



## Allegiance (Star Wars - Legends)

By Timothy Zahn

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Never before has the incendiary mix of action, politics, and intrigue that has become Timothy Zahn's trademark, been more evident than in this new Star Wars epic. On the heels of the stunning events chronicled in *Star Wars: A New Hope*, the newly minted heroes of the Rebellion—fledgling Jedi Luke Skywalker, smuggler turned reluctant freedom-fighter Han Solo, and Princess Leia Organa, a bold leader with a world to avenge—must face the harsh realities of the cataclysmic conflict into which they have so bravely plunged. From this point forward, legends will grow, treachery will abound, and lives will be irrevocably altered, in the long, hard fight to counter the fist of tyranny and restore hope to a galaxy too long in darkness.

The destruction of the Death Star by the Rebel Alliance was a decisive blow against the Empire, but Palpatine and his monstrous enforcer, Darth Vader, are no less of a threat. The brutal extermination of Alderaan not only demonstrated the magnitude of their murderous power, but served as a chilling testament to their resolve to crush the Rebel uprising. Standing against them, Skywalker, Solo, and the Princess remain uncertain opponents. Luke is gifted and brave, but unschooled in the power he possesses. Han has doubts about waging someone else's war—and his contentiousness is one more burden for Leia to bear as she struggles to help keep the Rebellion alive. The three have been sent to mediate a dispute between Rebel Alliance factions in Shelsa Sector—agitating matters by forcing Han to deal not only with pirates, but with his more dreaded enemy, politics. At the same time, Mara Jade—all of eighteen and years away from her fateful meeting with Luke—is serving her evil master, Palpatine, well in her role as the Emperor's Hand: tracking suspected treachery in the Empire to what may be high places—while trying to stay out of Darth Vader's way.

But the Rebels will prove to be only one of the Empire's concerns. For Imperial Stormtrooper Daric LaRone, his faith in the Empire shaken by the wanton destruction of Alderaan, will commit a sudden and violent act of defiance, and take four other enforcers with him, in a desperate bid to elude their masters' wrath.

Each of these fateful actions, whether sanctioned, secret, or scandalous, will expose brutality and corruption, spur upheavals destined to shake the Empire to its core, and shape momentous events yet to come.

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### Editorial Review

#### From Publishers Weekly

Five idealistic but fed-up Imperial storm troopers led by Daric LaRone share the stage with young Rebel Alliance crusaders Han Solo, Princess Leia Organa, Luke Skywalker and Chewbacca in this politically fraught but still rollicking early years Star Wars adventure from Hugo-winner Zahn (*Star Wars: Outbound Flight*). Emperor Palpatine's favorite Sith, Darth Vader, has a new rival, the 18-year-old Countess Mara Jade Claria, whom Palpatine has schooled in the Force to assume the special agent role of "Emperor's Hand." Zahn depicts the intrepid Rebel quartet and the turbulent development of the Alliance while revealing the human faces behind the storm trooper armor of Daric and company, who become unexpected allies of Han and friends once the troopers are on the run after killing a superior officer. The author also underscores Mara Jade's tough-girl charm and blossoming Imperial clout against the background of Palpatine's dedication to Imperial domination and his insidious influence on his minions. This episode will please fans wondering about events between the first and second movies in the original Star Wars trilogy.

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#### From School Library Journal

Adult/High School—In this eighth novel set in the *Star Wars* universe, five Stormtroopers led by Daric LaRone become fugitives when they defy orders to kill a group of defenseless civilians. On the run, the unit turns into a team of self-appointed vigilantes fighting to protect the rights and safety of the citizens of the Empire. A second story line features Mara Jade, a force-wielding apprentice to Emperor Palpatine, and her investigations into a world governor who is stealing Imperial tax money to fund a team of brutal space pirates. LaRone and his team bring a uniquely human touch to the men behind the Stormtrooper armor, while Jade is a highly likable woman filled with enough guile and drive to rival Princess Leia herself.

Chronologically, this story takes place between the films *A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back*. While it focuses on the new characters, some of the more familiar names are here as side characters to draw in the fans and drive the plot along. There are some fine moments as a young Luke Skywalker struggles to learn the secrets of the Force and Han Solo questions how involved he wants to become in Princess Leia's rebellion. Jade's and LaRone's plotlines intersect and interweave, leading to a fast-paced climax filled with blaster shoot-outs, star-fighter battles, and Jade's clever tricks with the Force. Tightly plotted and fast paced, *Allegiance* will appeal to hard-core and intermittent fans alike.—Matthew L. Moffett, Pohick Regional Library, Burke, VA

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#### From Booklist

The dean of Star Wars fiction returns with this exploration of events between *A New Hope* and *The Empire Strikes Back*. Luke Skywalker has perhaps the easiest time, as his studying of the Jedi way is mentored and monitored by Obi-Wan Kenobi. Prince Leia is dedicated to the Rebellion but aware of the price this can exact and ambiguous about her feelings toward Han Solo, who is ambiguous about the Rebellion, even though he knows he is a marked man after his role in the destruction of the Death Star. And we meet Mara Jade as a young Hand to the Emperor Palpatine, still developing her abilities as a troubleshooter. In this case, the trouble can shoot back--a band of renegade stormtroopers, half-vigilante and half-pirate. Mara finds good men and women in the service of the Empire, but over all looms the shadow of Darth Vader, who has a short way with both failure and rivals. The author paints a rather large canvas in a comparatively compact book, with his usual spare prose, swift pacing, and eye and ear for details in the world he is depicting. More exploration of the in-between periods in the saga will be heartily welcomed. *Roland Green*

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Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to understand everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim as well as goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their a chance to read a book. They may be reading whatever they consider because their hobby is usually reading a book. Why not the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man feel need book once they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you'll have this Allegiance (Star Wars - Legends).

#### **Robert Hatch:**

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