



# Katya's War

*Jonathan L. Howard*

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## **Katya's War** Jonathan L. Howard

The battle lines have been drawn. The people of Russalka turn upon one another in a ruthless and unwavering civil war even while their world sickens and the deep black ocean is stained red with their blood. As the young civilisation weakens, its vitality fuelling the opposing militaries at the cost of all else, the war drums beat louder and louder.

Katya Kuriakova knows it cannot last. Both sides are exhausted – it can only be a matter of days or weeks before they finally call a truce and negotiate. But the days and weeks pass, the death toll mounts, and still the enemy will not talk.

Then a figure from the tainted past returns to make her an offer she cannot lightly refuse – a plan to stop the war. But to do it she will have to turn her back on everything she has believed in, everything she has ever fought for, to make sacrifices greater even than laying down her own life. To save Russalka, she must become its greatest enemy.

## **Katya's War Details**

Date : Published November 5th 2013 by Strange Chemistry

ISBN : 9781908844187

Author : Jonathan L. Howard

Format : Paperback 320 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Young Adult, Fiction, Dystopia

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# From Reader Review Katya's War for online ebook

## Grace Troxel says

This review originally appeared on my blog, Books Without Any Pictures:  
<http://bookswithoutanypictures.com/20...>

Katya's War is the second book in Jonathan L. Howard's Russalka Chronicles, which are set on a watery planet that was colonized by a group of Russians but eventually broke away from Earth's influence.

Katya's War picks up after Katya Kuriakova has saved the world from an imminent threat, and now she's trying to get on with her life as a submarine captain even as her planet is in the midst of a civil war that she helped to start. When Katya receives a strange request from her former reluctant ally, the pirate Kane, it changes her world completely.

Katya's spent her whole life believing that the FMA are heroes and that her planet is the honorable underdog that beat the odds against evil oppressors. What Kane tells Katya challenges this worldview and shows that the government that she's supported wholeheartedly has done some pretty nasty things in the name of its citizens. Katya realizes that the maintenance of the status quo comes at an unacceptable price, and she's in a unique position to do something about it. Katya struggles with her conscience as she sorts out what really happened, who she can trust, and whether she's willing to risk her life to do the right thing.

It took me a while to get fully immersed in the book, partly since it's been a while since I read Katya's World, and I had forgotten some of the major characters/events/tensions in the story. However, once the plot picked up, the book was impossible to put down. Howard writes some great characters, my favorite of which is Tasya Morevna, often called the she-devil. Tasya was a leader of the Yagizban, which has been fighting the FMA in the civil war. She's competent, ruthless, and an excellent shot, and her preferred means of getting out of a sticky situation involves lots of firepower.

One of the things that's great about this series is that there's no love story whatsoever. Most young adult novels (especially those with female protagonists) have a romance as a central conflict in the story, and it's refreshing to see something so different from the norm.

The ending leaves off on a massive cliffhanger, and I'm just itching to see what happens next.

If you're a fan of submarines, politics, and adventures on (or under) the high seas, then be sure to check out this series!

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## Alek Cristea says

Katya's World was the first YA SF I had read in a long time (the last being City of Ember which I am not even sure counts fully as YA and not as middle grade) and I quite simply loved it. Now I'm picky when it comes to SF versus how I am with fantasy and so I read far less of it (my only other recent venture in the genre being The Expanse Series). But Howard's series, set on a planet covered by water and taking place underwater appealed to me. It was also the first Strange Chemistry title I read.

And I loved it.

So I was very excited when Katya's War came out and once I actually got round to reading it (damn you depression for the time it took me to get this!), I wondered why I hadn't done so sooner. Katya's War is everything Katya's World was but ten times better. There is more action, more mystery, more character development, and the book stops on the most amazing cliffhanger, one that made me want to scream for the sequel to already be out!

Katya's War picks up not long after when Katya's World ended, with Katya now captain of her own tiny ship and trying to resume a semblance of a normal life as war rages on around her. She has nightmares of everything on Russalka being destroyed and wishes more than anything that things could go back to the way they were before. Or that at least she didn't know everything she did. So of course, when Havilland Kane walks back into her life, escorted by the Cherkova, Katya is even angrier. Let alone when he asks her to commit treason and risk herself.

