



## The Stars Are Legion

*Kameron Hurley*

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## **The Stars Are Legion** Kameron Hurley

Somewhere on the outer rim of the universe, a mass of decaying world-ships known as the Legion is traveling in the seams between the stars. For generations, a war for control of the Legion has been waged, with no clear resolution. As worlds continue to die, a desperate plan is put into motion.

Zan wakes with no memory, prisoner of a people who say they are her family. She is told she is their salvation - the only person capable of boarding the Mokshi, a world-ship with the power to leave the Legion. But Zan's new family is not the only one desperate to gain control of the prized ship. Zan finds that she must choose sides in a genocidal campaign that will take her from the edges of the Legion's gravity well to the very belly of the world.

Zan will soon learn that she carries the seeds of the Legion's destruction - and its possible salvation. But can she and her ragtag band of followers survive the horrors of the Legion and its people long enough to deliver it?

In the tradition of *The Fall of Hyperion* and *Dune*, *The Stars are Legion* is an epic and thrilling tale about tragic love, revenge, and war as imagined by one of the genre's most celebrated new writers.

## **The Stars Are Legion Details**

Date : Published February 7th 2017 by Saga Press

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Author : Kameron Hurley

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## From Reader Review The Stars Are Legion for online ebook

### Kevin Kelsey says

Posted at Heradas Review

**"We all create the stories we need to survive."**

This one was, wow, very interesting. I won't be forgetting this one any time soon. It's going to be very divisive. It had some interesting pacing, and a couple plot holes, but nothing I can't overlook. The ideas and resolution were wild as hell, and that is where the novel really shined. It really did feel like it was written during the New Wave era of the late 60s/early 70s; some weird combination between Joanna Russ and Iain M. Banks. I'm thinking of some elements of Matter by Iain M. Banks specifically, but structured more like Consider Phlebas.

None of the characters are likable in any way, but that's a good thing. They're not meant to be your friends, they're meant to be brutal. There's a goal that a few factions are trying to reach, and I found myself not particularly caring who achieved it in the end, because everyone seemed to me to be equally shitty. Honestly, it's more realistic that way. I really liked that.

There is just a metric fuck-ton of gore and blood and nasty, disturbing, bizarre shit in this thing. People eating their deformed babies, guns that fire squid-like creatures for ammo, organic ships with asexually reproducing characters who birth whatever the ship needs at that moment. It's wild stuff, really interesting.

I really enjoyed the decision to not elaborate too much on the world building for the readers sake, it's just presented to you, and a lot of it is weird as hell, but you sort of feel it out and figure it out as you go along. A few of the characters took way too long to discover basic things that I thought were glaringly obvious to the reader, and the prose was just okay, but the story is just wild and huge and definitely worth checking out.

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### Sarah says

Zan is a warrior who keeps attacking the Mokshi. Each time she fails she's retrieved by two women on Katalyryna before being sent back into the fray. She's guided primarily by her sister Jayd and her mother Anat, neither of whom are actually related to her. Since Zan's memory is wiped each time she has no memory of Jayd, which makes it really hard to trust her. Jayd also has some POV chapters but these were not something that was enlightening since she was keeping secrets from the readers.

The world in this is pretty interesting. There's a whole legion of worlds existing in the same area and it created a fantastic visual. Unfortunately there's no way my visual was actually accurate because the worlds would have been majorly interfering with each other's orbits. Still, it was such a lovely image. And then there's the planets. These are all living planets with lots of... fluids. There's a certain ick factor to this, much like the tower in Annihilation, but it was definitely the coolest aspect of the book. Another interesting thing was that the characters were all women. Every single one, including the one that I kept imagining as a man.

My only real objection to this book was that it felt like she didn't have things completely locked in before she started. It ends up being a quest story and the items necessary for completion of the quest felt like the author was just randomly grabbing a couple of items and then beating you over the head with them. The number of times she repeated these two items together were... yeah, "legion" is the word that springs to mind.

I definitely recommend this book because it was such a cool idea and the world was so unusual that that alone made it worth reading. It was a real page turner for me despite its flaws. I'm looking forward to other things Hurley writes, although I'm not a fan of bugs! The organic nature of the world was both the the best and worst parts so I guess I'll have to get over that.

