



# To Honor You Call Us

*H. Paul Honsinger*

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The Terran Union is engaged in a vast interstellar war against the Krag, ruthless aliens intent on exterminating humankind. In 2315, the wily Max Robichaux is given command of the USS *Cumberland*, a destroyer with state-of-the-art capabilities but a combat record so bad, she's known as the "Cumberland Gap."

Capt. Robichaux's first mission: to take his warship to the Free Corridor, where the Krag have secretly been buying strategic materials, and to seize or destroy any ships carrying enemy cargo. Far from the fleet and under enforced radio silence, Max relies only on his determination and guile...and the support and friendship of his chief medical officer, the brilliant Dr. Sahin.

Because even as he deals with the ship's onboard problems and the stress of carrying out her risky assignment, Max and the doctor discover that the *Cumberland* and her misfit crew are all that stands in the way of a deadly Krag attack that threatens to end the war--and humanity—once and for all.

A far-future story in the tradition of "ships of wood, men of iron" novels, *To Honor You Call Us* and the Man of War series combines the adventure of exploration, the excitement of war, and the dangers of the unknown through the eyes of a ship and her crew.

## To Honor You Call Us Details

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Author : H. Paul Honsinger

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# From Reader Review To Honor You Call Us for online ebook

## Judy says

This is the first military sci-fi/space opera book I have read (I listened to the audiobook) and I was surprised at how much I liked it. The influence of the seafaring novels was there (Aubrey/Maturin, Hornblower, etc.) and I really liked that. I liked the historical references and thought the characters were well-developed. There were a few spots that were a bit over-the-top for me, but overall I really enjoyed it. I have the next book in the series on audio, and look forward to it.

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## Online Eccentric Librarian says

*More reviews (and no fluff) on the blog <http://surrealtalvi.wordpress.com/>*

I love a good old fashioned military sci fi but it's the space opera subgenre that I truly enjoy. This book by Paul Honsinger, previously self published, is now getting a glossy release with a great cover.

Although the book is decently written, I have to admit I did not find myself engaged by the characters. Dialogue seems to always be presented, rather than spoken, and it ended up making the characters feel either pompous or smug. I listened to the Audible version as well as reading the print and I can't pinpoint whether it was the narrator's way of tapering off sentences to an emotional low or simply stilted dialogue. But in the end, I just didn't believe any of the characters are real people. Robichaux was a bit too perfect - always coming up with the perfect solutions to any situation, alien or otherwise. I believe the author wanted to present a flawed character forged through a crucible of horrific experiences. But I'd have to have seen, rather than be constantly told in speech after speech, of that pathos. And therein was a lot of the problem for me - we get a lot of tell but very little show as to the nature of the characters. Even the narrator was having trouble making the dialogue sound believable.

Plot: Captain Robichaux lost his first command in a horrific way and now finds himself captaining a grossly mismanaged ship with serious issues. He will have to pull it together as an alien species is bent on human genocide. For it will turn out that their ship may be all that stands between the aliens and Earth.

Robichaux, we're told, is suitably flawed - suffering from PTSD, having to overcome the obstacles of his new captaincy, and with only his ship's doctor for a friend. Those who have read Patrick O'Brien's Age of Sail series will recognize these archetype characters immediately (or, at least, Star Trek interaction between Kirk and Bones). Most of the book is Robichaux fixing the issues with his new crew. As such, there's not much action until near the end: just events, speeches, crew mutiny, speeches, drug problems, speeches, introspection, speeches....and more speeches. I felt like every sentence someone spoke had to end with an exclamation mark.

There are no women whatsoever - we are told the aliens created a virus that wiped them out. Even at social functions, there are no women nor do any of the men really think of loved ones/parents/etc. I can't think that leaving part of the human race at home because of gender when there is a war to annihilate your species is

going on is the smartest move - if you lose, the women bite it anyway. But it is thematic with the Master and Commander feel of the book, harkening to the days when women were considered bad luck on a ship.

