



Harbinger of Treason

Bayard West

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Disgraced starship pilot Cassandra Hague must save her friend from a form of extortion – one that has left his brain implant fatally sabotaged. Time is short, and the only doctor who can cure him lives on a distant outpost deep in enemy space.

Cassie has no choice but to take the fastest starship she can get her hands on and head for the outpost, even though stealing an advanced prototype ship is bound to attract the wrong kind of attention. She soon discovers that the Sol Alliance government will do anything to safeguard the secret tech crammed into that ship, but – even worse – they are not her only pursuers...

A psychotic artificial mind with a strong interest in the stolen tech noticed her fleeing the solar system, and now she has become its prey.

Harbinger of Treason Details

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Author : Bayard West

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From Reader Review Harbinger of Treason for online ebook

Bayard West says

From the author

Some of you that follow my reviews may wonder if I will submit my book to the same quantitative analysis that I do other authors' books. Of course!!! Here we go. There's also a review from BlueInk Review towards the bottom.

Sub-genre: Hard Sci-fi

Literary conflict: Man vs. Man

POV: 3rd person

Multiple-POV: ✓

THE GOOD:

Solid editing/polish: ✓

Fun characters: ✓

Witty repartee: ✓

Great "how-it-works" technology descriptions: ✓

Thought provoking: ✓

Great ending: ✓

THE BAD:

Rapid head-hopping: no

Unbelievable moments: no

Cast of thousands: no

Starship pilot Cassie steals a prototype warship when a spy threatens to kill her boyfriend...

With her spoiled military career behind her, Cassandra Hague pays for her tiny bunk on the Mars space station by flying transport missions to Earth and, when money is really tight, boxing. She is content to let her combat-flying skills atrophy until a spy threatens to kill her boyfriend unless she defects with a tech-heavy prototype frigate. Cassie steals the ship and makes plans to foil the spy's plot but discovers she'll have to be twice the pilot she ever was to survive the coming days.

Harbinger of Treason is the first novel in a Hard Sci-Fi series, featuring an intelligent, foul-mouthed 24-year-old who BlueInk Review calls "an undeniably endearing heroine." She has trouble making friends and an even harder time spotting enemies.

The book introduces the Harbinger Universe where two geniuses - Dr. Henry Richthofen and his brother Dr. Oswald Richthofen - have catapulted mankind into the stars with faster than light travel and permanently altered the human condition by genetically engineering brain modifications that connect people to computers without screens or keyboards. It is a technology-laden future where books, art and even clothing exist only in computers, superimposed over our vision as a second layer of reality.

The story is told from multiple perspectives. The switch between points of view happens at chapters boundaries. This book does not have a cast of thousands, instead exploring just the personalities closest to the protagonist.

Although part of a series, the book's ending is strong, wrapping up the main conflict of the novel and giving the reader a big take-away to talk about at the water-cooler.

A review from **BlueInk Review**

<http://www.blueinkreview.com/book-rev...>

Reminiscent of Elizabeth Moon's saga featuring iconic military heroine Esmay Suiza (Once a Hero, et al.), Bayard West's debut novel is a page-turning fusion of military and adventure science fiction with a little romance thrown in for good measure.

As the story opens, we learn that Cassandra "Cassie" Hague's father is admiral of the space fleet for the Sol Alliance, an interplanetary government that includes the human civilizations on Earth and Mars. Meanwhile, her mother serves as ambassador to the Consortian Republic, a colony of humans who broke ties with Earth and formed their own government on the planet Consortia. This leaves Cassie caught in the middle as tensions between the two governments escalate to dangerous levels.

At the center of it all is Dakota Simms, a civilian contractor originally from Consortia who essentially defected to the Sol Alliance to continue his work creating revolutionary battleship technology. Consortian conspirators have evidently tampered with Dakota's headmods (implants that offer network connectivity and the ability to project thoughts to others) and planted self-destructing malware that will kill him in less than two months. With the launch of the starship boasting his advances just weeks away, the only way for Dakota to survive is to steal the spaceship and take it to Consortia.

But Cassie thinks she can save the life of her budding love interest while keeping the tech out of enemy hands. All she has to do is hijack the ship and take Dakota to a genius living at the edge of colonized space who can presumably fix the malware problem.

While somewhat derivative, this story is action-packed, fast-paced, intelligently plotted and features an undeniably endearing heroine; it's solid science fiction through and through. SF fans should be aware, however, that the mind-blowing cliffhanger at novel's end will leave them pulling their hair out waiting for the sequel.

