



Hope's End

Brian McClellan

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Captain Verundish has two problems. On campaign with the Adran army and far from her homeland, she is helpless when the young daughter she left at home is threatened. To make matters worse, General Tamas has put her lover in command of a Hope's End—the first charge through a breach straight into the teeth of enemy cannon and sorcery. To save the people she loves, Verundish will have to come up with a deadly solution...

Hope's End Details

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From Reader Review Hope's End for online ebook

Mr. Matt says

Hope's End is a fantastic little story. The book follows Captain Verundish, a young officer and a mother. She has a very big problem. Her loveless marriage is crumbling. Ordinarily this would not be a problem. They'd just get a divorce. Unfortunately, in their case the church won't grant a divorce. The husband decides to take matters into his own hands. Unless Verundish kills herself in three months time he will sell her daughter (not from him presumably) to slavers. Verundish is left with a terrible choice: kill herself or condemn her daughter to a fate worse than death.

Verundish sees a solution in leading a desperate charge into a besieged city. She will lead the Forlorn Hope. She will be the first woman over the walls. And she will probably be fried by Privileged magic as soon as the assault begins. This will be an honorable death. One that frees her daughter and yet does not taint her legacy. It is a truly selfless act that I think only a parent can imagine willingly embracing. Verundish goes willingly to her death. Her only problem is that sometimes the desperate assault works.

I was impressed that such a short little story could leave such an impact on me. Verundish's choice is awful. It is terrible. But I was hooked from the very beginning. I wasn't putting this book down until I was done. I cared deeply for a character that I hadn't even known about only moments before I started the book.

I highly recommend this little book. Great writing. Lots of action. Human emotions. Awesome. To be fair, I wonder if I would feel the same way if I had not already been introduced to the Powder Mage world. Would I feel the same way if this had been the first of Brian McClellan's books that I had read? I think I probably would. Four stars.

Melissa Hayden says

A short story in the life of a Captain under General Tamas. Life is complicated, personally and as a soldier. Hope's End is the surprise attack and the first wave of soldiers to go in. Verundish might be able to save two lives if she leads the attack...maybe.

Awesome to see Tamas through another's eyes. To see him in action with battle and command.

FULL REVIEW

Captain Verundish's letter from her ruthless husband is not good. Her father won't approve their divorce, as he performed the marriage and has to sign for divorce. Her husband has other plans. He holds a threat of their daughter's life over her for the divorce, one way or another. Captain Verundish learns her lover is chosen to lead the charge at Hope's End, the first line through and facing all deadly throws. Rarely does anyone survive. Captain Verundish has an idea to help save her daughter and her lover...

I had suspected her plan was as such. Brian, brave as he is, took his characters there and I love it. Hard battle and personal life struggles are present in this short.

We read from the eyes and heart of Captain Verundish. We see Tamas in her thoughts and views. Tamas is in the field, as General. Younger and in action. You see his hatred of the Privileged seeping through in his

strategies.

Tamas seems to influence those he meets, and Verundish is one of them.

? Irena ? says

Hope's End indirectly tells about how Tamas became a Field Marshal as he promised to himself. Even though he appears only in few scenes, he is still larger than life.

The story starts with Captain Verundish considering suicide. Not surprising when you consider the content of the letter she received from her despicable husband. They are married only on paper and since her father was the one who married them, Captain Verundish can't get a signature required for divorce. That wouldn't be the end of the world if the creep weren't threatening to sell her daughter unless she gets that signature or kill herself, whichever comes first.

So when Tamas orders her lover to attack an unbreachable city, she sees a way to save her daughter.

Hope's End is too short, but nothing is lost. You are introduced to a remarkable woman, told about her troubles and possible solutions and in the end you are shown how great she is. Brian McClellan writes short stories really well.

Stefan Svartling says

Great. Very intense fight. Brian McClellan grows on me. Very short story though.

Jessica says

Loved it. I love that McClellan's short stories are short enough to sit and read in one sitting, but apply to a larger story line. It makes for the perfect afternoon treat without the risk of reading through the night :)

Jarek "the Mistborn" D?browski says

These prequel shorts are a great companion to the trilogy building on the characters we've already met. Gives more depth to the entire story line. One star I took away because I would've liked it to be longer.)

Taylor Davis says

I adored this short story.

Promise of Blood was a great book, and while I don't think Brian had any issues with his female characters as some others have pointed out, I honestly just wish there were ****more**** of them. Fortunately, Captain Verundish is an extremely convincing, well-written, likeable female protagonist.

This short story is a very quick introduction to the Powder Mage universe, and I personally enjoyed it a bit more than The Girl of Hrusch Avenue (not that I didn't enjoy that as well, but I rated it 4/5 stars, where this one is a 5/5 in my opinion).

The arc flows perfectly, with quite a bit of characterization for such a short piece.

Anyone looking to see whether they're interested in diving deeper into this world is highly encouraged to give Hope's End a try. Here's to hoping we see Captain Verundish in future works.

