

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin purple lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming distinct geometric shapes like triangles and polygons. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and digital.

Leviathan Wakes

Written by James S.A. Corey

Published by kctv7

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Leviathan Wakes

By James S.A. Corey

Leviathan Wakes Series

Humanity has colonized the solar system - Mars, the Moon, the Asteroid Belt and beyond - but the stars are still out of our reach.

Leviathan Wakes Review

Jim Holden is XO of an ice miner making runs from the rings of Saturn to the mining stations of the Belt. When he and his crew stumble upon a derelict ship, the Scopuli, they find themselves in possession of a secret they never wanted. A secret that someone is willing to kill for - and kill on a scale unfathomable to Jim and his crew. War is brewing in the system unless he can find out who left the ship and why.

Leviathan Wakes Pdf

Detective Miller is looking for a girl. One girl in a system of billions, but her parents have money and money talks. When the trail leads him to the Scopuli and rebel sympathizer Holden, he realizes that this girl may be the key to everything.

Leviathan Wakes Tv Show

Holden and Miller must thread the needle between the Earth government, the Outer Planet revolutionaries, and secretive corporations - and the odds are against them. But out in the Belt, the rules are different, and one small ship can change the fate of the universe.

I complained in my review of Chasm City that the gee-whiz mechanics of space opera can't really sustain a 600-page narrative. It turns out I was perhaps incorrect: most of the lengthy examples I've sampled in the sub-genre (Alastair Reynolds, Iain M. Banks) are of the "dark and gritty" variety, grim, nihilistic visions of the future starring amoral asshole protagonists who are impossible to sympathize with. Even with a bunch of cool ideas on display, spending 700 pages in these books is exhausti I complained in my review of Chasm City that the gee-whiz mechanics of space opera can't really sustain a 600-page narrative. It turns out I was perhaps incorrect: most of the lengthy examples I've sampled in the sub-genre (Alastair Reynolds, Iain M. Banks) are of the "dark and gritty" variety, grim, nihilistic visions of the future starring amoral asshole protagonists who are impossible to sympathize with. Even with a bunch of cool ideas on display, spending 700 pages in these books is exhausting. Inevitably, I like them for about 400 pages and then I just... get tired.

But this book... this is the space opera I want to read. This book has the spirit of the genre's early days, characters who still marvel at the impossible immensity of the stars, but it isn't a pastiche or a throwback -- it's a natural evolution, and a remarkably satisfying one. The closest analogue I can think of is the oft-overpraised television show Firefly. Say what you will about the annoyingly zealous fanbase (or don't, you don't need the hate email); that show really did almost everything right in translating space opera to the modern age. The characters are complex, they operate in a world that is more grey than black & white, but each also has a clear moral center, so we know why they do the things they do, even when they are terrible things. You can make space opera (or epic fantasy or whatever) that is "dark" and "gritty" and still fun to read, with characters that are fun to read about. Because why would you want to explore the stars with assholes?

I'm having some trouble locking the tractor beam on my point here, but it basically comes down to this: if you want me to invest in your lengthy space epic, you better give me something more to care about than magic space technology macguffin crap, because I will get sick of that. This book gave me cool ideas and everything else: archetypal characters that nevertheless manage to be compelling and sympathetic, interesting and very well thought out politics and economics, constant narrative momentum without sacrificing character... It's the most fun I've had reading sci-fi in a long time.

I should have expected nothing less of Daniel Abraham, who is one-half of the pseudonymous James S.A. Corey; earlier this year, I gushed about the way he was able to do basically all the same stuff within the confines of the epic fantasy genre. And there is so much to like about the premise, just on the face of it: it's a few hundred years from now. Humanity has colonized Mars and invented an engine that allows fairly speedy travel, to a point. Our solar system has been colonized, with outposts on the moons

of Saturn and spread across the asteroid belts, but we've gone no further because, come on, space is freaking huge and what are the chances we're going to invent warp drive and quickly stumble across the other needles in the galactic haystack? Besides, we've got enough to keep ourselves busy: colonizing space hasn't exactly united humanity, and Earth, Mars and the Outer Planets Alliance operate under an uneasy truce, with heavy prejudices on all sides.

