



A Practical Man

Karen Traviss

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On the surface, it seems like just another routine contract for Boba Fett and his Mandalorian commandos, but the mystery client who hires them to start a small war is more dangerous than any of them can possibly imagine. When the Yuuzhan Vong invasion force sweeps into the galaxy, the Mandalorians find they're on the wrong side—fighting for an alien culture that will bring about the end of their own.

Now Fett has to choose between his honor and the survival of his people. Since he's a practical man, he's determined help the resistance beat the Yuuzhan Vong—even if it means working with a Jedi agent. Trouble is, no one trusts a man with Fett's reputation. So convincing the New Republic that they're fighting on the same side is a tall order. Denounced as traitors, Fett's Mandalorians need to stay one step ahead of their Yuuzhan Vong paymasters—and the Republic who sees them as collaborators with the most destructive enemy the galaxy has ever faced. . . .

A Practical Man Details

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From Reader Review A Practical Man for online ebook

Darryl Dobbs says

I've enjoyed Traviss' work before (frankly, I wish the Republic Commando novels didn't have to end unfinished). And this novella was similarly well written. However, it was rushed. The story was compacted and broken - which I'm sure is by design but it didn't do the plot justice. I am also unhappy with the loner Boba Fett suddenly leading a small army. Not his style, or at least not the style I'd like him to have. If this is a pre-cursor to the New Jedi Order storyline, then I'm glad to have read it.

Lyn says

A Practical Man is a 2006 short story featuring Boba Fett and acting as a precursor to the New Jedi Order series of novels.

Author Karen Traviss explores a third great power source in the Lucas universe, neither the Jedi or the Sith, really not even directly involving The Force, but rather the Mandalorians and Fett's miraculous escape from the Tatooine Sarlacc.

The Mandalorians were a warrior group comprised primarily of humans who operate out of a clan based confederacy, and frequently appear in the Star Wars expanded universe as mercenaries or bounty hunters.

In this story, Fett leads a group of weapons for hire and then makes some tough, but practical, decisions regarding the impending invasion of the galactic Yuuzhan Vong.

This story also surveys the continuity distinctions between the Star Wars Legends mythology and the film based Canon. Lucasfilms has stated that the "true" narrative follows the films exclusively, while the Legends stories are possibly, according to some purists "Apocrypha". There is some interesting reading regarding the overall continuity issues and Disney's acquisition in 2012.

I like the Legends stories, as there is a lot of talented writing and a wealth of fun adventure fiction. This is a good example.

Wojtek says

Dull and annoyingly-written story with a (in my opinion) horrible 'Mandalorians-do-this, Mandalorians-do-that' scheme explaining anything from a way of killing an opponent to a method of ordering an ale in a cantina through a Mandalorian way of life. Everything has to be 'mandalorianised' in Travis' part of the Star Wars EU and I liked it for a short time, now it really makes me sick of her works; she tried to create a culture and did a good job in the whole culture creating process, yet it wasn't subtle at all (and destroyed the mysterious Mandalorian aura, replacing it with a well-explained society of families bound to traditions and rules as much as the sanctimonious Jedi of the Old Republic Era).

I tried to make an amateur translation of this text to Polish, but I just couldn't take this awful 'Mandalorian-ness' any longer and managed to do only half of the job.

The only thing I remember liking from this text was a somewhat cool one-liner: 'You may run, but you will only die tired.'

Said by Boba Fett - a man who shouldn't be speaking anyway.

Dan says

One of the traits of science fiction is that it often confuses the reader and conveys a sense of other-ness, alien perception, and unfamiliar technology, though as the reader comes to understand the world and characters it becomes less confusing. However, this probably shouldn't be the case in a novel (or novella) set in a universe with which the reader is already very familiar - i.e. Star Wars. I was very confused for the first half of the story, but once we got to Boba Fett's perspective in the second half it got much better. 2 stars for the first half and 4 stars for the second half. Oh, and also don't be fooled by the page count - it's only 51 pages, not 71, the rest is an excerpt from another Star Wars novel.

Kaleb Phillips says

This one.... well, what can I say about this one?

It was alright, there are times when the book felt interesting and intriguing. But there were more times when the narrative was confusing and gave information not vital to the story, or back story. It follows the thoughts of two characters during the same instances, instead of only one, which gives an odd sense of dual personalities, seeing as you read a thought and think it is one character, only to find that it's the other that is suddenly the star of the show again. It also will flash to the antagonist to give very little relative information on what is happening, merely showing what he thinks of Boba Fett, or confirming what you already knew/thought from the information given by Boba Fett and his companions.

It's a decent read if you don't mind re-reading parts to try and unravel what is happening and make sense of it all. It has an epic intergalactic plot that seems dwarfed by what is actually going on in the book, and abruptly ends without any climax whatsoever. When things finally start getting interesting, and the plot begins to grow with depth, the credits roll. It's only actually 70% of the book, because afterward is a "Free chapter" of one of her other books from the Republic Commando series.

