The resolutions often involve a secondary character doing something off-screen, but nothing defies belief.

This is the first in a series that is a spin-off from his Quarter Share series. Our protagonist is a young woman with subtle talents, a strong drive to reach her goals, and a willingness to take some risks to get there. As with Quarter Share, this is not about the plot, it's about the people and their motivations.

I will read the next one. Note the "YA" tag is because there is little violence or romantic content so it is suitable to be read by teens. However, the characters are all adults.

robert kaliski says

Mr Lowell gets better and better

One of the reasons I have read through almost all of the Solar Flipper series is that there are no epic ten thousand ship battles, perfect officers who have more luck than all the 4 leaf clovers in Ireland and evil villains who aretoo evil. No the people in this universe are the same people you run into all the time. They are just trying to make a living in an environment that is totally unforgiving. You can care for the characters because they feel real. Some smart, some are dense, a few struggle with baggage that prevents them from rising to the top.

Toe hold space feels real and lived in. I wish this were a series on TV instead of Star Trek but it would be ruined by the dissenting more bug eyed monsters. Enjoy the series and hope for many more books

John S Roth says

Great Story!

For those readers devoted to Nathan Lowell's "Tales From The Golden Age Of The Solar Clipper" series will be delighted with this spin-off. Mr. Lowell writes in a manner that each book stands wonderfully on its own merit, yet is also another building block to a much larger saga. I strongly recommend this book!

Jai Baidell says

Great little story with many unanswered questions at the end. Can't wait for the sequel to find out more.