Conor says

This instalment in the Powder Mage universe tells the story of Captain Verundish, a woman facing a terrible decision. When the husband she despises sends her a letter threatening her daughter unless she ends their loveless marriage by committing suicide she decides to lead the Hopes End, a suicidal charge against a hopelessly superior enemy.

This was a decent novella but I was disappointed that it didn't live up to the intriguing premise it started out with. McClellan set up a tense, difficult situation filled with brilliant characters (Captain Constaire, Tamas) for the heroine to navigate, but the resolution felt forced and rushed. (view spoiler)

Disappointments aside this was still an enjoyable novella that added a lot in a short space of time to the world of 'The Powder Mage'. I really liked the parallels between the Gurlish campaign and Napoleon's campaign against Egypt. Combined with the parallels between the American and Fatrastan revolutions I noticed after reading The Face in the Window, it's added a lot of depth to the world and addressed my main problem with the world building in Promise of Blood, the lack of context for the revolution against the nobility. I also really enjoyed the battle towards the end, despite the somewhat rushed conclusion it was an intense, gripping section.

Overall this was a decent story that provided some very interesting background information on the world of The Powder Mage, I would definitely recommend this to any fans of the series.

Mikheil says

Love, hatred, duty, romance, hope, war, magic all condensed in only 30 pages. Brilliant.

Mark says

Much better read than promise of blood.

Petros Triantafyllou says

That's probably one of the best short stories i have read.

It features Verundish (a character first introduced in *The Crimson Campaign*, a then-Captain of the Adran Army, 19 years before the promise of blood, and her struggle to survive both a hopeless fight (something like the Suicide Squad) and her abusive husband that threatens her child.

Ps. I do not rate short stories.

Bookwraiths says

Originally reviewed at Bookwraiths.

“Hope’s End” is a short novella set in Brian McClellan’s Powder Mage world, which began with the novel *Promise of Blood*. Where *Promise* was epic in its scale and ambition, depicting vast power struggles between huge forces, sorcerers and demons fulfilling ancient prophesy, and the story of the social and economic cost of a political revolution, “Hope’s End” is a bite-sized snack, allowing a current fan or a newbie reader to experience an exciting snapshot of a soldier’s life in this flintlock and sorcery world.

The story itself shines the spotlight onto one of General Tamas’s soldiers: Captain Verundish. (Yes, you read General Tamas, because this novella takes place before the Powder Mage Trilogy and immediately before Tamas’ ascension to Field Marshall of Adro’s armies.) You see, Captain Verundish is a good soldier: dedicated to her career and to her general, but she has her own personal problems outside of being in harm’s way at all times. One, she is married to a horrid man, whom she wishes to divorce but cannot due to family and religious reasons. Two, she has a young daughter by her foppish husband, and he has threatened to do something awful to this innocent child if Verundish does not give him a divorce - in a very unusual way. And three, General Tamas has placed her lover in command of a Hope's End: a suicidal attack against a fortification, where her fellow soldiers will be casting themselves into the teeth of both musket fire and sorcery!

How can Captain Verundish save those she loves from such terrible situations without sacrificing herself?

The story that ensues from this setup is all you could ask for from a novella. You get an appearance of General Tamas and a look at his inner motives for future actions. Captain Verundish and her lover are solid characters with real life dilemmas. And there is even a short but exciting battle. At the end, all the problems get neatly resolved.

I have to warn you about one thing though. Once you finish this novella, you will feel it was too short and will crave even more of Mr. McClellan’s Powder Mage universe. But you already knew that right? Why else would Mr. McClellan be giving people such tasty morsels as “Hope’s End” to sample if not to whet their appetite for more? So be prepared to download the author’s other novellas or to buy *Promise of Blood* immediately after reading this one.

Rob says

Definitely one of my favorites of the Powder Mage novellas, especially with some background regarding a known, but lesser detailed character.

David Sven says

A short story set in the Powder Mage Universe approx 20 years prior to Promise of Blood.

This story features Tamas when he is still a General. Tamas is ordered to assemble a "Hope's End" (leading charge against a breach in a wall) to storm a Gurlish stronghold.

We get some gunpowder and bayonet action as well as some Powder Mage and Privileged sorcery, all told from the 3rd person POV of a female officer in Tamas' army.

I liked this more than The Girl of Hrusch Avenue because of its insight into Tamas' hatred of the Adran system of nobility and in particular his hatred of Privileged sorcerers that would eventually lead to the coup and French Revolution style massacre at the beginning of the main book.

Recommended for fans of Promise of Blood

4 stars

(I'm not sure I would have appreciated this as much without having first read PoB)

Orient says

Not sure what to make of this shortie. The melodrama is at it's high peak in this one so far. While the three earlier ones wandered near the line of possibility more, this one - clearly not.

Why 3 stars? For Tamas of course!!!! <3
