



A Flag Full of Stars

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It has been eighteen months since the Starship Enterprise completed her historic five-year mission and her legendary crew has separated, taking new assignments that span the galaxy.

On Earth, Admiral James T. Kirk has married and started a new life as the Chief of Starfleet operations where he is overseeing the refit of his beloved ship, now commanded by a new Captain -- Willard Decker. Kirk's only tie to his former crewmates is his Chief of Staff, a young Lieutenant Commander named Kevin Riley.

But Kirk's new, quiet life changes when he meets a scientist named G'dath who is on the brink of perhaps the greatest scientific discovery in a century. G'dath's invention could mean tremendous strides in Federation technology, or -- in the wrong hands -- the subjugation of countless worlds.

When Klingon agents capture this new technology, Admiral Kirk and Lt. Commander Riley are all that stands between peace and devastation for the entire Federation.

A Flag Full of Stars Details

Date : Published September 22nd 2000 by Pocket Books (first published January 1st 1991)

ISBN : 9780671739188

Author : Brad Ferguson

Format : Mass Market Paperback 241 pages

Genre : Media Tie In, Star Trek, Science Fiction, Fiction

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Nicolas says

None of this worked for me. Too much focus on original/minor characters, Kirk's choices feel out of character, and the plot was never compelling to me.

Mikael Kuoppala says

This book is a part of The Lost Years-saga, and although published as the third of the four books, chronologically it takes place after the thirdly published "Traitor Winds".

"A Flag Full of Stars" doesn't live up to the expectations of "Traitor Winds", which is, without a doubt, the best of the four. It does come second though, due to the credibility problems of "The Lost Years", and the simple meaninglessness of "Recovery".

The Biggest strength of "A Flag Full of Stars" is that it's an unconventional Trek novel. Taking place mostly on Earth, the plot centers around original, and more-or-less successfully constructed characters. We have a plotline of a Klingon scientist living on Earth and a tale of one of his students who, as is so often the case with young characters, comes across at least five years younger than his reported age.

The Klingon scientist on the other hand is written extremely well, but even he can't measure up to his pet kitten who is clearly the best character of the entire spectrum of the characters introduced in this novel. Seriously. Not excessive cuteness but clever instances of surprise from an animal character.

The setting of "A Flag Full of Stars" is excellent, the writing good, characterization decent, but the plot leaves something to be desired for. It's based on a ridiculous concept of introducing a machine that can create energy out of nothing. And most ludicrous is the fact that it's created not in some top secret research lab but in a regular home without the inventor even knowing what's being created. Whatever happened to the laws of physics and common sense?

All in all the kitten, the writing, and the use of good characters elevate this book into a decent one. It might have been excellent if it had had a slightly more intelligent plot. I've understood that the original manuscript was very heavily edited by the publisher, which might explain some of the odd weaknesses in this one.

Surreysmum says

[These notes were made in 1991:]. One of the "Lost Years" series. Apart from the fact that its title is inspired by the American flag, I guess the worst bone I have to pick with this story is that it really only involves one of the "regulars" - Kirk. Young Lt. Riley also has his story fleshed out a bit, and McCoy puts in a very brief vocal appearance on a call-in show. Otherwise, we're on our own. However, the plot (a classic Roddenberry about the perils of technological advancement) and the supplementary characters are well-drawn. I particularly liked G'dath, the Klingon with a kitten, a scientist/teacher dealing with xenophobia on earth. It is his invention of super-fast technology that sets the plot in motion (eventually not only G'dath's invention but

his person, plus those of his student and Kevin Riley, are captured by hostile Klingons). The other half of the plot is the disintegration of the marriages of both Riley & Kirk. Riley has found a new love interest by the end of the book. Kirk's marriage with Lori Ciana (which occurred in the last of these "Lost Years" books) always struck me as frankly improbable, so his tentative reunion with her at the end was less convincing to me than the breakup at the beginning. I quite like Mr. Ferguson: he has an eye for the human detail. And I adored Leaper the kitten! But how can you have a Star Trek story without Spock?