Kane doesn't give Katya much of a chance to say no as he takes her on a little underwater tour of the truth, facing her with horrors she would never have imagined possible. And when face to face with the truth of it all, Katya realises that the only thing she has left to do is to follow Kane in a crazy mission that could very well cost her life.

Howard does a brilliant job of his character development in this second instalment of the series, as Katya grows up faster than she would have liked to, faced with harsh truths that are almost unacceptable to her. But Katya is a strong character, and although she carries her own self-doubts and fear, she is capable to face up to the situation and not let it destroy her. Kane remains much of his old self, part mysterious, part truth-bringer, mixed with a lot of sadness, more even than anyone can imagine. For the secrets he revealed in Katya's World are nothing compared to those he still holds inside. We also get to see a very different side of Tasya, softer and gentler, hidden beneath the veneer of the Cherkova.

All in all, the characterisation is excellent. Howard isn't afraid of showing characters that are flawed, or a darker shade of grey. He makes no difference in between his male and female characters and they are all three dimensional, with their own agendas. And, no matter what their past, what they have done or secrets they hold, I find each and every one of them likeable. Howard manages to turn the darkest of past into something that doesn't vilify a character, but instead builds them to the person they are now.

The pace and world building is just as excellent, with Howard managing to dump a lot of information on the reader about the world (and its past, through Kane) without ever boring or droning on. He drops enough hints here and there to let us know that something big is coming, that a revelation is about to happen, and then does so slowly, letting us work parts out through Katya as Kane slowly sets up the scene.

The mystery as to the nature of the treason is kept very well until the very end of the book, despite Katya knowing exactly what she is doing. Focussed as she is, she spares no idle thoughts towards the ins and outs of it and allows Howard to keep us hanging until the very last line of the book. The very last line that creates the most awesome-yet-frustrating cliffhanger that I have ever read. But then Howard knows how to end most chapters in a way that makes you jump to the next page even if it's 3am and you have promised yourself to stop after this chapter because you really need to get some sleep.

Katya's War is even more awesome than Katya's World was and was one of those books I just couldn't put down. As soon as the second chapter I was hooked, enthralled, and intrigued by the set up. I loved seeing Kane and Tasya again as well as Katya and the trio definitely took me on one hell of a ride through the

Russalkan Sea. The pace just did not ever let up, giving the reader just long enough to catch his breath every now and again before picking up speed again.

Definitely one of my favourite books this year.

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## **Online Eccentric Librarian says**

*More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>*

Katya's War continues the story begun in Katya's World and amps it up quite a bit. The stakes get higher and Katya is going to be tried and pushed even further than in the first book.

While the first book focused on the Yagz, this book focuses on the FMA - Katya's own government. Things are clearly not stable with her government and Katya is going to be once again drawn into the machinations of the Terrans. But the Yagz aren't done with her either. Will Katya survive long enough to cut through the lies and work toward saving her planet?

This was a much more serious novel with some grave issues to confront concerning her government and a strange round of mystery sudden psychotic illnesses in the underwater colonies. Everything she has been told is turning out to be a lie and she has to figure out what she will sacrifice, including herself, to try to save her people. We're given real character growth for her and it's clear she is going to have to grow up even faster.

As with the previous book, we are given a lot of action (this time, it's personal and not with machines). But no info dump is needed at the beginning - we're dropped right into where we left off, with Katya now the owner of the Baby - newly renamed after her Uncle.

In all, if you liked the first, you're going to like the second. And we're set up for a third book nicely.

Received as an ARC from the publisher.

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## **Ashley Ferguson says**

This review and more can be found at The AP Book Club!

*\*I received this book as an eARC from Strange Chemistry on NetGalley in exchange for an honest review\**

It's so hard to find a straight, hard sci-fi novel in the YA genre right now. Most everything is a mix of sci-fi/fantasy, fantasy, dystopian, post-apocalyptic, or romance, or some combination. The Russalka Chronicles comes as a breath of fresh air, and Katya's War did not disappoint!