This stuff is very well thought out. People in the outer planets have lived for generations free from the constraints of heavy gravity, and have started to differ physically from Earthers. Language and culture have shifted too. This makes racism easier. Meanwhile the sheer logistical challenges of sustaining life on dead rocks (from mining interstellar ice to diets of food manufactured from algae) mean the "Belters" are still beholden to their terrestrial cousins.

The plot is a potboiler, effectively combining space action with a noir murder mystery (the two storylines intertwined in chapters that alternate between two POV characters). The characters are, like I said, broad types in some ways, but you can do broad types very well; a stock character can still be well rounded and compelling. This book manages to star both a world-weary detective and an idealistic space captain (with a smart-mouthed love interest and some wise-cracking ship's crew in the background) and not feel like a retread, to give the characters tough moral choices (and sometimes they make the wrong ones), without turning them into unrepentant sociopaths. It goes back to what I was saying many, many paragraphs ago about honoring conventions while expanding upon them.

I don't know if I am communicating this very well, but this book is all of that and also just impossible to stop reading. It's also funny without trying too hard, and thoughtful without being overly constructed or preachy. It's the book I have been looking for every time I picked up a space epic. I just didn't know until I found it. ...more

Leviathan Wakes Audiobook

I've been gorking out on Urban Fantasy and Romance lately, so mixing it with a FANTASTIC Space Opera was JUST what I needed!

I loved this book because in a lot of ways it humanized a BIG SF world in a way that is normally tough. I cared about the characters, I yelled at them a lot, and I enjoyed every minute! It felt modern and current, and created a really believable world that I wanted to live in and learn about. The politics of Earth vs Mars vs the Fringers, the mystery and vaguely noir-ish sub

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And I guess it's part of a future trilogy? Yum!

...more

I got nobody to blame but myself for this!

I've had a long-standing policy that I will not read an unfinished sci-fi/fantasy series because I spent over a decade waiting for a certain master of horror to get off his ass and finish what he started. Plus, I have no urge to join the ranks of fans of other fantasy writers who seem to spend more time coming up with excuses and side projects rather than producing new books to finish their on-going series.

Ignorance isn't a good defense, but it's all I got nobody to blame but myself for this!

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Ignorance isn't a good defense, but it's all I can claim. I picked this up on a whim after hearing it mentioned on the Incomparable podcast. I was a little leery when I saw it was almost 600 pages, but I didn't bother looking into exactly what I had gotten myself into until I started the book That's when I freaked the hell out:

9 novels?!? 9 goddamn novels and they're all this long? Holy shit! Only 5 have been released?

It's an unfinished series?? IT'S AN UNFINISHED SERIES! Oh, sweet jebus what have I done? And holy shit snacks they've been releasing off-shoot novels! ARGGHHH!! This is a nightmare!. OK, calm down. Let's see, there's actually two guys writing it under one pen name. Two guys can keep each other focused and moving forward. They've been releasing books like clockwork and have a schedule to bring it home. That's good news. And these off-shoots are Kindle shorts so it looks like they're really just true extras and not them filling their pockets while dawdling on the main series. Oh, and the Syfy network is doing a TV series based on it? That could be cool. Maybe this isn't so bad after all. Wait, one of the authors also works as an assistant to. Uh oh. Well, maybe he's learned what NOT to do when you're working on a series. Or maybe I'll end up not liking it very much and can just stop here.

No such luck. Damn it. I'm a sucker for the kind of sci-fi where even though they're in space the characters have dirt under their nails and skinned knuckles rather than lounging around in pristine uniforms on ships that look like corporate cube farms. I'm also much more of a believer in the idea that if humanity does make it to other worlds that we'll be dragging all our collective baggage out there with us rather than being explorers from a utopian society. Plus, I'm a big mystery fan and one of the main characters is a burned out space detective with a cynical outlook. And I also like (view spoiler)[zombie stories. So when it's alien vomit zombies? (hide spoiler)] Oh, yeah. I'm in.

I particularly liked the push/pull between the two main characters. Holden is an idealist who thinks that people will make good collective choices as long as they're told the truth, and that contrasts well with Miller's bleak outlook that people are stupid sheep. Put those two guys in a society built out among our solar system's asteroid belt that is about to go to war with Earth and Mars as they try to unravel the conspiracy behind it, and you've got yourself a pretty damn compelling sci-fi story.