-BlueInk Review

Diane Stokes says

Easy to Get Lost In

This is a fast-moving, action-filled book that I had trouble putting down. The characters were interesting and believable. The author has created an intriguing and thought-provoking glimpse of a future that seems not unlikely, given what I understand human nature to be. I hope he plans to write a sequel!

Paul Kaitson says

Truly a visual playground for me as a reader. West managed to take me on a journey that I did not expect. Every chapter was engaging and allowed me to escape into a reality that someday might be our present life. Bravo ...an excellent read. Look forward to further stories with Cassandra leading the way.

Marla says

I received a copy of this book from Goodreads First Reads in exchange for an honest review. This was an awesome book! I can't wait for more! Very tech heavy but a completely engaging story. I'll be passing this book on to my brother who is a voracious tech heavy reader. I doubt he will give it back lol.

Brittney Washam says

I received this book from the author via the Goodreads giveaway - and it even had a nice little note from him telling me to enjoy it! - in exchange for an honest review.

I loved *Harbinger of Treason*. When I first read the plot and premise, I wasn't sure how entirely original the book would feel as I read it, but I was pleasantly wrong in my doubt. The main character, Cassie, is a disgraced pilot who left the military after a prodigy-esque time at the academy in order to look for her friend who was a victim of human trafficking. Now, she has to take freelance pilot jobs just to scrape by. When an amazing new ship called the *Harbinger* is presented, Cassie just itches to get her hands on it. She starts to get friendly with the ship builder, a man named Dakota, who working on training her how to fly with the new controls he designed.

In the meantime, someone tampers with the technology in Dakota's head, programming it so that it will soon kill him if he doesn't deliver the ship to his blackmailers - who happen to be working for another government, on the brink of war with their own. To save her new friend, Cassie convinces him to steal the ship with her. They must escape capture by both military groups and try to fly this new ship with its amazing capabilities (not even fully known to Cassie) out to the edge of the colonized enemy system in an attempt to save Dakota.

One of the biggest features of this book for me was the amazing technology. I suppose this could classify as "hard" science-fiction, where everything is in a distant enough future that the way of life is even drastically different from our own. I can see how some people may not be into reading some of these technical descriptions, but I loved it. The "headmods" were an imaginative take of a complex personal computer network that manages to network everyone together and even to allow side conversations that others cannot hear. This technology would certainly make things like research drastically quicker and easier than it already is, and it still furthers the current issue of actually maintaining privacy. I also liked the warring governments, the fight for better technology, and the various ships and how they were used. All this tech was really shown off in an excellent space battle later in the book.

I also really liked the various characters featured in the book, especially Cassie. She was a strong, talented female lead, very admirable in her abilities yet still flawed with desires and just how far she was willing to go to achieve something. Her back story was slowly revealed, and there were some startling character

revelations in general by the very end of the book. I'm still surprised by one of the twists, certainly, because it was so well done!

All in all, I think this novel had an amazing premise, story line, setting, and characters. I certainly look forward to being able to read more about this universe that West has made for us, as well as the characters in it. He gave us a great debut novel, and I can't wait to read more from him. I hope he indeed takes the opportunity to provide us with a sequel!

Roger says

good idea for a story but the writing was BAD! and all the miracle recoveries by the star just got stupid after a while. had to skip through the last 90 pgs to try and finish it. a pure waste of time!

Ashley E says

Harbinger of Treason is a fantastic science fiction debut. Cassie Hague stumbles into friendship and intrigue in the form of ship-designer Dakota Simms, who built the Alliance latest and best prototype, the *Harbinger*. Circumstances force Cassie and Dakota into stealing the ship and starting off for a distant station under a deadly timeline.

Cassie is headstrong, arrogant, downright brilliant, and just a little bit broken in ways that she tries very hard to hide. As a main character, she so easy to sympathize with, and I found myself falling right into the story with her, wanting to know how she could possibly fix her problems. Dakota is mysterious and sexy and brilliant in his own right. A perfect foil for Cassie, and a perfect match to her wits. There's much more to the plot than either Cassie or Dakota know, however, and much more to *Harbinger* than Dakota is willing to reveal.

The plot takes an amazing amount of twists and turns, but it never gets too confusing or convoluted, or becomes beyond the scope of reality just because it could. I was hooked until the very last page and even beyond. The ending definitely leaves an opening for a sequel, in more ways than one, and I would be all over that bandwagon.

My only detractor was some minor typos throughout, especially regarding quotation marks. However, it didn't inhibit my reading at all, only caused some brief annoyances. I debated sincerely between 4 and 5 stars because of this. Overall, lovely!