Plus, there's this:

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**Elise (TheBookishActress) says**

*I fear her, yes, but I've never been loyal.*

4 1/2 stars, rounded up because I know for a *fact* this will stay with me. This story follows the Katazyrna family and the Bhavajas, trying to conquer the Mokshi, a world-ship with the power to take their family away from the Legion, a ship system – think a solar system where all the planets are actually orb-shaped ships – in which they are trapped, where cancer eats away at the ships and people must be recycled for the ships to live at all.

Jayd and Zan have a plan to escape, to reach the center of the legion. But they have yet to convince their mother, Amat, of the rightness of what they're doing. Worse yet, Zan has lost her memory and doesn't trust Jayd at all. But Jayd has a plan.

It's a really complex concept, I know, but I actually found myself... not very confused by this book. At least after the first 50 pages. You will be super weirded out, but I don't think you'll be confused. **The broad concepts here are so weird and different that it's impossible to forget them.**

Perhaps that's a good summary of this book - **weird and different.** I mean, okay, you thought my synopsis was weird? Their world is literally a human body and it eats other human bodies. At one point someone climbs up the vein of the world. I pictured it shaped like a palm tree. I do not kid.

*“What is freedom?” Arankadash says. “It is control of the body, and its issue, and one's place in the world.”*

*“See?” Camas says. “We aren't all completely dead in the head.”*

The characters here are so interesting and... terrible. They're all villains and they're all liars and they all have bad intentions, every one. But somehow, it's hard not to see where they're coming from, hard not to root for them [even

►Zan - has lost her memory. probably all of us if we were reading this book. disaster lesbian. pretty badass considering she doesn't know what she's doing. shares futch memes and is actually solidly butch, probably. chaotic neutral trying to be chaotic good. I'm making jokes but I actually love her a lot

►Jayd - our second narrator. projects competent lesbian but is a closet mess. that one girl on your feed who always falls for the villains. one of the most antiheroey antiheroes ever. solid lawful neutral.

►Sabita - fucked-up villain love square member #3. an enigma. doing her best. shares steal your girl memes and never once succeeds at stealing a girl in this book. it's kind of tragic. solidly chaotic neutral.

►Rasida - murder lesbian. I don't like villains but I kinda love her delightfully evil aesthetic. she probably wears combat boots and drinks too much

Then there are the inner world characters. What I liked about these characters is that in Zan's mind, they're shitposting 24/7, but all of them are actually totally rational. Arankadash, Das Mudi, and Casamir - my favorite - all have their own motivations and characterization. Many of these characters [okay, okay, I mean Casamir] are fundamentally driven by a need for agency.

Which is I think what this book is about at its core. In a world where everything is for your family, what does it take to make a choice you don't know is right? And maybe more importantly, what does what you do to someone you love do to you?

I don't know, man, this is a really fantastic space opera. I want to recommend this but I also feel like I am totally about to get judged for recommending this. hello to all my lovely followers, and may I just make it very clear: this book is weird as hell. you are absolute not allowed to judge me for liking it anyway because I like weird things and hey, **the Hugo awards agree with me.**

*? buddyread with my crippling inability to push through books with intense worldbuilding, and also this angel and fellow sapphic sff stan*

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## Carlos says

3 stars for its innovative theme ( I haven't read anything like it ) , I would have given it 4 stars but I was not a fan of the ending. This book might revolt you (there are very gory scenes ) or it might just be what you were waiting for, the story in itself is confusing at best and the more you read the more confused you get , there is no clear direction by the author , but I ended up liking Zan , (but not jayd) one of the main characters, she seemed genuine and was likable even if she did something foolish (at least to me ) at the end . Nice foray into science fiction for the author but I wish the ending would have given satisfaction to all the characters and the reader.

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## j says

This book is poised to be Kameron Hurley's mainstream space opera breakthrough, but apparently no one told her. It's as visceral and violently angry as anything she's ever written, a ragged scream from the heart of a broken world--but one not past mending, if there are people willing to do the work.

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## Emma says

I'm just.....so disappointed.

Mostly in myself for not DNFing earlier.