Overall I did not hate it. But it was confusing in parts that had to be read over again, and was somewhat disappointing, more so at the sudden end. However, it was kind of cool to see Boba Fett out and about, and to learn more of what he is like, at least in the mind of this author.

Erik Fjeldsted says

This was a short, short story and I was really hoping for a Boba Fett to have a good shoot 'em up scene. But if you take out the mutant creatures trying to take over the Galaxy it was about him living up to his dad's legacy and how the sarlacc pit still gave him nightmares.

I feel like with Boba Fett and Mandalorians as the protagonist it could've had a lot more action and explosions. That's kind of what they are known for.

And this book didn't conclude well at all. It talked about he was preparing Mandalore for a big battle with these creatures, but then nothing happened.

Don't waste an hour reading this one, unless you really love Boba Fett and then you will be disappointed, like me.

Jim C says

My rating is 3.5 stars.

A short story that introduces the storyline of the New Jedi Order and involves everybody's favorite bounty hunter. This short story is about the Vong meeting up with the Mandalorians. I liked the story up until the ending. Even though this was a short story, I thought the ending was a little abrupt. I think fans of Boba Fett will enjoy how he handles situations and how his plans are well thought out.

Ernest Solar says

What can I say, the story is about Boba Fett and the Mandalorians, how can it not be a great story? Traviss always does a wonderful job with any Star Wars story that she writes. It's clear that she respects the Star Wars universe and the mythology of the tale. Therefore, a great author paired with one of the greatest characters ever developed, an easy win. Plus, (as if it can't get any better) the story is set at the beginning of the Yuuzhan Vong war and there are ties to Jango Fett, it only keeps getting better and better. Honestly, it's a great story, engaging, and a joy to see the universe through Boba Fett's eyes.

Bernard says

This is the first story I've read by Karen Traviss. But it won't be the last. As I was looking up the New Jedi Order reading list I noticed there was this oddly placed e-book shorty story listed as #1.5 of the NJO. Turns out it was published in print as well, in the back of Legacy of the Force: Sacrifice. That book having sat on my shelf for too many years waiting its turn to be read, I nevertheless picked it up out of order, dusted it off (literally) and flipped to the back to read this Boba Fett and friends / Yuuzhan Vong combo story set in the early days of the invasion (hence its placement as #1.5). Let me tell you two things about why I thought this book was really cool.

1) It was the first story in the Star Wars Legends (nee Expanded) universe, post ROTJ, that incorporated elements from the prequel movies. Where I'm currently at in my publication-order tour of the Star Wars novels, I'm just now getting to the point in time where authors could start using the prequel movie material. Having Boba reminisce about Jango, and the sole Jedi in the story mention to Boba a service which Jango dubiously provided the Jedi during the Clone Wars, made this a double-win.

2) Sympathizing with the "bad guys." Yes, it is a story about the Mandalorians. Sure, I've had some sympathy for them, thanks to the Clone Wars & Rebels animated series, but this was the first time, apart from the hilarious short story in the Tales of the Bounty Hunters about Boba & Han Solo in their old age, where the Mandalorians really played a big part of the story. Hm, maybe I'm forgetting some details of K.W. Jeter's trilogy, but that's saying something--they weren't very memorable.

I'll definitely be looking up Traviss' Republic Commando books--all in good time, though. I still have to finish the New Jedi Order!

Dale Card says

It was going well, then it just ended.. not on a cliffhanger, it literally just..ended, should have been 150-200 more pages to finish properly.. so much lost potential, a complete waste of time.

M Hamed says

more like(Star Wars: The New Jedi Order, #1.5).it explains why the Mandalorians did not appear in the series at all, but not good enough

Dave Logghe says

I'm no stranger to the Star Wars extended universe. In middle school and high school, these were the only books I read with any type of eagerness or regularity. Having read a lot of it, I have come to terms with the idea that most licensed star wars novels are little more than decent to good fan-fiction. You can usually assume there will be a jedi who makes only lightside decisions and usually one who will do the opposite (always two, there are). However, this simple little novella broke out of the preconceptions I have, and became something more. It wasn't fan-fiction, but more a good novel (or novella) that happened to take place in the star wars universe. The characters acted and thought like real people. Not to mention it's probably the best treatment Boba Fett has received in any venue (that I've seen thus far anyway). It's fortunate that it takes place right at the beginning of the new jedi order storyline because I know have a vested interest thereof and look forward to diving in. I also look forward to reading more from Karen Traviss, be it Star Wars fiction or other.

Joseph says

Pretty cool and probably a nice fill in between Prime Vector and Onslaught. One thing that might be misleading is Boba Fett is in the book, but maybe not the main character. It is another Mando guy, which is a little disappointing because everyone knows Boba Fett is the best character in the SW universe. So I wish it was more on him, but still a good solid mini book. Maybe he and other Mando's will be in the other books. I am not sure.

J says

I enjoyed and have always enjoyed Ms. Traviss' take on the Mandalorians. She paints a wonderful picture of apparent mercenaries, doing the most difficult thing, fighting for the wrong side to gain valuable intelligence all while no one can know the good that they are doing.

Amy says

I love Fett, but I couldn't get into it.
