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Star Wars: Life Debt - Aftermath, Book 2



Synopsis

Set between the events of Return of the Jedi and The Force Awakens, the never-before-told story that began with Star Wars: Aftermath continues in this thrilling novel, the second book of Chuck Wendig's New York Times best-selling trilogy.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Customer Reviews

Anybody who watched The Force Awakens and has questions about how and why the Empire transformed into the First Order would do well to read this book. We see the foundation of the First Order being laid and we see the major players being brought into the fold. For example, General Hux's father, Brendol Hux, is recruited into the military junta that is rapidly taking control of what is left of the Empire by Rae Sloane, who has been promoted to the rank of Grand Admiral by her mysterious commander, Gallius Rax. Rax is shrouded in mystery, having come up through Imperial Naval Intelligence and most of his career history is classified. He is cunning and ruthless; his love of opera and classical music just barely masks a brutal warlord that is willing to do anything, use any weapon or tactic, to achieve his goals. Anybody who defies him, or who he simply considers unfit for the new order he is building out of the wreckage of Endor, ends up dead or missing-in-action.

Sloane doesn't trust Rax, in fact he creeps her out quite a bit, but in the end she is forced to dance to his tune. Meanwhile, Han and Chewie's attempt to liberate the Wookiee homeworld of Kashyyyk failed miserably. Chewie is an Imperial prisoner-of-war and Han is missing-in-action. Leia, desperate to find him, turns to team that rescued Wedge in the first book. This is where Life Debt starts and takes us on a high-stakes adventure in the final months of the Galactic Civil War.

Between this book and Bloodline, it is clear that secrecy to preserve the plot of The Force Awakens for theaters affected the scope of the stories being told in the new expanded universe material. With the movie released the gloves have come off.

Last year during the craziness of Force Friday, fans tried to satiate their desire for anything Star Wars with new toys, coffee mugs, shirts and books. In all the mayhem, one book stood out from the rest as the one that people could not wait to devour, Aftermath. This was going to be the start of the new canon, the story of what happened after Return of the Jedi and set up for The Force Awakens. Sadly the reception for the first book, a planned trilogy, was lukewarm at best, leaving fans hoping that the second book would redeem the series. Themes There are a couple of interesting themes in the book. The first is the way in which the Empire looks to reestablish itself after all the losses it has sustained. It's idea, propaganda. They will just feed the populous a fictitious narrative backed up by various acts of staged benevolence to sell the facade. There is an exchange in the book between Rae Sloane and Gallius Rax that feels chillingly familiar, "He stops her there. "Rae, do you know much about opera?" "...I know opera, though I am not an enthusiast." He clasps his hands together. "Become one. It will make our partnership more rewarding for you. Opera moves me. And yet none of it is real. Therein lies the crux of what you need to understand: Something does not need to be real for it to have an effect. The instruments and song, the drama and melodrama, the pathos and tragedy. It's a lie. A fiction. And yet what happens on the stage speaks a kind of truth just the same. Facts and truth are separate things. I am more interested in truth than I am fact. I am comfortable with artifice when it suits our needs. And here, it does.

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