## Here are the facts:

??this book is set in space

??everyone is a lesbian

??I wanted to love this so badly

??it's just,,, so fucking confusing and weird

??**example A:** everyone spontaneously gets pregnant ALL THE TIME

??and then they give birth to weird shit like mutated fish and giant slug things

??**example B:** it's supposed to be suspenseful bc you don't know what's really going on but it's actually just annoying

??leaving every!! single!!! important!! reveal!!! til the end isn't a rewarding plot twist IMO

??can you tell I'm angry I had to slog through all that boredom for an ending that was the literary equivalent of a bowl of soggy generic brand cornflakes????

??**example C:** random cannibalism feasts aren't Cool and Edgy they're gross and so fucking unnecessary

??v messy pacing

??I don't like any of these people???

??in theory they should be interesting and morally gray but I genuinely could not give less of a shit about whether they live or die

??sometimes the worldbuilding was cool-ish

??tbh there wasn't really anything I liked about this but I just don't feel like I dislike it enough for one star

anyway, this was definitely Not For Me and I'm glad it's over.

(while you're here, though, you should also go read Elise's review because she actually loved this and wrote a pretty stellar (~~stop emma from making bad puns 2k18~~) review!!!)

**CW:** VERY graphic violence, character death

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**br with a sapphic queen** ???

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## **Manuel Antão says**

If you're into stuff like this, you can read the full review.

The lack of recognition for female SF writers appears to be particularly acute for what's known as 'hard science fiction', i.e. science fiction that pays fairly close attention to scientific plausibility, and that seeks to break as few physical laws as possible (in an ideal universe, perhaps, none). Other subdomains of SF have a better acceptance of female authorship -- for example, Lois McMaster Bujold has made wonderful inroads into space opera with her Vorkosigan series, and it's hard to think about time-travel fiction without bringing to mind Connie Willis' books exploring the London Blitz through time travel. And yet there's still the idea around that women don't, or can't, or shouldn't write hard SF, which is nonsense. I've started actively seeking out hard SF by female writers, and there's some tremendously good stuff there.

For a literature of the future, SF still has some fairly reactionary attitudes at times.

If you're into SF, read on.

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## Lata says

2.5-3 stars. I found this a difficult book to get through, despite liking the concept. I loved the idea of totally female-populated worlds/ships, I liked the big differences amongst all the different levels/cultures on board the ships. I liked Casimir, too. I liked how the women could be generals, warriors, mothers, carers, plotters and schemers, strategic thinkers and impulsive, scientific and curious, violent, horrible and in general, just a variety of people, instead of being just a mother, just a daughter, just a stand-in for a lamp. What I found difficult was the sheer yuckiness, the bio-based tech and all the viscera, blood, etc. I had some difficulty not feeling grossed out a number of times. At the same time, I liked the way tech was expressed so differently here.

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## Bradley says

Memory, bio-punk, world-building extravaganza, betrayal, adventure, horror.

There's so much to love in this book. It's full to the brim with fantastic living "world/ships" and the special parasites that are living aboard them. (Us, or some kind of alien that's near enough us that makes no odds.)

I originally thought that it was going to be a lot like Starscape with the living ship, but in reality, this is much, much larger. At least the ship is. In fact, aside from a few quick space battles, most of the events take place across vast distances inside the ships. Worlds. :)

Here's another great bit: The women. It's all women. The ships manipulate and bring them back as clones (although it's never really described as such) and their memories come back slowly. This gives us a lot of really awesome plot devices that lead to so many horrible discoveries, but more-so, it gives us a really tangled web of social and interpersonal nightmares. And it's all women.

This is a fairly unique world-building exercise, and while it's not completely original, I've rarely seen it done this well while also being completely immersed in truly strange alien-tech, or being fully realized for huge story and biological reveals later. Suffice to say, I'm loving the hell out of the world-building.

The story is pretty cool, too, full of distrust and dire situations and nearly hopeless striving, neither side ever truly being able to come to grips with one another... or do they? It's truly a nightmare of social tangles when you include memories being lost or the fact that you might have been doing this same quest, futilely, over and over. The despair is palpable.

This is the fourth book I've read of hers and this is the one I probably like the most, all told. She always has fantastic world-building, full of wonderful ideas, explorations, and implications.

What can I say? I wish there was a lot more of this out there. I love this stuff. True playground of the mind. :)

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## Philip says

2.5ish stars.

