



Song of the Navigator

Astrid Amara

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Worst Possible Birthday: Being sold into slavery by none other than your lover.

Tover Duke's rare ability to move anything instantly across light-years of space makes him a powerful, valuable asset to the Harmony Corporation, and a rock star among the people of the colonies. His life is luxurious. Safe. Routine.

He has his pick of casual hookups passing through Dadelus-Kaku Station. His one brush with danger of any kind—the only bright spot in his otherwise boring life—is Cruz Arcadio, a dark-haired, hard-bodied engineer whose physical prowess hints he's something much more.

When a terrorist abducts Tover, hurling him into a world of torture, exploitation and betrayal, it's with shattering disbelief that he realizes his kidnapper is none other than Cruz. As Tover struggles to find the courage to escape his bondage, he begins to understand the only way to free his body, his mind—and his heart—is to trust the one man who showed him that everything about his once-perfect life was a lie.

Warning: This story contains descriptions of extreme violence and assault. It also contains graphic sexual depictions. It also has a lot of birds. And pirate movies from the future. And romance.

Song of the Navigator Details

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From Reader Review Song of the Navigator for online ebook

Tami says

Very good SciFi M/M story. This had creative world-building, drama, adventure and an unusual love story.

I enjoyed reading it. Tover was an interesting and engaging protagonist, he changed so much over the course of the story - he was vulnerable, and he got hurt, but he fought through.

Cruz remained a little pale in comparison.

Tina says

4,5 stars

The blurb intrigued me... but in all honesty, I didn't expect a story like that. I'm still flabbergasted! Astrid Amara's writing style is gripping and powerful, and Tover and Cruz's story sucked me in from the start.

Song of the Navigator was a thrilling, entertaining, emotional firework, and I read it in nearly one sitting.

Need to check out Mrs Amara's earlier books now...

Em says

I'm always on the hunt for a good sci-fi and pounced on this one when I came across it. A really different concept and a very engaging story. Well done.

Jax says

I was totally swept up by the storytelling, but do heed the violence warnings. Tover undergoes some brutal treatment in the first part of the book.

Teresa says

My rating stands on second read. Sometimes they change when I see characters again, but they still loved this.

4.75 Stars -

I was expecting something a little different based on the blurb. The warning at the end scared me a little, to be honest. However, I was not disappointed with what I did get. Son of the Navigator had unique technology and worthy causes. Though parts of the story are a little familiar, big bad corporations threatening a planet and its population, others are different. And it is presented in an interesting and engaging way.

I felt so bad for Tover's betrayal by someone he cared about and the resulting pain he is put through. It was brutal but I didn't find the descriptions traumatizing. The truths that he faces later are even worse. I liked the conflict with Cruz and the position Cruz is put in, the decisions he is forced to make. It made the story real. I liked Cruz's family and all the people that seemed to genuinely care for Tover.

The book flowed well and I found myself not wanting to put it down. Definite recommend!

MLE says

I really wanted to like this book, but the dynamic between the two main characters was stale, and read like old style het romance. I also can't buy Tover forgiving, and falling in love with the man who sold him into slavery. Especially considering how badly Tover was treated.

Tess says

4.5 stars *"Without family, Tover had spent many birthdays in lonely places, but being sold by his lover to a bunch of unscrupulous pirates definitely won the prize as being the worst birthday present ever received."*

This was one INTENSE ride! I think I'm either a sci-fi convert or an Astrid Amara convert because I so want more like this.

The first half of this is violent, it's intense and it's gripping. Tover is a "rock star" of a navigator of extreme importance to Harmony Corporation. He lives a sometime shallow and oblivious life until he's kidnapped and then sold into slavery by his occasional lover. What Tover must endure is extremely brutal, especially knowing he was betrayed by the man he was falling in love with.

I won't go into any more details other than to say that I loved watching Tover grow during the course of the story and I LOVED the dynamic between Tover and Cruz and how it changes throughout.

Overall, a gripping story with a lovely romance!

Elena says

5 otherworldly, exotic stars!!! Loved it!

¡¡Que libro tan increíble!! Me encanto...

That book is truly amazing. It's so NOT simply sci-fi. Categorising Song of the Navigator like that wouldn't do it any justice...