I still kinda feel like a rube though.

Update 2/7/17 - You can tell from the original review I posted that I had a lot of misgivings about starting an unfinished series back when I first read this. A few years later after re-reading it I'm happy to report that it all worked out for the best. The authors have stuck to their schedule and delivered a book a year since they started, and the entire series has become one of my favorite sci-fi things ever. I also got a bonus in a pretty damn good TV series based on the show since then which just started it's second season. So this gamble has paid off pretty well so far. ...more

Leviathan Wakes Pages

EH? EH! this so-called space opera is anything but. no sense of wonder, no sense of truly divergent civilizations, no galactic span. and a clear lack of operatic emotions on display as well. perhaps this is due to the characterization, which is rote, uninteresting, and badly developed, with sub-par Firefly-style dialogue along for the ride. perhaps it is also due to the subject matter, which is confined to purely in-system politics between Earth and Mars (the two reigning superpowers) and the as

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This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, [click here](#).

â€• Way I see it, thereâ€™s three ways this can go,â€• Miller said. â€œOne, we find your ship still in dock, get the meds we need, and maybe we live. Two, we try to get to the ship, and along the way we run into a bunch of mafia thugs. Die gloriously in a hail of bullets. Three, we sit here and leak out of our eyes and assholes.â€•

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Well, really, the story begins when some alien species shoot a payload of virus at Earth and misses. This virus is capable of turning the human race into piles of nasty, smelly biosolids. Luckily for Earth, this contagion from space gets caught in Saturnâ€™s rings which keeps it from ever reaching its intended destination.

Holden is the second in command of an iceberg hauler. When he sees his ship Canterbury blown into dust particles by pirates, while the ship was trying to respond to an SOS, his world is suddenly expanded and contracted. Expanded by the beginning of a conflict that will spread across the known universe, but his world has also contracted down to the confining corridors of the small ship that he and his remaining crew members are trying to keep afloat.

The universal conflict might be more than a little bit Holden's fault. He broadcasts out to the world the existence of incriminating evidence that Mars might have had something to do with the pirates. The writers behind the name James S. A. Corey might be making a point about the misuse of disseminating wrong information on the internet. How many people believe it even when it doesn't make sense?

This section of the universe is shared between Earth, Mars, and what are called the Belters. Belters are people born in the asteroid belt. The Belters are generally taller, fitter, and tend to bastardize language much the same way as immigrants to America bastardized English. I kind of think of Holden as Gavrilo Princip, the man that touched off WW1 by assassinating Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Holden meant well; to him information is meant to be shared so that it can be analyzed and expounded upon. People unfortunately jump to conclusions without examining the evidence too closely, especially when the potential for war has been brewing for some time. The major powers in the universe are just looking for the right catalyst to start a war. Holden, inadvertently, provided the match.

• The moral complexity of the situation had grown past his ability to process it. •

So there is some lethal goo out there trapped in the rings of Saturn. Knowing humans to be the "curious monkeys" that they are... what do you think happens next? Yeah, they just can't help poking a stick at it.

Things go from bad to worse in a hurry.

Vomit zombies...need I say more?

Okay, maybe just a bit more because there are more stages to this thing.

• A flock of softball-sized spiderlike things crawled through the corridor, leaving a slick sheen of glowing slime behind them. It wasn't until he paused to knock one off the cart that he recognized them as severed hands, the trailing wrist bones charred black and remade. Part of his mind was screaming, but it was a distant one and easy to ignore. •

SHUDDER

As a counterweight to Holden is the cop Miller. He sees the world through rose murky colored glasses. He has seen the worst of people, so he doesn't need to speculate about what people are capable of.

He is on the case of a missing rich girl, and even after he is fired from his job, he continues to hunt for her. It turns out she is connected with the OPA, a Belter resistance group, and also she is somehow mixed up with the goo from space.

Miller hooks up with Holden and his crew, but it is an uneasy alliance. Holden's righteousness and Miller's cynicism mix like oil and water, but actually with the universe hanging in the balance their differing views create a middle which is generally where the right answers can be found.