Although I had a little bit of a hard time getting into this story, I really enjoyed it once I finally got past all of the (necessary) setup at the beginning. It doesn't really seem all that important to know about the FMA and

the Nags and the fighting and Katya's life in between Katya's World and this book, but all of it ends up being a huge reason why this book works so well. Katya feels safe amidst the civil war, and figures it must be on the brink of ending soon. The big reveal in the middle would not have been nearly as effective if the seemingly-slow beginning hadn't been there.

Katya really had to grow up in Katya's World, and was put into extraordinary situations that were incredibly difficult for adults, much less a 15 year old girl. In Katya's War, she finds herself in even worse circumstances, and handles them better than the people who put her there to begin with. She's quick-thinking, caring, loyal, adaptable, and willing to do whatever it takes to save her world, regardless of what that means for her personally. I think she's one of my favorite heroines in any series, and I love watching her grow and mature. I don't like that such a young girl is forced to make the decisions she has made, but I think it's great that she handles them with grace and never allows them to tear her down or give up.

I was really glad that some old favorites were back too - Kane, the Chertokva, Sergei, and others eventually show up to put in their two cents. These minor characters don't go through the amount of change and growth that Katya does and stay mostly the same, but each one is met with certain situations that make them look at aspects of their lives differently. They have minor revelations and try to right past wrongs, and I thought it was really neat to get to know them even better. I really hope they come back in the final book in the trilogy!

This book was very similar to Katya's World, but still had its own unique characters and plot points and conflicts. I love that it's hard science fiction, and I would definitely recommend this series to anyone looking for pure sci-fi in YA. If you've read Katya's World, you definitely don't want to miss this sequel! The ending is so open that I can't wait for the final book to come out so I can find out what's next for Katya, Russalka, and all her friends. 4/5!

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### **Corina Becker says**

So what we've got here is a cute, COMPETENT heroine who, while admittedly sheltered, is really smart and DOESN'T fall in love with the male lead (THANK YOU!!!)

And we have her on a deadly world with no land and crushing water, where you pretty much always have to use your wits to survive. So yeah, let's make the colony population Russian descent. So we got submarine futuristic-steampunk here, with a well-rounded cast of pirates, kick-ass crew, and well, awesome people being awesome, getting involved with plots that they don't necessarily want to get involved with, because they're decent people Doing The Right Thing.

And let's throw in some lovecraft references here and there, for just plain chuckles.

But mainly, writers, pay attention, there are TWO ass-kicking women in this novel, neither of them romantically interested in the male lead. Actually, NO romance in this novel, just plain ADVENTURE~~~!!!!

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### **Mia (Parentheses Enthusiast) says**

Wow!

If the books I've read so far this year have taught me anything, it's that sequels can *definitely* be better than their prequels. (Cough, cough, The Ask and the Answer.)

I enjoyed the first installment of this series, *Katya's World*, but not enough to seriously search for the sequel. Flash forward about a year, when I found myself at Powell's City of Books in Portland, Oregon. (Side note: It was huge! It was magnificent! The place took up an entire city block and is practically made of books! Do yourself a favour and go- it's a pilgrimage every booklover should make.)

While perusing the massive shelves, I stumbled upon *Katya's War*. The title sounded familiar, so I picked it up and soon realized that I'd read the first book in the series. Why not? It was a \$10 paperback, and I needed a good novel to ward away the growing feeling of summer laziness. Once back home, I checked *Katya's World* out from the library. I reread it and liked it much more than the first time around, then got started on this little gem.

And, again, if I may, wow. It takes place six months or so from the events of the first book, giving our protagonist, Katya Kuriakova, some time to cool off. During this time, she's matured, become the captain of her uncle's ship, received the coveted Hero of Russalka Award... and a war has started. This conflict between the Federal Maritime Authority and the Yagizba Enclaves seems finite and somewhat inconsequential, until, that is, someone else enters the picture. That would be, of course, Havilland Kane, the not-so-bloodthirsty, eccentric Terran pirate. And he is, of course, accompanied by the actually bloodthirsty, stone-cold killer Tasya Morevna, A.K.A. The Chertovka or She-Devil. And what they have travelled the world to say to Katya will change her life, and the trajectory of the war, forever.

