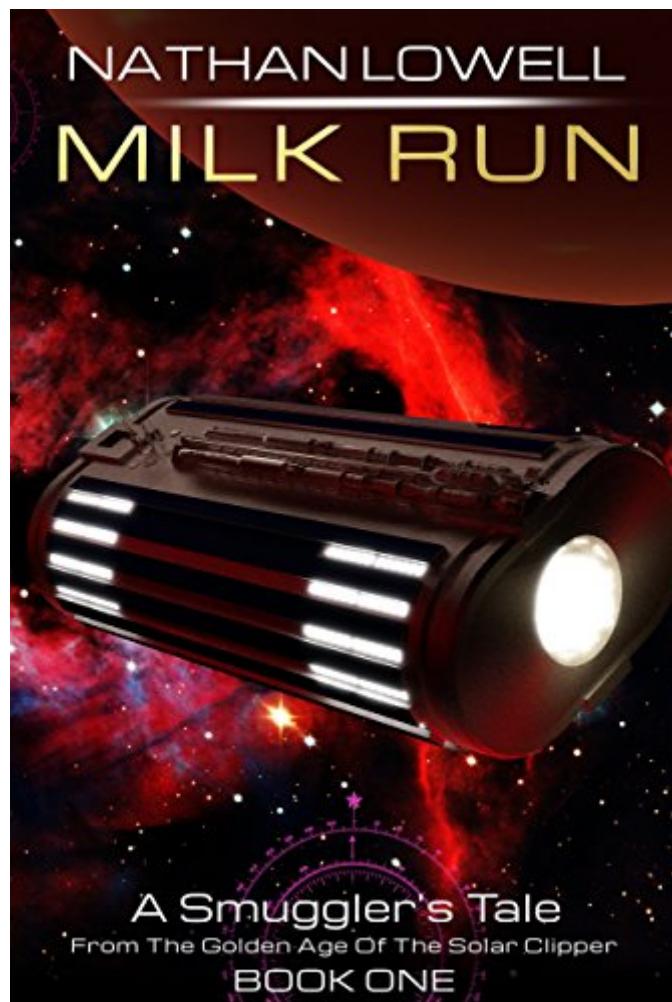


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# Milk Run (Smuggler's Tales From The Golden Age Of The Solar Clipper Book 1)



## **Synopsis**

Framed. Betrayed. Exiled. Academy graduate Natalya Regyri stood first in line for her pick of Engineering Officer jobs, until, at the graduation party, a classmate turned up dead. Now, betrayed by her friends and framed for murder, she must flee beyond the reach of the Confederation...and any semblance of civilized society. With a damaged second-hand ship and TIC interceptors dogging her step, she nets a smuggling contract that might just get her back on her feet and in control of her destiny. But only if she's willing to make an ore run back to the place she's wanted for murder, and into the arms of the authorities.....who somehow know she's coming.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

An awesome first-in-a-spin-off-series, of the shared Tales from the Golden Age of the Solar Clipper. As a first novel it can and does stand alone... It's totally independent of the original series, and it broadens our understanding of the way (Nathan Lowell's) universe works! Just what have Nats and Zee gotten themselves in to? What should be a Celebration and Graduation feast turns into a disaster, with a death, and a frame-up for murder... Nathan Lowell tends to joke that nothing

happens in his stories, because there's no alien attack or whatnot. But I say differently... No one else writes a story about space like Nathan! These stories are more of a procedural primer of what it takes to be a merchant on a starship, all served with a side of mystery and suspense...So get the book, grab a good cup of coffee, and welcome aboard!

I enjoyed the story and was very glad to get another installment of Mr. Lowell's universe, though I'd have to say it wasn't quite as good as Trader's tales. While the main characters are interesting and believable in the context of the story, there isn't much rapport with the primary protagonist, Natalya. The story is told from her perspective, but you don't really get in her head and experience the story with her. It's more of watching what happens around her as the tale unfolds. It's by no means bad, but definitely a different feel than Ishmael Wong's books. I'd say it's more of a perspective shift, more in the third rather than first. Also, since there's only the one smuggler's tale book, it's not exactly an equal comparison. However, thinking back on Quarter Share, Ishmael had grown substantially and had an exciting path ahead of him. Natalya on the other hand, has completed a notable accomplishment and the story just kind of ends. In some ways smuggler's tales should be fundamentally different to keep things interesting, but I still feel Ishmael has a charisma that Natalya can't quite match.

Like all of Nathan's stories, Milk Run was not at all what I was expecting, in the best way possible. Fans of The Golden Age of the Solar Clipper will enjoy the alternate view from the other side of space.

For someone like me who has enjoyed the rest of the books set in this universe, Milk Run is an exciting addition to Lowell's work. In many ways, this book lays out a world that is the total opposite of the one we (and the main characters) know and are used to. It's an easy read, with a couple of twists, but nothing like the cliffhangers that came at the end of the Share series. The editing is also very good for a self published book - far better than the original editions of Quarter Share and Half Share, which I recently reread. That said, there are moments when this book feels like the same "turn around a bad ship" plot that we saw in Double Share - just with a female protagonist, a bit less violence and a bit more commercial crime. The time spent on the small ship and station were, to me, much more interesting than the large ship time, which we have mostly seen before. That said, if this is your first exposure to this universe, don't start here - go read the Share series, and come back to this one once you've gotten hooked by it.

Nathan Lowell just keeps writing one great story after another, this one set in Toe Hold space, a very interesting concept. Natalya is a fresh, like able character, smart and savvy in some ways, naive in others. I look forward to getting to know her better in future books. Keep writing, .Mr. Lowell, we like your stuff!

I have been following my fellow Coastie's work for several years the series is a very accurate rendering of life underway. This book opens a new chapter in the way economies inter-relate and the effect it will have on individuals.

Three and a half stars. Maybe I am being a little harsh because I am such a HUGE fan of Nathan Lowell's other works. The pacing was steady through most of the book but became very rushed towards the end. I know Lowell did this is both Full Share and in Owner's Share but it seemed even more condensed in this book. I also wonder about the 'working the ship full time' aside which was just left hanging. Was this a hint at the future of this series, or was it a justification for the premise of In Ashes Born. When I first read Nathan Lowell, I was drawn in by the depth and richness of each of his characters. I know many complained "nothing happens" but there is a great deal that goes on, just in small steps (sort of how real life works). Lowell's book are not about action, they are about ordinary people doing both ordinary and extraordinary things. "Milk Run" seems to focus more on what is going on then who his doing it and it leaves many, many soft cliff hangers unresolved. A good read, but not Lowell's best.

This first novel in the Smuggler's Tales is a great adventure for our two young heroines, Natalya and Zoya, who just graduated Port Newmar Academy. They are maneuvered into seeking their fortune in a region of space called the Toe-Hold which is reputed to be a lawless area. Although it's not part of the Confederated Planets and a fair amount of smuggling occurs there, it is not quite the wild west. They end up on freighter that is doing not-quite legal business. Even so the voyage is considered just a Milk Run. Well it turns out to be anything but a Milk Run as there is much trouble and mystery aboard their ship. The writing is excellent and the book sparkles with witty dialog. It is a grand adventure filled with great characters. The book is complete within itself as the mystery aboard the ship is solved. But deeper mysteries are hinted at that will be solved in subsequent books.

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