So pull up a bowl of fungal curds and a cup of something that tastes close to coffee and have a blast watching the crew of the Rocinante cartwheel across the universe barely surviving one disaster after another as they do everything they can to stay alive and save the world.

The SyFy Channel has just launched a new series called *Expanse* that is based on the universe created by Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck in this series of books. I haven't watched the episodes yet because I really wanted to read the first book before watching any part of the TV series. If I have a complaint about the book, it is that it does feel a bit bloated, but the fact that it is unapologetically calling itself a space opera I feel kind of snarky even broaching the subject. The world building is fascinating, and from what I have read, the books will continue to add pieces to this world as the book series progresses. I have plans to read at least two more.

One last little tidbit from Miller which I found rather funny as I'm holding this 16 pound trade paperback novel in my hands: "The OPA man, Anderson Dawes, was sitting on a cloth folding chair outside Miller's hole, reading a book. It was a real book--onionskin pages bound in what might have been actual leather. Miller had seen pictures of them before; the idea of that much weight for a single megabyte of data struck him as decadent."

I just blew you a raspberry Miller.

If you wish to see more of my most recent book and movie reviews, visit <http://www.jeffreykeeten.com>
I also have a Facebook blogger page at: <https://www.facebook.com/JeffreyKeeten> ...more

Leviathan Wakes Hardcover

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

Here's another Jessica quirk: I LOVE sci-fi on screen, but I rarely like reading it. I have no idea why. Some things just are.

BUT. I binge-watched *The Expanse* last week, and it was good enough that it made me curious. There were no giant-insects-as-aliens, no surplus of tech gobbledygook, and no discernible artificial intelligence (the things that make me avoid sci-fi literature, even though I can usually handle the movie version), and what there was was mysteriously m

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The story revolves around two male MCs, Jim Holden, the XO of the ice-hauling freighter *Canterbury*, and Joe Miller, a washed-up, "prototypical Noir detective" (description stolen from Mike, b/c it's darn near perfect, and I didn't want to bother coming up with my own lesser version).

Holden is a thirty-ish bright-eyed idealist whose naivete borders on unbelievable, given his dishonorable discharge from the UN Navy (for punching a superior officer who needed to be punched, if I remember correctly) amongst other things. He's also rather immature about relationships, convincing himself that he's in love with every female he lusts after. His actions would've been more consistent with someone ten years younger, but then he wouldn't have the experience to land his XO gig, so what are you going to do?

Miller . . . is a hot tepid mess. He's in his mid-fifties, divorced in what feels like the recent past, but in reality is probably going on a decade ago, and unable to move on. He's a drunk. He moves through life in a contradictory haze of apathy and regret. Then, when he's forced to face a personal truth that he's thus far insulated himself from, he latches on to his last assignment: a retrieval job for the rich parents of a young woman who has turned her back on her upbringing to champion the Belters, the dregs and underdogs of her world.

During his detecting, Miller becomes infatuated with the Earthen-turned-Belter freedom fighter. He's obsessed with finding her, convincing himself that if he can save Juliette Andromeda Mao, all of life's disappointments and failures will be worth it.

It's another stretch, or at least it was for me, but I'm inexperienced in all things Noir, so maybe that's my ignorance talking.

Regardless, both Holden's idealism and Miller's transference were stretches that I was willing and able to accommodate, in part b/c of the character growth both MCs went through from start to finish.

At first, I straight-up didn't like Holden. I thought he was an idiot, who recklessly made decisions that had consequences he couldn't begin to understand, and a manwhore who justified his manwhoring by believing his was in lurrrrve. Every, single time. *rolls eyes*

But just as I was about to write him off, someone schooled him about a little thing called REALITY, and that in conjunction with several other hard-earned lessons he eventually took to heart, he turned into someone I could admire. He was no longer an unrealistic dreamer, he was an uncorruptible man who stood by the principles that guided every aspect of his life.

Miller . . . damn near broke my heart.