First of all, it took me by surprise from the very beginning. Let's face it, Star-Trek-style teleportation or even moving things/people through space by the power of one's mind is nothing new! I've seen it on screen, I've read about it... that's standard. But using one's special vocal cords amplified by some special equipment? And actually "singing" the cargos to some distant places? "Jumping" them by sensing the universe's vibrations and answering to them? Well, that's not standard at all!! Let me just tell you - the "song of the navigator" is really what it sounds like!

And **Tover** is one of only 42 people across the universe who can bear the title of the "Improvisational Navigator" - and he wears it proudly! So much so that he is considered by everybody (even his own selfish self) a demigod - rich, handsome, powerful, untouchable (and spoilt!)

Tover lives in his "tower palace" - the penthouse in the most prestigious, luxurious hotel on the whole state-of-the-art DK Station.

Unfortunately, Tover doesn't even realise that outside his warm and cosy station and the best job for the Harmony Corporation, there is a totally different world - a whole universe of crime and poverty, of exotic worlds on the verge of extinction and of people fighting to keep their planets and families safe and free.

Cruz is Tover's once-in-a-couple-of-months' tryst, his hidden, guilty pleasure - you see, you CAN'T be gay on the perfect DK Station and in the perfect Harmony Corp. Cruz is handsome, muscled and intelligent. He's funny and quick-witted and, what's more important, dominating - exactly what Tover needs and craves. But Cruz is also... dangerous - a trait of which Tover learns rather painfully...

The world-building in the book is excellent! The different places/worlds described beautifully and detailed. Astrid Amara did a wonderful job here. The MCs are vivid and you can easily love/hate them and feel for them all the way through their adventures... And the plot got me hooked from the first page.

¿Y los fragmentitos en español? Pues, ¡fueron una sorpresa deliciosa para mí! Inglés + español es mi combinación favorita ya que me pasa intercambiar las dos lenguas también. Debo decir que continuamente... ;) Entonces, ¡GRACIAS, Astrid Amara!

For me Song of the Navigator is a book of wonderful contrasts. The contrasts between the places:

First, the cutting-edge high-tech DK Station:

Then the shabbiness and decay of Jarrow and *The Baroque* :

And finally, the beautiful, exotic planet of Carida! With it's green sky, lush, overwhelming jungle of flowers and wildlife:

But it is also a story of contrasts between totally different people: artificial and phoney corpexecs, violent and brutal smugglers, dedicated and dangerous guerillas and finally the ones who care and who help and who become your family...

Be aware: the first part of the book contains... (view spoiler)

Song of the Navigator touches a lot of difficult and painful issues (i.e. ecological problems, soullessness of corporational environment) etc. But, all in all, it's a **wonderful, wonderful story**, full of action and adventures, natural beauty and hope...

Highly recommended for nature lovers!!! Cause wouldn't you fight for something so beautiful??? ;)

I must tell you - the book had me thinking of all those gorgeous images all the time!!! :)
Enjoy!

Lila says

2,5 stars

I love when authors take their main characters and strip them of *everything* first-not just their freedom, but ruin every important thing they believe in before they finish their journey.

It's kind of an ultimate character development story- one that leads to transformation.

So, that's, essentially, what Song of the Navigator is about. Sure, there are scifi elements and there are elements of romance, but, imho, they are more in service of story of Tover Duke.

So, Tover Duke we meet at the beginning is a man with unique talent: he is improvisational navigator. That means that his voice creates "controlled vibrations to recalibrate sub-atomic strings to make enclosed orbitfolds, which traveled through subdimensions of space and appeared somewhere else." <---this means he can teleport himself/people and objects, even big ones like ships, to any place in space as long as he has coordinates and he does it using only his voice.

This is very rare ability (there is only 42 people who can do what Tover does in human population of 36 billion). That makes him practically treasured on his space station. He has adoring fans, he is worshiped as deity; everything he wishes for, he gets. As a consequence of such life, Tover thinks very highly of himself. He is vain, he values his good looks and he doesn't want to give speeches because his navigator skill makes

his voice rough, growly and hoarse (*apparently, this is considered unattractive, so roll with it*). He has a lot of men available for sex, but he grew attached to one particular engineer who is smoking hot and fun in bed. On his birthday, at parade held in his honor, he is abducted by the very man who's dear to his heart and who turns out to be terrorist and who sells him to pirates.