[I received this book for free through First Reads and was not required to write a positive or any other type of review. All opinions stated herein are solely my own.]

Brandi says

I loved this book and I can't help but to hope that there is a book #2 coming out to follow it. The characters in this book had such depth that I could actually relate to them. Cassandra not only surprised me, but she is such a strong female lead in the book. As for Dakota, there were moments that I loved his character and then

there were moments that I questioned his intentions.

When I finished this book, I had to share it with my husband and others I know. I think I talked about it for two days straight. The tech in the book is believable and somewhat reminiscent of both Star Trek and Ender's Game. The starship Harbinger was so inventive that I wanted to fly it for myself by the time I finished the book. I look forward to the next book with great anticipation!

Marlin says

Harbinger of Treason By Bayard West,

I enjoyed read Harbinger of Treason from the time I picked it up till the time I finally had to lay it down. It will be added to my shelf of read again books. Non stop excitement from beginning to end. Thank you Mr. West for a very good book it has been a pleasure reading it.

Marlin Read

Megan McCauley says

I received this book via good reads first reads

I'm new to reading science fiction, but I have to say I really enjoyed this book. The author did a good job with the characters they were easy to relate to. I was glad that Cassandra was a strong female lead as a posed to most leading ladies in other books. His vision of the future was believe able, and I couldn't help but picture it all in my head. I hope there is a sequel with Cassandra as the lead character again.

Arnold Bosserman says

I could not put this novel down. I was drawn in by Cassie and how her story unfolds and the secrets that are revealed. I found myself really enjoying this book. This book is well written with very creative and cleaver concepts. I also liked the local Washington DC touch. The Harbinger of Treason has my highest recommendation.

Vicki says

I received a copy through Goodreads Firstread's Giveaways in return for an honest review.

To start things off, I was drawn in from the second that I had read the synopsis on the giveaway page. I've always been a fan of good science fiction. So I thought that this would be up my alley and to my delight it was. This book exceeded my expectations and then some. Now on to the review.

From page one, we are introduced to our main character, Cassandra Hague, a disgraced starship pilot. She

had been at the top of her game with a promising career ahead of her when she inexplicably resigned to go look for a friend of hers years ago. Now she was in a similar position. She has to try and save another friend no matter what. This time it is a man by the name of Dakota. He is a shipbuilder and he has built the best ship anyone has yet to see, the Harbinger. The pickle that the two find themselves in is that Dakota's brain implant has been purposely tampered with. It is growing, giving him only a short time span in which to live. This is unless he turns over the Harbinger to the people who did this. Then he will be fixed.

Cassie thinks that there is another option other than turning the ship over. There is another doctor who specializes in the field that is not apart of that group. Now all they have to do is to get to him in time Sounds easy right? Wrong, in order to get there they have to steal the Harbinger and head for the outpost where the doctor is without getting killed and hopefully not start a war in the process.

All in all I loved this book. Mr. West has created a realistic version of the future here with all of it's grittiness as well as it's hard science. It's all very fun book and I will say this that things aren't always what they seem in it, but it really does work in the end. I can't wait to see where Mr. West decides to take these characters in the future.

Lily Knol says

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book! It's a rollicking good tale; a space-opera with real bite and an intelligent, plausible premise. The characters are well-drawn and the action is very readable. Bayard West has created a believable future world that I quickly became immersed in. I'm not a huge fan of "hard" science fiction as a rule, but this one was a lot of fun to read. There are some very clever ideas, but not self-consciously so. It's about the people and what happens to them, which is why I read fiction. I highly recommend this book!

Barbara Townley says

As a non-science fiction reader I was surprised when I got into this story and couldn't put it down. There is a nice escalation of tension and a huge surprise about a main character as the story culminates. I am hoping for a sequel and perhaps a prequel. For a first time novelist I think the author did an amazing job combining imaginative storytelling and technical knowledge to create a book that captures your interest and keeps holding it all the way through.

Victoria says

I won this good reads in exchange for review, it started out really good however as the plot began I had one thought why cant the head mods be removed. they are killing the female lead who starts out strong and capable only to become a whinny mess as the book drags on only to regain her earlier self when the plot comes for it the last two plot twists felt tagged on and unneeded. The biggest threat is a a.i with no body can't they just send a virus into him got bored halfway though the book because the hero's were unlikeable or flat the bad guys had even less depth certain terms were explained yet others that could have used explaining like the often used term gs a decent first effort but it needed to make me care not jam 3 plots into one book.