We are thrown back into the hardy, unforgiving world of Russalka and the cast we met in the first installment. The plot develops at breakneck speed as dark secrets about the FMA and the truth about the war against Earth surfaces. The characterization in this book is spot-on: Katya matures and wrestles with the idea of martyrdom and her loyalty to the Federal Maritime Authority, we see deeper into Tasya's personality, revealing that she might just have a conscience, and Kane... Well, Kane is absolutely terrific, as usual. Case in point: "I like the sound of a groaning hull. Don't you, Katya?" he asked. 'Makes you feel alive, when you think of all those millions of tonnes of water just out there, and how narrow a rope we walk in this life. Just one silly, inconsequential thing- *seemingly*,' he corrected himself, '*seemingly* inconsequential thing could kill us all in a tenth of the time it takes to think, *Well, gosh, that's a lot of water.*'" But he isn't all philosophical and cheery as aspects of his past and his place in the Terran war are examined. He reminds me of the eleventh doctor!

I feel the writing style itself has elevated as well. Despite the same typos and editing mistakes that pocked the first novel, this was quality writing, a solid plot that takes unexpected twists and turns, and characters that are put through hell and back but actually evolve and are built up through their experiences and pasts. It was highly enjoyable and I am REALLY hoping there is a third installment in the Russalka Chronicles. I can hardly wait! This series seems to be a hidden gem in the world of sappy, romance-driven YA and predictable science fiction. I loved it so far, and if the improvement between *Katya's World* and *Katya's War* is anything to go by, the next Russalka Chronicles should be amazing.

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## Caroline says

Rating: 3.5 out of 5, recommended

Source: ARC from Netgalley (Thanks very much Strange Chemistry!)

I enjoyed the first book in this series, (Katya's World: Russalka Chronicles #1), but I felt like the world as a whole needed development. In the second book in the series you get a tonne more development, whilst also watching Katya grow as a character, until she becomes absolutely awesome. I loved reading about her moral dilemmas throughout this book, as she wrestles with the difference between right and wrong and between friend and enemy. There's less about her technical proficiency, which was A BIG DEAL in the first book, and more about her internal strength. Her ability to know the risks and consequences of her actions, but still carry on because it's the right thing to do is something I admired hugely about her. I also LOVE the fact that there is no romance. Katya has got a job to do, her entire world is in danger, and I adore Jonathan L. Howard for not throwing a love interest in to the mix for extra ~tension. Instead he relies on the strength of the plotting and the tension of the narrative to carry the book.

My favourite character from the first book, Tasya Korevna, otherwise known as the Chervotka or sometimes the She-Devil, is back with a vengeance, and also the tiniest hint of a conscience, which does nothing to stem her badass-ery. My one criticism would perhaps be that the other secondary characters aren't developed as much as her or Katya. There's a lot of plot to get through so mostly Howard focusses on racing you through the story, rather than giving you deeper insights into the other personalities on Russalka.

Russalka itself made more sense to me after this novel too, perhaps just because I've spent more time there now, well, in a book sense... urgh you know what I mean. The whole concept of a planet whose population spends all their time underwater was a little difficult to grasp at first, but I suppose it's a lot like living on a space station, except, underwater. There were a few classical, Russian myth references that I recognised as being references but was unable to actually understand! This was more intriguing than annoying however as none of them were integral to the plot, and it just made the book as a whole more layered. Plus what a cliffhanger to hand on! I can't wait for the next one.

All in all, Katya's War is a worthy sequel to Katya's World, in some senses surpassing its predecessor. Definitely worth a read if you enjoy strong female protagonists and/or science fiction!