So, this is where I get back to total deconstruction of Tover- he is betrayed by one man who means something to him, treated as slave, beaten into obedience and abused both physically and psychologically*; he lost his good looks and even his ability suffered. But this is not where it stops, because Amara takes it even further- Tover ends up on Carida, green planet planned to be terraformed by Harmony- company he works for and people he meets and new experiences makes him question his life, his beliefs and if his coveted status isn't actually just a golden cage.

Total deconstruction of Tover's character and building him from pieces into someone new is the one aspect of this novel that made the strongest impression on me.

But here is a downer:

Other elements of this story are really weak:

- I ended up being disappointed by plot because the more I read the more rushed it felt and I find the culmination to be particularly unconvincing. To be blunt, if you are in it for the romance then you will be happy with our characters ending up together at the end. But if you are following backstory like I did, you will probably come to conclusion nothing is really resolved... I don't know if this is building for a sequel, but this ending doesn't work the more I think about it (view spoiler)

- romance is ok, but it's a bit generic and predictable. Unlike Tover, other mc is not developed beyond dark, beautiful and "fights for his people."

- Book opens with scene where Tover uses his navigator skills. It is the most scifi thing about the story. Whole idea about "singing" and vibrations as means of space travel is cool, especially because it touches good old question of sound wave travel in space and especially because in 2003. NASA discovered that black holes do "sing". How cool is that? I find it to be really interesting concept. But beside this part, we get some vague view and vibe of setting with rather generic visuals of soulless and fake Company and green planet. In fact, Carida felt particularly unfinished (view spoiler)

I had this feeling that author had this bigger vision and that there is a bigger story she imagined set in this world, but we don't get to see it here. I am actually leaning toward this explanation because at the end, there is note that this was supposed to be joint project by Nicole Kimberling, Ginn Hale and her (*and now I need this in my life really bad.*) so maybe there is more to it.

I went looking for more Astrid Amara books after reading fantastic *The Devil Lancer*, but this book is not even close to the same level of complexity and quality. It's a fast read that will certainly not bore you. So, if you are in for something less challenging than *The Devil Lancer* and *The Archer's Heart* and you crave for mm romance set in space, this is a good choice.

**Book contains scene of physical violence toward main character. It's not vague or toned down, but it's not overly graphic either. Still, warning stands. (view spoiler)*

Ami says

I will be honest with you – I approached this book with a LOT of trepidations. See, sci-fi is a genre that resides in the lowest of the low in my reading genre totem pole. I just can't connect with the idea (I can *watch* sci-fi but not exactly enjoy reading it). All those weird names with nothing but consonants, living in other planets, ALIEN ... yeah, my brain just shuts down.

But ... Astrid Amara is one of my favorite authors. I first read her work almost five years ago when I started reading MM genre almost exclusively. Let's just say that I had that in my plus corner going in, but still, it was reading something out of my comfort zone. I was dragging my feet, not wanting to do it but needed to. In fact, I told my friend that I would keep the light/fluffy contemporary romance to-read books as my "reward" after finishing this one, as I predicted that it would be a difficult read.

When I opened the first chapter, the whole explanation about navigator's job, technology with strange terms like TEUS and orbifolds, weird places like Dadelus-Kaku Station, Kepler 7-b, Thereon Galaxy, or Aremdar Nebula, were able to give me cold sweats. But, then, *"something happened on the way to heaven"* ... because slowly the narrative reeled me in. It only took the ending of the first chapter to make me irrevocably hooked.

Song of the Navigator is a wonderful piece of storytelling with heartbreaking but rewarding journey of a character that undergone life-changing experience of being betrayed by someone he loves the most. In the beginning, Tover Duke is basically a rock-star, worshipped by people in DK Station. He is one of the elite group of forty-two people in the whole universe who are capable of manipulating space in improvisational movement, to move goods and people into unexplored regions of the galaxy and beyond.

Tover is cherished, he lives in a penthouse, with private elevators, and has his own greenhouse for one of his passions – the birds. Until that day of his thirtieth birthday when his occasional lover, Cruz Arcadio, kidnaps him, and later trades Tover to slave pirates, which brings Tover to forced labor. He is physically tortured if he refuses to do what the pirates tell him. In an instant, Tover's life turns into hell.