One thing that really did bother me were the countless references to late 20th century space/sci fi - I think Grissom was mentioned, what, 5 times? Star Trek 7 or 8, and a lot of the terms derived from pop culture. That felt odd considering the space/sci fi of the first part of the century not really being noted - from Verne to Buck Rogers. Clearly, the author is a child of the 60s and 70s but the character Robichaux isn't - and why would any of his crew get those random historical references? It would be sort of like referencing generals of the Crimean war if you lived in the 1920s. As well, there would be many many more cultural icons to draw from in the coming several centuries before this story takes place - but no reference to anything else except 60s and 70s NASA/Sci Fi. This may seem nitpicky but it kept pulling me out of the story and was starting to feel far too gratuitous and wink wink.

Military sci fi authors each bring something special to the table for their successful series. CJ Cherryh and her psychology, Campbell's Lost Fleet and likeable characters, even another formerly self published but now published author Currie and his down to Earth motley assortment of simple folk. What I feel Honsinger brings is a more formal, stilted, old fashioned type of navy at sea a la Nelson and Hornblower. So if you like characters that don't speak, but instead Project with a capitol "P", then this likely will be a series you'll enjoy. But for me, it just didn't engage me and I just didn't like or get behind any single character in the book. I didn't dislike them - I just found them annoying and somewhat pompous.

At this point, I'm not sure if I want to continue with the series. Reading the writer's haranguing of reviewers who didn't highly rate the book in the Amazon review comments sections was disappointing and quite off putting (personal attacks, "if you don't like it, go write your own novel!", "this person is a shill working for another sci fi author trying to discredit me!"). It's just not something that makes me want to support the book with sales or even recommend.

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## **C.P. Cabaniss says**

\*I received a copy of this novel through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.\*  
This review can also be found on my blog: [www.courtneysreads.blogspot.com](http://www.courtneysreads.blogspot.com)

While it took me quite a while to finish this novel it was by no means due to a lack of interest. I was hooked from the first page. The prologue was brilliant.

This novel is set in the year 2315 where Earth, along with its allies, is fighting a war against the Krag-an alien race set on the destruction of humankind. The main events of the story take place aboard the USS Cumberland, a destroyer in the Union Space Navy. The Cumberland is up against tough odds, particularly considering the majority of its crew has little battle experience and are used to abuse from the commanding officers.

One of the best things about this novel is the characters and the relationships that we see beginning to develop. Max, the young and impulsive captain, has a tormented past that leaves him haunted but he's very good at hiding his demons. Abraham Sahin, the chief medical officer, is articulate, brilliant, clueless, and observant all in good measure. The combination is quite endearing. The friendship that begins to develop between these two characters was beautifully depicted and I hope that it continues to be explored and developed throughout the rest of the series.

Some of the other characters that I particularly enjoyed were Brown, the chief engineer, who was hilarious. I was always laughing during his portions of the novel. He always had something funny to say that lightened the novel perfectly. Garcia, Max's second in command, was also a favorite. There were others I really enjoyed. The entire crew of the Cumberland really made this novel for me, even those I didn't particularly enjoy.

The naval information was fascinating. At times there was too much information dumped on the reader that could have been more broken up and spread out, but it was all relevant and informative. Even when the explanations became lengthy it was still nice to have the information presented, rather than the author assuming that you understand all of the naval jargon and such. The glossary of terms at the end was also a nice addition. I used it to refresh myself on some of the terms and sayings. It was very informative.

The main downfall of this novel for me was the action scenes. These scenes could be cleaned up and polished a bit to improve the overall flow. At times it almost became too descriptive and was more telling rather than showing what was happening. This caused me to lose the story in the details a few times.

I'm really glad that I decided to read this novel. I've had little experience with science fiction in the past, but that I have read has impressed me and this novel will join that list. I am very excited to start the second installment and see where Max takes his crew next.

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## Gökçe says

Askeri Bilim Kurgu romanlar?na erkekler için Romans demi?ti biri internetlerde. Romans okumasam da ne demek istedi?ini anlad???m? san?yorum. Ço?u askeri bk'da belli bir ?ablon vard?r. Güçsüz bir uzay gemisi, gezegen ya da askeri birli?in ba??ndaki genç subay?n o birli?i sava?abilir hale getirip, kendinden büyük bir dü?man? yenmesini anlat?r. To Honor You Call Us da böyle bir roman. ?ablona uymas?na ra?men neden dört y?ld?z? hak ediyor dersiniz cevab? yarat?c?l???nda ve yenili?inde.