More reviews like this over at two girls, one suitcase

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## Pili says

I got the ARC for Katya's War via NetGalley and that reminded me that I already had book 1 (Katya's World) and that I needed to read it, which means I've read both books in quite quick succession.

Since this is the review for book 2 in the Russalka Chronicles series it means it will have inevitably spoilers for book 1, so be warned. I will however try my very best to keep the review as spoiler free as possible for all the twists in this book.

Katya's War starts a few months after the ending of Katya's World, and we see Katya still adjusting to her new position as the hero of Russalka, the captain of the Lukuyan and still trying to recover emotionally to all



the hardships she went through. But her emotional turmoil has nothing on the war turmoil that Russalka's going through, the civil war is getting more brutal by the minute.

Katya is trying to do her job and make a life for herself but it seems that she won't be allowed to limit herself to that. When Kane barges again into her life with completely unexpected revelations and an even more unexpected crazy mission for her, she's thrown back into the action with her world completely thrown upside down.

This book has all the things I loved from Katya's World and takes them to the next level. There's more world building, more character development and the plot keeps on thickening! Katya does a lot more growing up in this book, trying to deal with the tough truths that are put before her eyes and struggling to decide what to do about it and how to do it. Katya is not the only character that grows but she's the one that's mainly in the spotlight. Her choices won't just affect her or a band of people, this time her choices can change the course of history of the whole world.

As with book one, there's plenty of action, plenty of moral dilemmas and no romance whatsoever, even if I keep on wondering if we're not getting a few hints here and there about what might be? Still, I don't see romance becoming a driving force in this books at any given point!

The ending... well, I really didn't see it coming at all! And what an ending! It clearly qualifies as a cliffhanger but even though I just can't wait to read the next book, I don't consider it one of those killer cliffhangers (maybe I'm getting used to them now?).

Katya's War is what any second book in a trilogy should be, a fantastic read on itself, one where the action progresses the plot, the stakes keeps on getting higher and we get some unexplained lil tidbits that we hope will make sense in the last book! No middle book syndrome for this one at all! Very well deserved 4.5 stars!

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## **Paul Decker says**

\*I received this book as an eARC from Strange Chemistry/Angry Robot on NetGalley in exchange for an honest review\*

Like with Katya's World, I had no idea where the story was going for most of the novel. I would have one idea where the climax of the novel would be and then that would resolve and I'd be nowhere near finished with the book. There were so many surprises and twists.

The world of Rossulka is so interesting, a world of water with submarine cities. I enjoyed getting to see more of the world, especially since I was on a boat as I read it.

Katya plays such an interesting and pivotal role in the war efforts. In this novel, you get to see many different perspectives.

As a middle book in a trilogy, there were many things alluded to that never were revealed. The last sentence makes me want to read the next book immediately!

Although it took me a little bit to get back into the world and story, by the end this book really had me captivated. I give it a 4/5.

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## Infatuated with Light says

Thank goodness I brought this book and Katya's World together, because as soon as I was done with the first story, I got separation anxiety and jumped right back into Russalka.

This story was just as strong as the prequel. Katya is thrown into extreme situations, becoming an enemy of her own people to save them from self-destruction. That's a lot of responsibility on a sixteen year-old's shoulders. The classic, *The fate of the world rest on you* feeling was there, but it was executed realistically. No Deus Ex machina bailing you out of that bag of bees cuppie. Katya's fatalist tendency was more than essential for her to carry out her mission. Seriously, I've never red about somebody committing high treason with such a chill attitude.

I was so happy that the Chertovka got more opportunities to be breath-takingly efficient in this book. We're heard about her being sanguinary, here we get to see her an action. But no worries; she can also be a sweetheart, doing nice things like breaking into a maximum security prison to apologize to a fieldmate. Real classy lady.

Kane was immature as always, which is why we love him.

The Big reveal was worth waiting for. At least for me. It lived up to my expectations. It is my understanding that there's a final book coming, and I can hardly wait. Seriously, I'm about to pee myself from the trepidation.

Overall, the Russalka Chronicles and I are still BFFs. Whenever I need to see written words other than school notes, I reach for one of Mr. Howard's books. Wonderful stories.