Chad says

An entertaining read but mostly if you have some knowledge of the Star Trek universe that provides context to the book. The Lost Years books of which this is the second is an interesting speculative thread between the end of the tv series and the first movie. None of the major Trek alum appear in this, save for Kirk and a brief (sort of) appearance from Dr. McCoy. Overall, if you're a fan of the original cast, it's a light, enjoyable book.

Roz Milner says

Quick, enjoyable and has an interesting undercurrent of racism in the federation that Trek didn't get around to showing on tv until ds9 a good half decade later. But the story is pretty light and doesn't get moving until maybe halfway through - which considering how short this book is, really says something

Mike Crate says

Admiral James Kirk seems to be happy in his new role, he has just overseen the initial refitting of the Enterprise and the world watches as the saucer is flown into orbit for attaching to the engineering section. However all is not well, his marriage to Admiral Lori Ciana is crumbling and he is still estranged from his friends from his time on the Enterprise.

As the world looks to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landings which will include an epic flyby of vintage spacecraft including a retrofitted Space Shuttle Enterprise a Federation naturalised Klingon scientist named G'dath makes a breakthrough in energy generation. Thus the players are in place for a action based and politically charged clash of intelligence and Starfleet services as the fruits of G'dath's creation are up for grabs.

A Flag Full of Stars continues the storyline brought to us in the novel Lost Years and expands upon Kirk's time in the admiralty before the arrival of V'ger. We see that his time wasn't wasted and he is responsible for some major changes in procedures within the fleet thanks to the benefit of his experience and insight. We also see that the wanderlust is still within him and that as much as anything leads to his failed marriage. The addition of G'dath a Klingon who finds a home on Earth thanks to the Organian intervention was eye opening as is the more real world Federation Brad writes about. I have to be honest and say it may not offer the most "Trek" like conclusion to the paths some of the characters tread in the narrative but it makes sense in terms of how they have been presented to us so you'll come away satisfied if not too happy.

Oh and credit to Brad for making me question my own opinion of the presence of families onboard the Enterprise D :)

Oleta Blaylock says

This is a good story and for those that are a fan of James T Kirk I am sure that they will love it. While Scotty, Uhura and Sulu play a small part in this story they are the only members of the original crew that show up.

James Kirk is working as head of Fleet Operations and is just finishing the work on refurbishing the Enterprise. William Decker is now captain of the Enterprise and I think Kirk has resigned himself for the time that he stuck behind a desk. Jim is married, although the marriage isn't going well in this story. Admiral Nogura appoints Kirk to be the face of Starfleet for the press. It is during this first interview that he meets a Klingon that is working on a new power source. The Klingon Empire wants the device and will do anything to get it, including taking a child and Kevin Riley, Kirk Chief of Staff, as hostage so they can get off the planet and head for home.

I have never been a really big fan of James T Kirk. I have always preferred Mr. Spock and it was said that there was only a tiny mention of him or Dr. McCoy in this book. It bothers me that Kirk has resigned himself to losing both of his closest friends. I realize that there probably isn't much of a story in Spock trying to purge all his emotions but it would have been nice to know that he was struggling with what had happened to him and what he left behind. I do like Kevin Riley and I hope that he strengthens himself out and gets over feeling sorry for himself and get a little confidence in who he is and what he is capable of. I know that happens it is in one of the later books that he finally finds it calling and is doing a very good job. Oh yes, this sorry is set just before the events of the first movie.

Scott says

This is the second book in the Lost Years quartet of Trek novels and picks up a few months after the first novel, "The Lost Years." For the uninitiated, this series looks at the time period between the end of the original series and "Star Trek: The Motion Picture." I thought that the initial novel had some interesting bits about the last days of the original Enterprise along with good plotlines, but the novel as a whole did not really attempt to meld the two time periods together in a meaningful way. This novel suffers from the same shortcoming as well as having a limp storyline that chooses to only follow Kirk on his adventures. Scotty, Uhura, and Sulu appear briefly, but Spock, Chekov, and Bones are nowhere to be found!

So, Kirk works at Starfleet putting new ships together at a planning stage and has a marriage that's falling apart. He's too dedicated to his job, attached to the Enterprise, blah blah, every Trekker could fill in the rest. We also follow G'Dath, a Klingon that's permitted to live on Earth and teach in high school. Oh, he's also created a magic globe that can harness all kinds of energy. This discovery puts him at risk of capture by the Klingon Empire for his amazing discovery. The plot doesn't develop as much as just plod along to a minor conclusion that's both flat and predictable.