Askeri BK'n?n bana sorarsan?z bir alt kolu say?labilecek uzay gemisi kaptan? türünde ço?u yazar?n etkilendi?i eser Patrick O'Brian'?n Aubrey–Maturin romanlar? olmu?. Sevdi?im yazar Drake gibi yazarlar direk etkilendiklerini söylüyorlar. Dolay?s?yla ortada bir ?ablonun varl???n? inkar edemeyiz. Ancak bu dar s?n?rlar?n içinde öyle zekice i?ler ç?kart?yorlar ki keyifle okunan bir roman ortaya ç?k?yor.

Dünyay?, asl?nda galaksiyi demeliyim, ba?ar?l? bir teknikle anlat?yorlar. Bilgi dökmesi de?il, çakt?rmadan ve konu?ma içinde verme i?ini iyi beceriyorlar. Uzaydaki sava?lardan ziyade, donanman?n ve insanlar?n kültürü ba?ar?l? bir arka plan olu?turup roman?n keyfini artt?r?yor.

?çindeki sadece yer kaplayan cinsiyetçi, maço bölümleri atsalar be? y?ld?z verebilirdim. Fakat o bölümler ve uzunlu?uyla s?kan verilme de olacak yaz??malar yüzünden dört y?ld?z veriyorum. E?er gemi sava?l? askeri bk okumak isterseniz bir göz at?n.

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## Laz the Sailor says

Combine Longknife, Harrington, Scalzi, and a little bit of Nathan Lowell's Quarter Share, remove all of the women, and start a big war, and you've got this book/series.

And those are all good things (except maybe the lack of women).

A solid mix of tactics, tension, politics, and creative solutions. Somewhat predictable if you are well-versed in this genre, but still well written.

I will read the other books in the series.

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## **Mike (the Paladin) says**

This could be a slightly lengthy review so let me give a thumbnail for those who simply want to know if I like and recommend the book. Then I'll give a few details and impressions.

Yes...I greatly like and recommend the book. Good military science fiction, military fiction, action and simply a good novel. It gets my highest recommendation.

NOW, if you know my taste and my reviews then you know that means the emphasis is not on romance or a love story. Bottom line...there isn't one. Okay let me say a little about the book, the story and why (I think) I like it.

I wonder if some of this may not be related to the number of books I have read, even age related. I find more and more lately my reading is leaning farther away from nonfiction and message fiction. I have on my currently reading list right now 2 books that have failed to catch my interest. I keep laying them aside and just not picking them back up. I started another "space opera" and was so unimpressed that I put it back on my to be read list thinking I'd get to it later (it's the second in a series). I've also had a string of mediocre reads lately that I can only go about 3 stars for. I didn't dislike them, I even liked "parts of them". But as a whole they just didn't draw me in.

This book will I suspect appeal to those of us with military backgrounds (especially Navy or Marine here I suspect [Curmudgeon] though I'm Army I got into it). I don't know why it is that often when in the military we "bellyache", complain and carry on yet then the positive side stays with us throughout our lives...but there it is.

The characters in this book while not being laid out in long laborious detail are complete and you'll get to know them by their actions. The story (as I've said about other books I've liked) breaks out of the staring gate at breakneck speed and barely slows down to catch it's breath.

Now I'm going to say something else but please read it to the end in case you don't particularly care for the books I'm about to compare this to.

I've often read where reviewers compare military navy science fiction to the Hornblower novels. This one does bring much of the Hornblower "mythos" (if you will) into a futuristic setting. Now if you didn't like those books don't let that put you off. What I mean is that you see a junior officer having to perform in a very tough situation. This is a "space navy war" where ships are boarded with swords and cutlasses being used. AND there is a rational reason for it. The crews and officers share in prize money for captured ships. They have to deal with neutral worlds that won't take sides...

(I know you're probably asking about why they would use swords and why not just have a self destruct for

boarded ships. The book answers those questions...but if I told you, you would miss out on finding it out in the book. I wouldn't do that to you.)

No...no spoilers here. I truly enjoyed this book. Am I shallow???? Maybe, but it's a good book and I burned straight through it. I give it my highest adventure/action recommendation...

Enjoy.