The only other thing I'll say about him is that (view spoiler)[the Romantic in me wishes and hopes that he's with Julie now. That when he inevitably succumbed to the protomolecule, he bonded with her, and she knew him and accepted him the way he knew her. *WAILS* (hide spoiler)]

Something readers coming to LEVIATHAN WAKES post-Syfy series should know is that Chrisjen Avasarala doesn't show up until book 2, CALIBAN'S WAR. The absence of any female POVs makes this a very male-driven story, but I've been assured that problem (if you see that as a problem) is resolved in the later installments. CALIBAN'S WAR introduces not only Chrisjen Avasarala, but also a "space Brienne with power armor." (<-----description also courtesy of Mike .)

visions of Aeryn Sun dance in my head

The first half of the book is mostly repeat, if you've watched the series, but I knew that going into it, and when I hit new material at the midway point, it took off. So that's also important to know: season one of the Syfy series doesn't cover the entire first book, only half of it.

So maybe it's consistently like this throughout the book for people who read LEVIATHAN WAKES prior to watching THE EXPANSE, but at around 60%, revelation upon revelation starting being revealed, and in a holy-crap-that's-so-cool or holy-crap-WTF?! kind of way, not an overwhelming bombardment of information kind of way.

I plowed through it, resenting every moment I had to spend away from it, and when I finally got to the

This baby starts off with a serious bang with our prologue introducing us to Julie. Julie and her crew have been taken captive and she's left alone in a dark locker for days on end. When her sanity begins to wane she breaks herself out to find an abandoned ship around her. When she does finally locate the crew, it's a ghastly sight to say the absolute least. This is where our journey begins - what happened to Julie? Where is she now? Why is the ship she was on sending out an emergency signal? Enter James 'the loudest mouth in the solar system' Holden, the XO of the ice miner ship the Canterbury. His ship has picked up the previously mentioned emergency signal.

The law of the solar system was unequivocal. In an environment as hostile to life as space, the aid and goodwill of your fellow humans wasn't optional.

When Holden and his crew board the Scopuli they have no idea what they will find and how this lone decision will be the catalyst that will change their lives forever. Enter down and out Detective Miller, he's been given orders to investigate the missing daughter of a high-level, wealthy family. He has no idea that the case and search for one Juliette Mao will be the catalyst that will change his life forever as well.

Told from alternating POVs between Miller and Holden we're given a broad and overarching look at the entire world and future Corey has built. This novel is a behemoth of a story and clearly the first in a series. A lot of ground work is laid down in the first half of this to build a world thoroughly for the reader. The beginning got a bit bogged down for me and veered into the hard sci-fi that I'm not a big fan of. However, when the two story lines finally converge, man does this thing get cookin'.

You spent your life in a stone bubble with your food, your water, your air shipped in from places so distant you could barely find them with a telescope and a certain moral flexibility was necessary.

For being a novel so steeped in traditional science fiction tropes Leviathan Wakes was incredibly accessible as a whole. A lot of delicate intricacy is at work in this novel dealing not only in the overarching mystery but in more subtle ways as well. Things like sexism, racism, human morality and where we draw lines are discussed regularly throughout this read. The technical demands and logistics of deep space exploration and colonization were handled deftly and secured on a realistic and clearly researched basis.

I've been reading a lot of thriller / suspense novels recently and this was a really nice break from a lot of the patterns these types of stories fall into. There is a great mystery here that keeps the intrigue alive for the entirety of the read. The world building is top notch and I was left endlessly impressed throughout. Even further, it was so refreshing to read something that was full of genuinely likable characters. I felt a strong connection to the crew of the Canterbury and loved Miller's thread and timeline.

All in all this lost a star for me because while as whole the novel was accessible and enjoyable (even for a non-sci-fi reader) the first 200 or so pages dragged a bit for me. There were multiple points that I didn't understand and had to get clarification for from my husband (as this is his favorite book series).

However, despite the tedious build up this was an impressive edge-of-your seat read and I enjoyed going out on a limb with this one. I'm not sure I'll be picking up the second installment right away as these novels are a huge undertaking but I'll certainly be reading on down the line!