Okay, the plot's bland, but there's some good stuff in here. One strength of the book, however, is how Ferguson injects a lot of humanity and thought into all of the characters. Every one of them has a clear sense of who they are, what they're looking for, and what they believe in. Riley comes back in the story from the first novel and emerges as the most interesting and flawed personality. Ferguson's version of Riley (and his first encounter with Kirk that's in there as a flashback) deserves its own novel. "Riley's Bogus Adventure"

may be upon us, who knows?

At the book's conclusion, however, everything gets tied up neatly in a cliched bow - character motivations included. Everyone has their own epiphany that illustrates a lesson on morality, yawn. In the old days of the series, a good Shatner speech would get the job done in one gloriously hesitated dialogue. "Risk... is our... BUSINESS!" to name my personal favorite.

I'm wandering, sorry, but there's just not much to this book to discuss. Very forgettable plotwise, character work is quite nice to a point.

Daniel Kukwa says

This was a great read: tightly focused, full of character development, and a fast-moving exciting plot that slows down at just the right times to give us very human (and very Klingon) moments that scream "this is Star Trek". A concise little powerhouse of a Trek novel.

Travis says

This is one of a couple books that tries to fill in the gap between the end of the original TV show and the first movie. It's a nice idea but the books aren't much fun.

Everyone is so mopey that it colors the story and sucks the fun out of it. Feels like the crew just spent the in between years being depressed.

Ben Guilfoy says

A thoroughly uninteresting "Star Trek" novel ostensibly about a race against time to prevent a powerful new propulsion device from falling into the hands of the Klingons... but really about Klingon living in New York who teaches 6th grade and learns to love a kitten. He then manages to invent a magical device that can instantaneously travel immense distances and then puts it in his closet.

By the time anything of any importance happens in this book, it's more than halfway over and the limp climax that's implausible even by "Star Trek" standards just kind of happens and ties everything together in a neat but just as uninteresting bow since the only people who learn anything at all in this story is... the 6th graders.

This novel fails as a sequel to the first "Lost Years" book, jumping ahead a year but not advancing any of the characters' storylines in any appreciable way. Kirk still hates his job and wishes he could be back on the Enterprise, Nogura still wants him behind a desk for reasons that are never truly made clear (because he's Shadowy and Manipulative oooo), Riley still thinks he isn't good enough to serve as Kirk's aide and also wishes his wife wasn't dumping him... Spock and McCoy simply don't appear in this book at all (because why would we want to read a book called "The Lost Years" and learn what those characters were doing during the aforementioned years?).

Literally the most exciting part of this book is that the Klingon teacher, G'Dath, uses the same subway stop I

do.

Kreg says

This book had several 'inspirational' moments; the 1701's 'saucer' lifting off into orbit and docking with the engineering hull, the 1970's era Space Shuttle Enterprise finally reaching space, and a several moving passages about the 1969 moon landing. All of those serve to raise an otherwise drab story into something worth reading.

The 'main' story however is full of eyebrow raising elements. I can willingly suspend my disbelief on a Klingon living as an immigrant in New York - and people's reaction to him. However his "invention", which has only a fragmentary description of what it actually does is the weakest element of the whole tale - and unfortunately it's a key element for that plot to work. It is the only part of this story which prevents it from being a perfect 5 in my opinion.

ladywallingford says

Interesting read...not the best of the TOS novels that I've read but definitely not the worst. I think my favorite part of the whole novel took place during an interview Kirk was giving on the Dart Project. He was answering viewer questions via "call-in" and McCoy gets through the system. Fun times! We also meet Kevin Riley again. I still wonder why the writers of TOS got rid of him. I should look it up sometime. Anyway, if you want a quick, easy light read, try this book out.

Read1000books says

Four books span the time gap between the end of the original series and the first movie. This is book three. Set about 200 years in the future, the story incorporates the proto-type space shuttle Enterprise. A good ST read.

Taaya says

Nach ersten Ärgernissen und trotz kleiner Schwächen erstaunlich gut und unterhaltsam geschrieben, mit sympathischen neuen Charakteren.