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## Wendy says

"Katya`s War" is the second installment in Jonathan L. Howard`s Russalka Chronicles and opens with an intense civil war between the Federals and Yagizban; a conflict that is tearing apart this fledgling civilization. Kayta Kuriakova has assumed command of her deceased uncle`s minisub, but life is hard when the FMA pays for deliveries with government script rather than money. Frustrated and angry when she`s told that she can sell the script for half its value, her dilemma only increases when she stumbles into two former troublemakers; one a notorious killer and the other a dangerous pirate. What they offer is a plan to save the planet from destruction, but is Katya willing to see through the lies she`s been told, and to sacrifice her life and reputation for Russalka`s future?

The plot is slow at first but quickly heats up as lies, dark secrets and an abuse of power is revealed, when only truth and self-sacrifice will stop the war. Russalka is a fascinating oceanic world with its underwater cities, military vessels, submarines, and even a ADS (Atmospheric Diving Suit) that`s like a mini, minisub. It`s a story that pits one governing body against another in a deadly struggle for supremacy that could even mean the extinction of humanity on Russalka.

The characters are as colourful as they are complex adding depth and dimension to this riveting story. Katya Kuriakova for sixteen years of age is tough, smart and brave; a compassionate and determined teenager who`s not easily duped. In stark contrast Tasya Morevna, the she-devil is temperamental, edgy and fearless, with a quick trigger finger. Havilland Kane, the terror of the world ocean is more of a mystery; eccentric and fatalistic with a wry sense of humour but insightful and calm when called into action. Sergei Ilyin is the opposite of Kane. He`s a man of small hopes and dreams . Sergei is stoic, tough and pragmatic as well as surly, sarcastic and opinionated at times. The antagonists in the story seem to be the Yags who are considered to be sneaky, underhanded traitors, but it`s the Feds that mask heartless, cruelty under a

reputation as honourable warriors. Only time will tell who are the heroes and who the merciless enemy.

As events unfold and the action intensifies the story keeps the reader riveted and ends with a cliff-hanger that begs for a third book. I liked Katya's World and highly recommend it.

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## **Hollowspine says**

Katya's War is the follow up novel to Katya's World, picking up pretty close to where the action left off. Katya is now Captain of the Lukyan (formerly Pushkin's Baby) her uncle's submarine, though she has yet to face sitting in Lukyan's chair.

The war is on and times are tough, her pay usually takes the form of government scripts rather than usable money and Yagizban ships lurk and hunt the trade routes, making her job as captain of a shipping vessel both hard to make a living doing and dangerous. When her co-pilot Sergei finds a job delivering plumbing parts for real money Katja doesn't question it.

She's also noticing a strange hostility which escalates as she's getting ready to depart, a fellow captain is shot in front of her eyes for disobeying a new policy that hasn't even gone into effect yet. Is this a normal effect of war paranoia or is something else in the water?

Of course the well paid plumbing job turns out to be a trick. Havilland Kane needs Katja's help yet again. But this time he's asking her to do something terrible. He's asking her to commit treason.

This was a good sequel to Katja's World, answering some of the questions I had left over about Russalka, which is a very interesting setting. However, I felt that the book went much more quickly than the first book and I missed the character development of the the first one, especially with Kane, who was very much on a back burner in this book.

What I didn't miss was the love triangle that seems endemic in YA lit right now, esp. in books with a heroine as the protagonist. It was nice having Katja focus on the really important things, not how do I look or is he interested in me, or do I like strong stoic guy or do I like rebel boy, instead Katja was in the present, she didn't worry about her hair or figure when she had the crushing weight of the Russalkin ocean to worry about, or getting shot, or being tortured or the future of her entire world.

There were a few things, such as the propensity for just the right guy to go nuts, that makes me wonder, is that part of a strange plot, or just convenience?

When I first noticed Howard was writing a teen series, I was interested, but I had no idea I'd be so impressed. He really translates well, writing from a woman's pov for a teen audience, not easy, but he does it with ease. I can't wait for the next book in this wonderful and original teen series.