I'll leave you with one of my favorite quotes:

There hadnâ€™t been a cowboy on Earth in a hundred years, and Mars didnâ€™t have a blade of grass that wasnâ€™t under a dome or a horse that wasnâ€™t in a zoo. Mariner valley had been settled by East Indians, Chinese and a small contingent of Texans. Apparently the drawl was viral. Because #TEXASFOREVER! ...more

Leviathan Wakes Kindle

Leviathan Wakes broke my reading slump! Listlessly slogging my way through various reads--a couple of which came highly recommended--I was starting to wonder if I had lost my book love. Then I picked this up for a Book o' the Month read. Expecting a detail dense sci-fi, within the first few pages I found myself hooked, and by page 100, thoroughly reeled in by this hefty genre mash-up. Space opera? Perhaps. Horror? Maybe. Military? Sort of. Mystery in space? Yes, definitely. And if by the end Leviathan Wakes broke my reading slump! Listlessly slogging my way through various reads--a couple of which came highly recommended--I was starting to wonder if I had lost my book love. Then I picked this up for a Book o' the Month read. Expecting a detail dense sci-fi, within the first few pages I found myself hooked, and by page 100, thoroughly reeled in by this hefty genre mash-up. Space opera? Perhaps. Horror? Maybe. Military? Sort of. Mystery in space? Yes, definitely. And if by the end it reminded me a little of *The Rook* and *The Gone-Away World*, that's not a negative comparison. All of them have some interesting philosophical underpinnings combined with genre mash-up, a light mystery-driven plot and a nice side of humor.

"Mariner Valley had been settled by East Indians, Chinese and a small contingent of Texans. Apparently the drawl was viral. They all had it now."

Oddly, I seem to be on an unintentional run of books created by collaborators, and in some cases it works well (Ilona Andrews), and in some, not so much. Although there's a few rough spots here--and I'd have to agree with a number of reviewers that pinpoint the ending as displeasing--it generally works very well. I went looking for some background on the collaboration, and the duo offered up a few thoughts on Scalzi's blog and in an appealing three-part Youtube video interview with author Carrie Vaughn: <http://youtu.be/Yu0xjpCy95o>

Initially, a fragmented viewpoint had trouble luring me in, but once the authors settled down for an exchange of viewpoints between Holden, an "executive officer" on an ice hauling deep-space freighter of outcasts, and Detective Miller, a world-weary member of an asteroid peace-keeping force, it was suddenly became completely absorbing. The culture felt at once familiar with generational differences between deep spacers who grow up on various asteroids and moons, and those that grow up on the more developed Earth and Martian colonies. The writers add a twist by including some physical differences that occur between Earth-gravity and deep-space gravity peoples, and further enlarge upon it by including economic and political angles that make the culture-building feel real. If the lead characters seem a bit stereotypical, it is because the authors intended them to be more archetypical. The genius is in their interactions, with the world-weary detective and his 'realistic' problem-solving contrasting with the outsider hero and his optimistic one. Suddenly 'right' and 'wrong' aren't so clear.

"The circle of life on Ceres was so small you could see the curve. He liked it that way."

I admire the writers' goal of a composition that addresses the emotion of the story, and for wanting to write an engaging style that doesn't depend on artificial cliffhangers (Psst! Modern UF and YA--we're talking about you). One reason I don't spend much time in deep-space sci-fi is the tendency to focus on world and tech-building at the expense of character and plot. Either that, or it all becomes a set-up for a giant philosophical thought experiment. Had I known from the beginning about the authors' intentions, I might have went into it with higher expectations of enjoyment.

"We're sentimentalists. We care whether the soul-crushed cop finds redemption. We care whether the quixotic holy fool of a captain overcomes his own failings in time to get the girl. And we expect you to care too. The risk we take is that you might not, and if you don't, there's no defense against the failure on our part. But you know what? We think it's worth it anyway."

It was worth it.

Four deep-space stars.

Cross posted at <http://clsiewert.wordpress.com/2013/0...> ...more

I enjoyed the story and the world (Mars, the asteroid belt between Earth and Mars, Earth, various mining stations) depicted in Leviathan Wakes. The setting and overall atmosphere of this near-future thriller has a noir feel to it (which only becomes more evident with the appearance of Detective Miller and his investigation into the missing Julia Mao). At times, you feel like you're reading a pulp crime detective novel in the spirit of Raymond Chandler, but Leviathan Wakes does more than answer questions about who done it (although who and what things happen become part of the ongoing drive of the plot). As in so much of really good science fiction, the question of what it means to be human and the moral implications of asking and acting on assumptions of that question are explored. Nothing seems forced, though. It just seems to happen in the natural progression of the story. The characters are what makes this a strong read, though. None of them are either totally good or bad or think in black and white.