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### **Eric Allen says**

Yeah, I'm four chapter ruling this one. I have a rule that if a book can't interest me within four chapters, there's plenty of others out there that can, and I shouldn't waste my time with one that can't. I can usually sit down and enjoy the most terrible of Military Sci-fi, but this one just isn't doing it for me. Most of all, it's just really, really boring, and all of the characters are just so bland and lacking anything resembling personality. And there's so much made up military jargon, and acronyms that the author either doesn't explain at all, or spends way too much time explaining. Here's an idea, save yourself the need to explain, as well as saving the reader the head-scratching over trying to figure it out, and work the jargon into the story in such a way that the meaning is apparent. There are literally PARAGRAPHS of this book that are made up of nothing but nonsense words and acronyms that are not explained until pages later. You want to take me out of the story, entire paragraphs of meaningless gibberish is a pretty good way right there.

If you're looking for some good military sci-fi and Amazon keeps pushing this one on you like it's the freaking holy grail, don't give in to temptation, and skip it. If you like well written sci-fi with strong characters, pick up Terms of Enlistment by Marko Kloos instead, I've recommended that one to quite a few people, and not had a complaint yet.

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### **Vicii says**

I read the first half of this book quickly and then paused whilst I read a "book club read". I can't deny that I read the second half just as quickly but not so much because I wanted to find out what happened.

There was lots of suspense and it was written in a very military way but nothing seemed to go wrong. It was just too convenient that everything seemed to work out and the end of the book just seemed to be the final nail in the coffin for me, when congratulated on how well they had done. It was kind of like one of the Hollywood movies that has to explain what happened just in case you didn't get it. Well I read the whole book, so I got it and didn't need it re-iterating.

Probably somewhere between 2.5 - 3 stars

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### **Moira says**

6.7.2016 - 5\* - strašně se mi líbí autor? v styl psaní. Jeho vedení postav.

8.11.2015 - 4,5\*

D?j, atmosféra p?fb?hu, militantní prost?edí.

Rasy, jejich zvyky.

Nebylo to *dokonalé*, stále mi u všeho n?jaký ten kousek chyb?l, ale rozhodn? to bylo zatracen? nadpr?m?rné a psaní m? stejn? tak chytlo, že jsem si to prost? jen užívala.

A postavy si *tak* oblíbila. .)

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## Keith says

Wow, I must say I am impressed. After reading a lot of mediocre Space Opera over the past few years, I have finally found another series I actually like.

Excellent series so far. The smaller scale of the books felt a lot more like early Honor Harrington, with only a few ships and small scale diplomacy against a larger backdrop, but without the "single ship charging into the unknown and getting into and out of all sorts of trouble" that I have come to hate.

The series is told from the perspective of the commander of a smallish space faring military vessel, including interactions with his senior staff and crew. The cast of recurring characters is relatively small and easy to remember, and the characters are actually adults, not testosterone addled kids getting in over their head doing stupid shit like *Odyssey One* (*Into the Black*) or *Aurora: CV-01*. The future is dark - there is a war on - but it is not dystopian or post apocalyptic like *Marines* or *The Empire's Corps*.

It lacks the large scale plots and PoV shifts of David Weber's Honor Harrington series *On Basilisk Station*, which makes it a much easier read, more like *Dauntless* or *On Silver Wings*, both of which are series I enjoyed. It is no where near as dry as *Lost Fleet*, however.

There is a distinct lack of women in these books, as it is based on the archetype "Ships of Wood, Men of Steel" model, but the lack is explained early on and in a way that bemoans the lack of women in the fleet - and emphasizes the genocidal nature of the alien threat. In some ways this feels little different that many military books written by men, where the women often come across as very masculine, like Honor Harrington or Sorilla or Tanya Desjani.

I look forward to book 3. Definitely recommend this if you like military sci fi told from a naval perspective.

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## Holly Heisey says

I've read and love many books with the premise of Horatio Hornblower in space, but this one leans on the template of Aubrey/Maturin, which I loved! There's the same sense of character, but the friendship between Captain Max Robichaux and Dr. Ibrahim Sahin is both familiar and a thing of its own. There's a warmth here, the sense of a navy that relies heavily on the tradition of the Napoleonic British with a dash of Cold War submarine warfare, but done in such a way that it takes into account what it's trying to do and shows why things are the way they are. The fact that it holds to a future timeline, too, anchors it, and one of my favorite things about the book was the gleeful references to history and pop culture that made their way into this future navy. My favorite: if a man's threatened to be put out the airlock, they call it "to go dancing with the stars."



