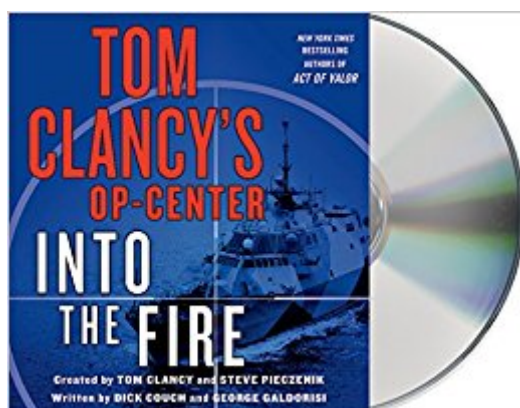


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# Tom Clancy's Op-Center: Into The Fire: A Novel



## Synopsis

Tensions flare in Northwest Asia and Op-Center races to prevent World War III in this chilling, ripped-from-the-headlines thriller from the authors of the USA Today bestseller *Out of the Ashes*. When a team of assassins murder a high-ranking North Korean general and his family in their sleep, making it look like a robbery, events are set in motion that could shake the balance of world powers. Meanwhile, a U.S. naval combat ship, the USS Milwaukee, is attacked by North Korean forces in the middle of a training exercise off the shore of South Korea, and Commander Kate Bigelow is forced to ground the ship to avoid being captured. The crew takes refuge on a tiny island, trapped dangerously between the grounded ship and a fleet of hostile North Korean soldiers. Op-Center intelligence discovers a secret alliance behind the attack—a pact between China and North Korea that guarantees China total control of a vast oil reserve found beneath the Yellow Sea. As both sides marshal their forces for a major confrontation at sea, Chase Williams and his Op-Center organization devise a plan to secretly spirit the American crew from the island and out from under North Korean control. But the North Koreans are not finished. In a desperate gamble, they unleash a terrorist cell on the American homeland. Only Op-Center can uncover their plan and stop it in time to prevent a major catastrophe that could lead to all-out war.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

• Intricately plotted, with wonderfully evil villains and enough realistic military action and suspense to ruin a couple of night's sleep. Highly recommended. • Stephen Coonts, New York Times

bestselling author of *Pirate Alley*—This thriller procedural packs plenty of pulse-raising action. The open ending promises more to come. • Publishers Weekly—Op-Center is back with a vengeance! . . . Couch and Galdorisi have just raised the bar for military adventure fiction. Suit up, strap in, and hang on, because you're in for one hell of a ride. • Jeff Edwards, bestselling author of *The Seventh Angel*

DICK COUCH graduated from the Naval Academy in 1967 and served as a Surface Warfare Officer and SEAL Platoon Commander in Vietnam. Dick has enjoyed a unique relationship with the US Special Operations Command and has been allowed to document the special operations training venues for SEALs, Army Special Forces (Green Berets), Rangers, and Marines. He is a co-author of the Tom Clancy's Op-Center series. He has been a professor at the US Naval Academy where he taught ethics and is often called on to speak to issues of character, moral battlefield conduct, and training and deployment of American military special operations forces. He lives with his wife Julia in central Idaho. GEORGE GALDORISI is a career naval aviator. His Navy career included four command tours and five years as a carrier strike group chief of staff. He has written eight books, including (with Dick Couch), the New York Times best seller, *Tom Clancy Presents: Act of Valor*; *The Kissing Sailor*, which proved the identity of the two principals in Alfred Eisenstaedt's famous photograph; and over 200 articles in professional journals and other media. He is the Director of the Corporate Strategy Group at the Navy's C4ISR Center of Excellence in San Diego, California. He and his wife Becky live in Coronado, California.