8/2/2018. Met James S.A. Corey (Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck) at a GenCon writers' event. Fun to meet them and chat about their books for a minute or two! ...more

Leviathan Wakes Chapter Summary

I thought it was great and sad!!

Mel 3.5 stars

Actual rating: 4.5 stars.

Leviathan Wakes is a joint venture of Daniel Abraham, writer of the Long Prince Quartet and The Dagger and the Coin series, and Ty Franck, George R.R. Martin's former assistant and science fiction writer. They are writing under the pen name James S.A. Corey.

This is the first installment of The Expanse series which, at this point, has seven novels already published which means two things; the series is very successful and it's very late to this party.

I did some research and found an interesting article about the collaboration of the authors and the process which led to making/writing this novel. Ty Franck initially created The Expanse as the setting for a MMO role-playing game. He created a solar system that included colonies on the Moon, Mars, the asteroid belt and faraway planets, ruled by three major factions; Earth, Mars and the Outer Planets. There was also an alien presence, with a role to mix up the balance between factions. He also set up a political commotion to create conflict among the factions. Unfortunately, at the time, his efforts to create this game were futile because he couldn't find investors. He later started to run it as a text based role-playing game on a gaming forum, and there, the story began to form along with the characters, but eventually, the participants lost interest.

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Franck met Abraham at the science fiction convention but they became friends much later when Franck joined the local collective of science fiction writers called Critical Mass, with members such as Abraham, Martin, Tregillis, among others. They heard about his game and asked him to set one up for them. After a couple of sessions, Abraham was impressed with the level of detail and thought the setting would make a great novel. The initial plan was for Abraham to write a book based on Franck's notes but the

first attempt failed. Abraham wrote the prologue and the first chapter but Franck wasn't satisfied because Abraham didn't see the world in the same way. He rewrote the chapters and after that, they began to alternate chapters. Franck wrote the chapters following Holden and Abraham wrote the ones following Miller. Abraham focused on the prose and filling in the details regarding characters and Franck focused on the world building and the plot. Leviathan Wakes was born.

As I mentioned above, the story takes place in the Sol system; the Moon, Mars, the asteroid Belt and beyond. Humanity has colonized the planets but the interstellar travel is still beyond their reach. The Sol system has become a network of colonies with tensions brewing, the mineral rich outer planets begrudge their dependence on Earth and Mars and the political and military influence they have over the Belt and beyond.

The novel is written in a third person limited style and each chapter is told from the POV of a central character. The first one is Jim Holden, the captain of the ice miner who, along with his crew, stumbles upon a derelict, abandoned ship, the Scopuli, and uncovers a secret that threatens to throw the entire system into war. The other one is Miller, a washed up detective, given a case to find a missing girl and his investigation leads him to the Scopuli and Holden. Soon, they find themselves on the same side, and while the solar system is on the brink of the civil war, they discover a vast conspiracy that threatens the entire human race.

It's hard to say more without giving up the major plot twists so I'll leave it at that and hope that would be enough to intrigue you.

Even though Leviathan Wakes is imagined to have a classic space opera feel, I'm very glad to inform you that it doesn't suffer from the dreary info dumps about technology and space stuff. There are some technical inputs but nothing that will make you feel bored.

There is something for everyone here; a gripping story, detailed world building, detective mystery, spaceship combats, thrilling action scenes, suspense, and the best of all, a cast of great, fleshed out characters, which drive this great story with an unpredictable ending.

The series has been adapted for TV, also under the title The Expanse, if you want catch a glimpse of what you can expect from the book. I must admit, I watched the first season of the show before I've read the book and the show intrigued me enough to give the book a try, and after reading it, I must say the casting for the show was very well done and it was kinda cool going through the book with the character's appearances already formed in my mind.

I highly recommend this novel, even to those of you who aren't fans of the space stuff, and I hope you'll enjoy it as much as I did because I can't wait to start the next one. ...more