The book is also very well written, with info parsed out in the same running fashion as Patrick O'Brian--good and technical, but not too info-dumpy. The pacing is brisk, but always anchored in character, and the characters are all wonderfully human, with plenty of demons to fight and overcome. The situation with the war with the Krag was dire, and painted in such a way that I wholeheartedly stood on the side of Max and his trouble-ship, the U.S.S. Cumberland. And of course, the space combat is realistic and superb!

I listened to the audiobook, and the narrator Ray Chase was absolutely excellent. If you can get the audio version, do!

Overall, a solid, surprising, and warmly human addition to my favorites of military SF.

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## **Mr. Matt says**

In the somewhat distant future, the Terran Union is engaged in a desperate war against an alien foe, the Krag. The Union's goal is survival. The Krag's goal is exterminating every last human. A rising star, the newly promoted Capt. Robichaux is assigned to the the USS Cumberland and tasked to harass, interdict, destroy, and disrupt the shipping of the Krag in the sleepy interstellar regions of the war. Robichaux and his crew find themselves engaged in a pivotal engagement where they all that stands between a dangerous new incursion by the Krag and the core human systems.

There is much to like in this book. The space battles are great. The author did a good job of converting the age of sail to the ago of star ships and faster than light travel. The cat and mouse of the Cumberland stalking and being stalked made for some pretty tense moments. Additionally, the hand to hand combat in the occasional boarding engagement was pretty exciting as well. And the Krag make a great enemy that we can all enjoy blowing to hell and back.

Unfortunately, there were some things in the book that also detracted from the experience. When I read, I like to lose myself in the story. There is nothing better than looking up from your book and realizing an hour and a half has just past - or staying up til three in the morning because you simply can't put the book down. That never happened with this book. There were some real zingers that broke my immersion in the author's story.

The books need to hold together with a certain amount of logic. And this book failed that test for me. OK, the Krag are engaged in an acknowledged war of human extermination. As part of that war, they unleashed a terrible plague - the Gynophage. This disease left men largely unaffected, but had a 99% mortality among women. It spread like crazy and it was only through a Herculean effort that a vaccine was developed. Let's say that it killed 70% of all women and girls. This is part of the author's story and it fits. What doesn't fit is all the unaligned human worlds. I have a hard time understanding how these numerous unaligned worlds would remain unaligned when (a) the Krag have announced their determination to exterminate humanity, and (b) the Krag virus has just killed most of the women on human planets. Now maybe I could accept an oddball unaligned human state - but lots of them. No freaking way! I think that given points (a) and (b) above ALL the human planets would come together to fight the Krag.

This is minor, but related to the Gynophage, I was surprised that there were no hints of homosexual relationships. Again, remember that conservatively speaking 70% of all women are dead. The remaining women are closely guarded and kept out of front line navy deployments. These men are at space for years at a time and even when they go planet side, there are simply no women. Surely homosexuality would be more

accepted in this type of world. In this story there weren't even hints. I think the author missed a chance to make his story more authentic.

The other main problem with the book was its predictability. Yes, of course, Robichaux is assigned to a problem ship. Of course he has to whip the crew and officers into shape. Of course he does it. Of course he stumbles upon a secret blitzkrieg plan that the Krag have hatched. Of course he thwarts it. The whole thing just very linear. I was expecting or hoping for some unexpected twist. It never materialized.

Finally, there was just an awful lot of explaining going on in the book. The characters spend a great deal of time explaining things to one another so that I, as a reader, will know what is going on. I may be the exception, but as a reader I kind of like not knowing exactly what is going on. It is fun to figure it on my own without a character telling me. A certain amount of exposition is necessary, but I felt there was too much.

Two and a half stars rounded down to two. This book was fun for space battles and kind of annoying for the rest of it. I wound up with something less than I had expected.

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## **Andrew Rose says**

### **Patrick O'Brien in Space**

The first book in the series, the reader is thrust into an intergalactic war with a rat like species. There are battles, mutiny, and interspecies politics. If you like Honor Harrington or the Lost Fleet series you'll enjoy this series.