Written solely from Tover's perspective, I must say that I loved Tover from that moment on. There is an inner strength and tenacity that Tover shows during his ordeal and later on when he recuperates. Tover learns that the life he enjoys before is not as perfect as it seems. He learns to stop being ignorant. Because when Tover is healing, living alongside the so-called terrorists, which involved Cruz and his family, he understands that there are always two-sides of every story.

I loved Tover's character-growth happened gradually. He doesn't immediately accept Cruz's reason out of love. It doesn't magically happened in one night...

"You can't convince me that my life has been something it isn't. I was the best at something, and I did my job with pride until you came along." His voice broke. "I won't let you make me believe it was worthless."

However, Cruz challenges Tover to change his way of thinking, his way of seeing the world. At the same time, Cruz also makes Tover see that he is worth more than just what he can do.

"...Yes, you are valuable. You are worth billions. They have made you into a commodity that everyone wants a piece of."

"You're no different," Tover said.

"You're right. I want you too. But not for what you can do. I want you because of who you are."

For me, this book is simply amazing. Yes, it has some difficult scenes related to the brutal treatment from the pirates in the beginning, but it also feels hopeful, moving, romantic, and fulfilling. I loved the characters (this novel has two notable female characters too, which I highly appreciated), I loved the setting (each location feels different yet vibrant, and acts more like supporting characters themselves), I loved the writing (beautifully engaging, as I know Astrid Amara's would be) ... and most of all, I loved the story. When I finished, I was enfolded in that pleasant feeling of satisfaction, that I refused to immediately start reading another story because I wanted to bask in the feeling for a while.

One thing for sure, **Song of the Navigator** is my best read of the month, and one of my favorites of the year. It also has done something quite the impossible: it makes me start thinking of perusing more MM sci-fi novels to read. That is an achievement no other books have done before. For that, it deserves my perfect 5-stars.

Readers' Advisory : For those of you who are worried with the warning tag of extreme violence and assault and graphic sexual depictions, rest assured that this story does NOT contain any rape or non-consent sex scenes what-so-ever. The violent and assaults are all physical beatings but even those don't last as long as one might expect. The graphic sexual depictions are between Tover and Cruz and they are definitely consensual.

The ARC is provided by the publisher for an exchange of fair and honest review. No high rating is required for any ARC received.

Reggie says

This book was well written and the word building is EXCELLENT!

My rating reflects my personal taste in recreational reading.

This story has very well written--- torture, abuse and the PTSD that follows. It is an integral part of the story.

It was overwhelming for me. I was mildly depressed and nauseated when finished.

But....world building was truly excellent.

Katerina says

White cotton sheets. A pillow. Home.

Too good to put it down only one minute.
Too powerful, too emotional, too beautiful to make comparisons.

Astrid Amara - this book was so perfect! I loved it so much!

Enjoy!

Lilia Ford says

[In particular the scenes with Cruz's family, which managed to combine the cliché of the warm, lovable ethni

Leanne says

Oh, it's so good to have Astrid Amara back again. I read this in one sitting, on a typically wet and cold Cape winter's day (perfect for reading) only stopping briefly to brew another cuppa and hug my Kindle. Yes, this one of those rare gems....a book I couldn't stop reading but didn't want to end.

A wonderfully real, totally immersive and gripping read. I loved the world building and strong characterisation of all the characters (loved Cruz's mother and sister), but Tover was something special. Seeing him start to rebuild himself after his charmed life was so brutally stripped away, realising what he'd been missing...the sense of home and family he'd never experienced before- had me tearing up and then cheering him on until the very last page.

Apparently, this was meant to have been part of an anthology with Ginn Hale and Nicole Kimberling. I for one am thrilled it went on to star on its own in a full length novel but if either one of those two awesome authors want to continue the project at some stage.... *bats eyelashes* :)

Tully Vincent says

This book isn't for the faint of heart. There's extreme violence, torture and betrayal. It's harsh and hard to read in parts, BUT it's also romantic, poignant and absolutely amazing.

Seldom outside of an epic fantasy series have I encountered such excellent world-building. From the DK station to the green and vibrant Carida, the settings are so vibrantly alive and peopled with characters so real that I felt like I could step right into the book and shake their hands (or punch them out as the case may be). Beautifully written.

(view spoiler)

In the afterward, the author indicates the possibility of stories set in this world eventually coming from two

other authors as well, Ginn Hale and Nicole Kimberling. I'll be crossing my fingers.
