The Good Shepherd by C. S. Forester

A Fine Story Of World War Two Convoy Duty.

Forty-eight hours on an American destroyer on the icy Atlantic during WW2.

My Personal Review:
This is the story of an American sea captain in charge of bringing a convoy of ships from America to Britain during the early days of America's entry into the Second World War. Confronted by a frightfully competent adversary—the German U-Boat fleet, Captain Krause has a vital mission indeed, as Britain's survival was dependent upon such convoys. Krause is well aware that the outcome of the war at that time was very much in doubt, and he must bring to bear all of the skills he has learned in a career forged largely in peacetime. Krause is more than a little reminiscent of Hornblower—highly intelligent, introspective, and full of self-doubts. Forester masterfully shows how Krause must continuously make tough decisions based upon imperfect knowledge, often low-quality ships and equipment, and subordinates who often execute his orders imperfectly. He must take all of these factors into account, and how he manages to do this makes for a very fine and satisfying tale. Personally, I could have done without Krause's flashbacks to his early marital troubles. I just didn't think this added anything either to the reader's understanding of Krause and his character, or to the story in general. Just my opinion. The career problems that Krause had earlier faced added a sufficient melancholy ingredient to the story, without being sordid. Forester always succeeds when he sets out to write a novel of naval adventure, and this book is no exception. This is a wonderful novel. I debated whether to deprive it of the fifth star because I believe that the Hornblower series, and "The Captain From Connecticut" are even better than this novel. But in reality this book is among the very best tales of naval adventure even if Forester has written even better ones, and so five stars it will be.

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