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## **Per Gunnar says**

This is a book that I stumbled on via various recommendations on Goodreads & Kindle. I am glad I did pick it up. It is a great book. Just my cup of tea. It is a very enjoyable space adventure about two main, rather heroic, characters that quickly form a bond and proceed to, not only get the USS Cumberland back in shape, but also to save The Terran Union. At least temporarily since this is just the first book in what I hope will be a reasonably long series.

The book is very well written and you really come to like the various characters, at least the ones that are meant to be likable. The science is quite acceptable. I was a bit put off at the start when they started to make combat with cutlasses and such archaic instruments. It reminded me about Tour of the Merrimack, a series which I read because I wanted to finish what I started but was never really very impressed by. It did not turn out to be as bad as I thought though and the space combat is quite well done.

Sometimes the book can be quite humorous, often due to the way the author word things but also due to the friendly bantering and bickering between the various characters. It is written for an adult audience and there is none of this nonsensical replacing of certain words that a soldier on the front-lines would utter from time to time. That kind of language is sparingly used though and mostly the author is demonstrating his skills in using the language instead. I noticed that someone had written review giving the book a one-star rating on Kindle claiming that the author is struggling with his sentence structure. That review is blatantly false and

nothing but trolling as far as I am concerned.

This book is really a great adventure story in the same style as the old sailing ship adventure stories. I loosely refer to Master & Commander in the title but you can probably find quite a few other examples.

I was planning to dig into another book by Christopher Nuttall after I had read this one but I am afraid that I got so immersed in this series that I just have to read the second book in the series right away so, sorry Mr. Nuttall, yours have to wait a wee bit longer. I just have to see where this series goes now.

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## Casey Hampton says

H. Paul Honsinger's *To Honor You Call Us* is on the softer side of Military SF. Rat-faced aliens religiously motivated and determined to exterminate humans play the role of villain. The stage is the stars, and the stars teem with alien life. Some species resemble catfish; others appear to mirror carnivorous teddy bears.

The year is 2315. Rough and tumble Max Robichaux is promoted to Captain, and the story follows his journey into deep space to fight the dreaded rat-faced Krag. In this era of FTL (Faster Than Light) space jumps, pulse cannons, and universal interspecies translators, we also encounter boarding parties, cutlasses, traditional firearms, beer and liquor rations, and battle-axes.

I struggled with this book. None of the characters are engaging, the dialogue is clunky unvoiled exposition, and pretty much the entire book is written in the passive voice. Honsinger overloads his prose with anachronistic stumbling blocks jarring the reader from the 2315 present-day. I didn't want to at first, but I was willing to accept sword wielding boarding parties in space. I drew the line at the ships commissary selling t-shirts (all sizes), ball caps, pins, coffee mugs, pillowcases, pendants, charm bracelets, polo shirts, shotglasses, workout shorts, throw pillows, Christmas tree ornaments, etc. When I encounter a character saying, "Maybe Santa Claus will come by in his sleigh and act as a missile decoy," I stop and scratch my noggin. The year is 2315, what character drops this antiquated holiday reference? And why does a character observe, "The sounds reminded Max of a child playing with his oatmeal by using a drinking straw to make bubbles." Is there really still straws and oatmeal in 2315? Don't get me wrong, I like oatmeal, but I've never used a straw with it before.

The struggle lies in Honsinger's earnest desire for his story to be taken seriously. If this had been presented as a farce, a jape upon the genre of Military SF like the film *Galaxy Quest* poked good-naturedly at its contemporary counterparts, I could have better rolled with the punches. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Honsinger's incessant desire to drop knowledge in the form of military history on the reader is tiring, and does nothing to advance the story. When it's all said and done, this reads like fanfic, poorly written fanfic.

I listened to the audiobook. Ray Chase is the narrator, and damned if he didn't make this book better.

Since *To Honor You Call Us* is the first in the Man of War series, I fully expect Honsinger's writing to improve as the story continues. And while I do feel burned by this book, I might be willing to pick up the next volume, in time, if Honsinger figures out what he is writing, drops the passive voice, and commits to more intensive revision.

