



Alpha

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Captured by an enigmatic android for an unknown—and possibly fatal—purpose.

Charon was the most ruthless—and brilliant—criminal of the twenty-first century, a practitioner of illegal robotics and android research. He is dead now, and General Thomas Wharington believes his team of experts has deleted all the electronic copies the megalomaniacal inventor created of himself. However, one major problem remains: Alpha, the only android survivor of Charon's cybernetic empire.

Outwardly indistinguishable from a human woman, Alpha has superhuman strength and speed, and perhaps even more deadly capabilities still unknown. Thomas's superiors want her dismantled and studied, but to Thomas it feels like murder. He stalls for time, a move that could prove disastrous. Alpha escapes from an escape-proof compound, kidnaps Thomas, and takes him to one of Charon's hidden installations. Charon might be dead, but Alpha continues to carry out her late master's orders, and she refuses to elaborate on what those orders entail. Her behavior is becoming more human—or so it seems. Is she developing emotions and a conscience, or is she just learning to counterfeit them as a means of carrying out her enigmatic orders?

And do those orders include Thomas's death sentence?

Alpha Details

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Author : Catherine Asaro

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From Reader Review Alpha for online ebook

Thomas says

Continuation of the story from Sunrise Alley. Very interesting. Watch as Alpha changes (grows). More indepth on where AI ends and sentient begins and what makes a human. Very interesting topic hidden inside an entertaining and engaging story. Well worth the read. The writing is well done and the expansion of the characters of Thomas and Alpha is nicely done.

Terry says

As usual I am reading a favorite author's set of novels. Set in her creative Skolian Empire universe this book made for a relaxing set of evenings revisiting.

Stephanie says

Précis Alpha is an android programmed to obey by her now dead master Charon. In the previous book, Sunrise Alley, she is captured by General Thomas Wharington. This story opens with her in captivity and Wharington is fascinated by her and wants to unlock the information she has. She escapes, kidnaps Wharington and they evolve a relationship that has many twists and turns, including the re-appearance of Charon.

The captivity has a profound effect on Alpha as well and she makes the general a very tempting offer that could change their relationship forever. Along the way the collective AI known as Sunrise Alley is vying for autonomy and gets involved in this in an unexpected way. Complicating all of this is the general's feelings for his family, especially his very precocious granddaughter.

Protagonist General Thomas Wharington

Antagonist Alpha/Charon

What I liked After thoroughly enjoying Sunrise Alley, I wanted to read this. I didn't know where Asaro was going to go with this and a romance of sorts is not what I expected, but she pulls it off with finesse. There is excellent action to go with the well written romance scenes. The ending was just right.

What I didn't like The only two things I didn't like was that the Sunrise Alley subplot was not more developed and that the granddaughter's unique abilities were not explored more. Possibly those will be pursued in a third novel in this universe (at this time I am not aware of Asaro having any plans to do that)

Laurie Green says

Very impressive story. The characters and the world-building were amazing. Alpha was unstoppable. Now I'll have to go back and read Sunrise Alley, the first book in the series.

Maureen says

Alpha was better than its predecessor, Sunrise Alley, and as straight sci-fi books both were ok. But I'm confused as to why this is considered a romance. Sure, the love interest is a primary focus of the story and sure, there is a bit of sex, but I'm afraid it just doesn't have the emotional connection I've come to expect from a romance. It just doesn't get inside the characters and make me feel what they are feeling like I've come to expect as a defining feature of a romance. Alpha does this better than Sunrise Alley did, and I think I definitely like the male lead character, Thomas, but it still felt... incomplete.

Overall, Alpha was ok but I think if I hadn't been expecting a romance I would have enjoyed it a whole lot more. It feels like it was written by a good sci-fi writer who wanted to try an experiment in a different genre and couldn't quite pull it off. Perhaps if the romance had been written as part of the story (ala John Scalzi's "Old Man's War") even an integral part of the story, but not THE story itself it might have worked better.

P. Kirby says

DNF. This was my third and last attempt at reading Catherine Asaro. I really, really, really wanted to love her books, but I'm just not feeling the love. The first Asaro book I read was The Charmed Sphere, a fluffy fantasy that felt like someone's first attempt at writing a novel, not a story from an award-winning author. Assuming that fantasy wasn't Asaro's thing, I then read Primary Inversion. The theoretical physics was fascinating, but the characterization rather dull (standard embittered warrior-heroine archetype), the romantic subplot unsexy, and the plot ... plodding. With Alpha, I was bored from page one. The backcover lists another book as the prequel. Maybe that's why the first chapters of this novel are chuck full o' exposition. Anyway, after about eight pages, I decided that reading a dull book was killing my muse and bailed.

Kerry says

Alpha by Catherine Asaro (9/10)

SF with a good touch of romance. I thoroughly enjoyed this, but I'm biased to like Asaro and this didn't disappoint, although it took a while to get moving.

[Copied across from Library Thing; 5 November 2012]

Greg says

This is a sequel to Sunrise Alley, although you would not need to have read that book to get what is going on in this book. There is plenty of back story in the first 30 pages to enjoy this story as is.

I've never read a romance novel, but the author has a reputation for writing SF/romance crossover novels.

Lance says

It is a good read. One that does not improve my faith in any government. Robots, etc. What is human, and not. There are some books I will read twice, this is not one of them. It is interesting to think C. Asaro maybe thinking of another follow up with Jamie.

Dawn says

I think I'm reading books out of order again and I've missed a lot of background to put this book in perspective.

It was a great book anyway, confronting the "when is a robot considered a human?" question and packed with action.

Josephine says

It was an interesting take on the story.

Buka says

At first I actually thought the first three paragraphs were an annotation for this book and not one of the worst-written info-dumps I've ever encountered. As far as info-dumps go, it sounded like a mediocre fanfic. Maybe the rest of the book is better and it did look interesting in the description but I just couldn't read past that.

Carolyn F. says

3 stars. I wanted to like this book more than I did. When I sat the book in my lap to start reading, I was excited about a new sci-fi romance. This was okay. Except for the lust, I didn't see the romance part at all. It ended up morphing into something more but I had no idea why Alpha was so into Thomas, especially since he vaguely looked like Charon. Anyway, it was good not great and a nice quick read.

Jackie says

An action-packed adventure that also poses some intriguing questions about the line between human and machine. The rather unconvincing romance (70-something army man with 30-ish-looking AI-woman) made is less engaging for this romance-junky than it might be to those who care more about action.

Crystal Starr Light says

Bullet Review:

[illegible]

Life is just too short for me to spend it on books like this; maybe I'll try it again. Narrator is not very impressive; sounds bored TO DEATH (this probably didn't help).

And fanboys/girls, before you shrill at me for my review, let's all remember: It is MY OPINION. You are more than entitled to love this and make many beautiful babies with it. I willingly admit that this is a "it's not you, it's me" book. Doesn't mean that I'll change my feelings or rating however.