I was a bit torn about my review for this new book in the Op-Center series. I loved the series and wanted this to put a fresh new look on the series and bring back a well tested set of books. SO, let's start with this, I started reading and quite frankly couldn't put it down. When I read my first Tom Clancy book I had that experience, I started reading and couldn't stop. That happened here as well. It's Dick Couch who is writing, but he caught my attention and interest and I kept reading and reading and reading until I was done. Now I want some more. NOW, why it was not what I expected. It didn't seem to me that the OP-Center was the main character of the novel. Yes, they are still the best set of intelligence gathering people and they have some good technical and military people involved, BUT, the story revolved more around Captain Kate Bigelow and the USS Milwaukee. This Naval Vessel is not a war time fighting vessel, it is a mine sweeper that carries little to no defensive weapons. But as the Milwaukee joins with the Defender (another U.S. minesweeper) and a South Korean flotilla they are approached by North Korean Naval Vessels that are wanting to capture and

take prisoner all the naval personnel on the Milwaukee just like the USS Pueblo from the last century. But Captain Kate Bigelow is a great leader and she takes her no weapon vessel and uses it as a way to hold off the two Korean Vessels and allowing the flotilla to escape. But she will lose her ship and some of her crew and come close to having everyone captured. OP-Center is the group that analyzes the situation and provides the U.S. President with a way to intervene and get the crew back. But this could lead to all out war. The book is compelling with today's political and military situations with North Korea. They are a menace to the world and need to be contained and in a sense reprimanded much as a stubborn child should be. Dick Couch gets the situation right and does a great job of bringing the situation to a climax that you will find impressive and well written. I'm happy with this new edition to OP-Center, but must say that it is not like our old OP-Center but still worth the read. I'll look forward to Dick Couch's next book

Following the long tradition of Tom Clancy novels, Op-Center: Into the Fire seems almost real. The rogue nation of North Korea plots to capture hostages from an American Mine Sweeper operations near North Korean waters. An attack on the ship disables the ship forcing it to run aground on an uninhabited South Korean island and the Op-Center goes into action to rescue the stranded crew. Along the way a plot is uncovered for an attack on American soil. This is an exciting book and difficult to put down. I recommend Op-Center: Into the Fire for any Tom Clancy action adventure fan.

The story is typical Clancy-ish and almost predictable; the epilogue was too short on details wrapping up the story or the final consequences to North Korea - it was like the ending was a rush to finish. The real problem with the audio version is the narrator had no concept of proper pronunciation of various maritime-navy terms/titles. Coxswain & Boatswain do not pronounce the "w", as "Marine Corps" is "Marine Core" not deceased. More upsetting is this Narrator just didn't do his homework before reading or no Navy person QA'ed it. They should have gotten Lou Diamond Phillips as many previous Clancy audibles used him and he is really the best! Was a CPO 10yrs, USN-Vietnam Vet.

Tom Clancy's INTO THE FIRE is written by Dick Couch and George Galdorisi. The story, part of Clancy's Op-Center series, is all U.S. Navy with a tiny bit of USAF and Army thrown in. Commander Kate Bigelow, USNA grad, is captain of the minesweeper, USS Milwaukee. What was to be a joint mine-hunting exercise with the South Korean Navy near Incheon Harbor quickly

turned into a mini hot war with the rogue nation of North Korea. For reasons not understood by Washington, North Korea dreamed up a plot to capture the Milwaukee and hold its crew hostage. A North Korean attack disables the Milwaukee forcing Bigelow to beach the ship on an uninhabited island. With dead and wounded aboard and under constant bombardment from North Korean shore batteries, Kate Bigelow proves her mettle and her readiness for command. To complicate matters even more, her XO is weak and constantly questions her decisions. Op-Center reporting directly to President Midkiff soon takes control of the potentially explosive international situation and introduces a questionable and untested system to rescue the stranded sailors. The writers manage to seamlessly move from one disaster to another keeping the reader constantly on edge and turning pages. Into The Fire is an exciting action packed book that is hard to put down. I give the story a strong 4 ½ stars.

To begin I'll say I read for enjoyment. This review was written with that slant. This book tells the story of our relationships with China and North/South Korea during one incident. It's a quick read and holds your interest. There should be no worries about the new authors keeping the legacy of Tom Clancy alive and well.

This is a great action adventure that seems to be cut from the front pages of the newspaper, with North Korea suddenly deploying all of its naval forces with no explanation... just a few months ago, they took that action for real, deploying 70% of their submarine force, though fortunately not followed by the fictional events of this well-written story. This book very accurately describes how modern naval warfare would be carried out, and for this of us who have been trained to conduct such warfare, we can attest to its accuracy... "BZ" to George Galdorisi for a great story, and for him and Dick Couch continuing to Tom Clancy tradition!

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