Kameron Hurley is full of ideas. Some of them obviously come from a dark, twisted, disturbing place. Some nasty stuff going on here. I mean cool, creative, crazy stuff, and it works... but also oozy, squishy, bloody, nasty blech, blech. The world-building is definitely the top selling point for this book. Organic planets/weapons/vehicles, all-female cast, mutant-babies, asexual conception, very interesting.

I feel like it *should* have been incredible, and I hoped it would be, but some of the other elements weren't quite as strong as the worldbuilding. I liked the mystery at the heart of the story, I thought the unreliable narrators were put to good use, I thought everything coalesced satisfyingly at the end. In this case, however, the whole never quite equaled the sum of its parts.

Some things I didn't love include the stilted prose, and that, for the most part, the characters never truly distinguished themselves from each other. There were some questionable/confusing plot decisions. I found the pace inconsistent- it never quite became a page-turner but some parts moved more steadily than others.

If nothing else, Kameron Hurley is officially on my radar. This was my first novel of hers and I hope to enjoy her work more in the future.

Posted in Mr. Philip's Library.

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## Crini says

The Stars Are Legion was my first book by Kameron Hurley and it definitely won't be the last. Quite the opposite, I now want to devour every single book of hers, preferably all at once.

This book is like nothing I've read before and I had a lot of fun reading something as unique as this. The Stars Are Legion might as well be titled Lesbians in Space and even that doesn't cover how truly epic it is: men don't exist in this world (don't get me wrong, I have nothing against men in books but it's SO DAMN refreshing to have an all female cast). And if you wonder how this could be possible, they need to have babies after all, let me tell you, you are in for a ride. Pregnancy without men is just one of many reasons why this book deserves the gold metal of WEIRD (and I mean that in the best possible way. 100% my kind of weird).

That's not all that makes this a great book though (but let's be real, that alone would make it a damn good book). THERE IS MORE. One of my favorite things in books is having an unreliable narrator and that's what you get. At first it might seem like it's taking the usual, often-read memory loss route, but The Stars Are Legion takes this scenario and turns it into something... more. The main character doesn't just suffer from memory loss but people around her purposefully keep secrets from her. Secrets are being kept for good reasons which makes the whole situation very addictive instead of annoying like it often is in other cases. It also helps to have more than one POV character and hints that give the reader ideas of what's going on. On top of that it made for a good way to introduce the world building. It seems like a hard balancing act to explain the world while at the same time keeping many details from the main character. On me it had the effect that it was easier to get behind the world building (which seemed quite complex and as I said before, WEIRD), and it also kept me hooked and unable to stop reading because I wanted to know more and find out what's going on.

As for the characters: from what I've heard Hurley keeps true to her signature and created once again a cast of characters which many would probably label unlikeable. I absolutely loved how cruel and monstrous all these ladies are and how you can trust absolutely no one.

I got to admit that this meant it took me quite some time to start really caring about the characters, but once I

did, I HAD FEELS. By the last third of the book I was so attached to some of the characters that I know I would rate this book even higher on rereading.

Kameron Hurley's *The Stars Are Legion* is a space opera like never seen before, putting weird on a whole new level, and featuring a fantastic cast of brutal, amazing women.

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## **Mangrii says**

4,5 / 5

Zan es una mujer con amnesia cuyo propósito parece ser atacar una y otra vez la misteriosa nave-mundo el Mokshi. Su vida es un ciclo continuo de recuperación, entrenamiento, ataque y pérdida de memoria. O al menos, eso es lo que le cuentan. Su única constante y lo que parece anclarla a Katazyrna, el mundo donde despierta, es Jayd. Aunque confía en ella, Jayd tampoco parece de fiar. Está sumida en una serie de maquinaciones políticas contra su madre y el planeta-nave enemigo Bhavaja. De la mano de Zan vamos descubriendo sobre las costumbres y la tecnología de las Katazyrna a la vez que buscamos las claves del plan de Jayd para salvar el planeta-nave que habitan.