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## **Susannah says**

A thoroughly enjoyable instalment in an excellent series. The only reason I haven't given this the 5 stars I

gave Katya's World is that the 'middle book' feel is a little too evident, especially in the ending which leaves us well set-up for a great finale - I honestly can't count how many ways everything could go wrong for our characters next, all as a result of them trying to do the right thing wherever possible...

But basically, this is a really fun return to Katya and her world/war/tiny submarine in a hostile ocean planet. The titular war is already in full swing as the book starts, having been kicked off at the end of book 1, and all of this book's plots come from the efforts of a few people to try to end it. It might be possible to get annoyed with the device of 'Katya is executing this super-secret plan and you won't be told what it is until afterwards,' but I didn't - partly because it felt right for the setting in the middle of a war (tell no-one more than they need to know, even the reader), but also partly because this book was exploring why you would take such a desperate step, not exactly what that step and its ramifications might be. (Roll on book 3.) The character interactions are, as always, a highlight, and I particularly enjoyed the Chertovka getting a bit more page time with Katya this time around.

When this series was first announced, I feared it would be a lesser companion to Howard's Johannes Cabal series, which I love, but I've ended up loving this series in its own right as a completely different entity. If I had to choose between having the next book of either series in my hand right now, it would honestly be a tough choice between them, despite the very different styles and central characters.

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### **Grace says**

I feel bad about not giving this 5 stars, but the truth is I don't think it was quite there (and unfortunately I can't give it 4.5, which would be my preference). I love all of Jonathan L Howard's books, and this one is no exception.

One thing I especially love about the series is the lack of romance, which I feel has become mandatory for young adult books with female protagonists. Perhaps it is a result of me being a rather unromantic person, but I like to believe that there is more to life than romance. In a dangerous situation, I can't help but think my priorities would be focussed on the matter at hand, and it feels a little insulting that very few young adult books these days reflect that, or how romance is not necessary for someone to be a normal functioning person.

That's hardly the only positive of this series though. I love the setting, I adore the writing style (it flows easily and draws you in) and the characters feel believable and interesting. Of course if you've read the first book, you probably already know that. If you haven't, I'd suggest you do because the plot and a lot of characters and things that are introduced are necessary for this book to make sense.

I won't spoil much of the plot. It basically picks up a few months after the last book, with Katya transporting cargo on her uncles boat, along with Sergei. A war is raging between the FMA and the Yagizban which is taking desperate tolls on both sides, but they aren't a part of it... until Kane drags her in. He has a plan, a plan which could end the war and put a stop to the deaths, but he needs her for it to work... and the price is high. Throw in the uncovering of a couple of conspiracies, and there you have it.

I won't go into further detail, but I will tell you that the stakes have been raised and I am eagerly awaiting the conclusion in the next book (which means Jonathan L Howard now has me waiting for two of his books). I'm sure it will be worth the wait.

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### **Kristen Kooistra says**

Katya's War is the perfect followup to Katya's World. So many times the second book fails to deliver, but not this one. This one is the equal to the first in every way.

Full review on my blog.

Following Katya's choice at the end of the first book, she is now living the simple, uncomplicated life of an obedient Federal citizen running cargo across the ocean-covered planet.

Expect for things are not that simple, they never are. The pace of this is like a work of art. It goes along and just when things need that leap to spur you forward, you get it. I didn't want to put this down because gosh darn it is good.

I love Katya. I love that this is a YA novel that doesn't have romance anywhere in sight. I love that Katya's constantly challenged and yet knows her own mind.

The twists in this book are INSANE. I mean, you think you know what's coming, but you don't.

I got a little sad in here when Katya is led to the destroyed base. And that feeling never quite diminishes as the web of lies and deceit is slowly unraveled to show all of its horror.

I lived one of my biggest nightmares during the very long climax at the end. Gosh that was terrible.

Like the first book, this kept me riveted and I REALLY want there to be a third book. (There has to be with how it ended, but I don't see any mention of one.)

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