El peso narrativo de la historia recae en estos dos personajes. Los capítulos de Zan y Jayd se van intercalando, aunque los de la primera son mucho más numerosos. Vamos cuestionando las respuestas de la mano de Zan, mientras que Jayd no para de plantearnos una incógnita tras otra. El estilo de Hurley es sencillo y conciso, sin grandes alardes ni florituras. Eso si, a veces algunas frases son brutalmente demoledoras. Aunque el ritmo es muy bueno y consigue mantener la tensión con escenas de acción impresionantes durante las 350 páginas, el tramo medio se diluye en una serie de aventuras y peripecias que no tienen otra finalidad que dar a conocer el mundo que ha construido Hurley y unos secundarios molones.

Si algo me ha fascinado de *Las estrellas son Legión* es el mundo que Hurley ha construido para su historia autoconclusiva. La Legión es un conjunto de mundos artificiales y orgánicos que están en plena decadencia. Cada uno intenta obtener los máximos recursos posibles para poder reciclarse y sobrevivir. Las naves-mundo que nos plantea la autora son entes orgánicos que tienen una relación simbiótica con sus habitantes. Habitantes que son únicamente mujeres, que las mantienen y dan a luz las cosas que estas naves necesitan. Pero ellas tienen el poder de decidir, de manipular estas gestaciones. Los úteros representan el poder, y como tal, son causa de guerra y pactos entre planetas.

Quizá uno de los aspectos más comentados de esta space opera sea que todos sus personajes son mujeres, tanto que se llevo hacer la portada alternativa "Lesbianas en el espacio" por un crítica absurda. Un hecho que no hace más que realzar la necesidad de este tipo de obras. En realidad, no sé trata más que de una historia de amor entre dos mujeres donde la orientación sexual no recibe ni siquiera atención. Hurley se interesa más por hablar de la necesidad de aceptación de uno mismo o de la estratificación de clases, de la maternidad y de la búsqueda de uno mismo a través de un viaje personal.

Más Kameron Hurley por aquí, por favor.

Reseña más extensa: <http://boywithletters.blogspot.com.es...>

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## **Althea Ann says**

If you know Kameron Hurley's work, you know you're going to get an intensely visceral experience, with plenty of slime. 'The Stars are Legion' delivers as expected. The whole book is filled with yucky-but-imaginative and fascinating details, and it's worth reading just for that.

However, I did have issues with both the plot and the pacing of the novel. It's an amnesia story: Zan comes to consciousness in the middle of a war; smack in the middle of a vicious ruling family, dependent on what they tell her about who she is, and what her goals are. She's suspicious- but she seems to be in love with Jayd, who woke her - and that makes her vulnerable.

She's on (aboard?) one world of the Legion, a swarm of organic planet-ships, which are in various states of decline and decay. Her(?) world is headed by a ruler who's desperate to take over another, called the Mokshi. And for some reason, everyone seems to be depending on Zan to lead the armada to do the job. Can she? If so, why? Moreover - should she? One thing is for sure: no one here is trustworthy, and everyone has their own agenda.

The plot starts out with space battles galore, but then Zan plummets into the depths of the world, which apparently has many onion-like layers. Those who live within know even less about the outside than the top-dwellers know about the underground. Once down there, the book shifts into a 'wandering-quest'-type format, strongly reminiscent of a lot of Golden-Age "weird planet" type sci-fi. Zan meets strange people and sees odd things, and tries to get back to the surface. And this went on for quite a long time. I have to admit that I wasn't that thrilled with all the wandering, or with the amnesia device.

It's still good - but I didn't like it as much as several of Hurley's other writings - for example, 'The Plague Givers,' which was on my Hugo Nominations list this year.

Many thanks to Angry Robot and NetGalley for the opportunity to read. As always, my opinions are unaffected by the source of the book.

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### **Emily (Books with Emily Fox) says**

WTF AM I READING?!

This was all I could think about while listening to this book. I had to DNF at 50% because I still had no idea what was going on and I wasn't enjoying myself.

I was intrigue by an all female cast of characters sci-fi but that was the only good thing about this book.

It was just weird and confusing and reminded me a bit of the movie "Snowpiercer".

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### **Allison says**

This may be my favorite Hurley novel to-date, likely because it's a standalone and is a lot tighter than her other stuff. Not for the squeamish or anyone who hates bodily fluids. Really packs a punch.

And ayyyyyyyyyyyyy there are no men in this goddamn book!

Longer review when I am on not-a-tablet.

