



Deserter

Mike Shepherd

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A search for her lost friend leads the female space warrior into a galactic hellhole with no way out.

Deserter Details

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From Reader Review Deserter for online ebook

Daryl says

The first 150 pages were about Kris Longknife's wardrobe. The book was agonizing to get through and I only found the last 40 pages interesting and exciting. This may be the end of the series for me. I will have to read other reviews to see if I will even consider reading more...

Matthew Whitehead says

An excellent read

I am growing to really admire Kris Longknife. She isn't without problems and flaws, but they are very human flaws. Unlike many military space operas this series isn't about any kind of average grunt that winds up in command through battle field promotions, nor about a well established career sergeant managing officers and troops and always getting caught up by situations beyond her control, nor about a ship's captain always gaining honors and social and political status as well as enemies. This is about a woman who is already living with the burden of the label of being "one of 'those' Longknifes", a family of war heroes, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and owners of mega corporations, not to mention being a trillionaire in her own right. She is also a woman scarred with survivors guilt from the kidnapping and death of her younger brother, a history as a childhood drunk because of it, and extremely demanding, controlling, and yet distant parents. She truly finds her home and herself in the Navy, but not without growing pains, not to mention several attempts on her life, and a growing series of exploits of her own to add to the legends of "'those' damn Longknifes". She also learns what it really means to Be one of 'those' Longknifes as well, what it means to be a Leader, both as an officer and as a person. The responsibility to those she serves and whom serve her and those serving under her.

It is really interesting to watch her grow both as an officer and as a person, and how she inspires growth in those around her. She leaves a very visible impact on those she meets, ripples on the pond as she skips like a rock along path of history.

Per Gunnar says

I was greatly disappointed with this book. I started to read this book series expecting military science fiction. Most of this book was political bullshit. Kris was stranded on a bloody planet all through the book for Christ sake!

Sure, the Kris' maid and all here gadgets, a bit 007-style, was quite fun and the book wasn't poorly written which is why I didn't give a 1-star but it was just not at all what I was hoping for.

I would expect, or at least hope for, more focus on the military aspect and less on booring political intrigue.

Elecampane says

Much the same as the first, especially in terms of Kris's unstable character: last book she couldn't do anything but ignore a potentially flirty line from Tom, but in this book she's decided she loves him... but since she lacks the guts to approach him, she loses him. Likewise, in the last book she complained about her small chest and refused to let her mother dress her up; now she has a maid who talks her into a push-up bra. (Note: this is where my suspension of disbelief broke completely, because if we have reached the 23rd century without developing something better than bras, I will eat my hat. Seriously: there are wearable organic computers with completely sapient AIs, and yet no one has come up with something better than a couple of wires in an elastic band?)

As with the first book, the mission parts are interesting; less interesting is the part where Kris has to dress as a prostitute to accomplish them. To her credit, while interacting with various lower-class residents of the city during the mission, Kris does start to realise there's a world beyond her Little Rich Girl upbringing, and even to consider how her family may have contributed to it on the world she comes from. On the other hand, putting your insecure character into prostitute's clothing to highlight her issues and 'get her over' her hangups about her body is about as "funny", "thoughtful", and well-done as *Miss Congeniality* putting a ridiculously graceless cop into a beauty pageant, and the overall effect was the same: I found the whole thing off-putting, and have not bought any more novels in this series.

Lianne Pheno says

<http://delivreenlivres.blogspot.fr/20...>

Un tome qui se tenait plus que le précédent, avec un meilleur schéma d'ensemble mais que j'ai néanmoins trouvé un peu plus dense et donc un peu moins fluide. Un très bonne lecture néanmoins, qui m'a fait passé un bon moment.

La ou dans le tome précédent on n'avait que les prémisses de l'intrigue principale au milieu de tout le reste, ici on est carrément dedans. Et j'apprécie ça de la part de l'auteur, j'avais un peu peur que cette série parte vraiment tout doucement en nous donnant quelques indices légers par tome pour faire avancer l'intrigue principale à la vitesse d'un escargot. Mais ça n'a pas été le cas, un bon point.

Kris utilise un temps de latence entre deux missions pour se lancer à la recherche d'un ami, Tom, qui l'a bien aidé dans le tome précédent. Celui ci semblait vouloir à tout prix s'éloigner de la machine qu'est devenu la famille de Kris, et a décidé brusquement d'aller prendre des vacances mais il semble totalement avoir disparu sans laisser de trace. Du coup quand Kris reçoit un appel alarmiste le concernant elle n'hésite pas, elle met tout de coté pour se retrouver sur Turantic, une planète indépendante, en dehors de l'influence positive ou négative de sa planète natale.

Mais elle est tombé décidément au bien mauvais moment car dès qu'elle arrive sur place une épidémie se déclenche et la planète entière est mise en quarantaine le temps qu'on vaccine tout le monde et que tout soit réglé. Mais quand la situation s'éternise, que les vaccins en questions disparaissent, et que tout semble être fait pour l'empêcher de repartir diplomatiquement parlant, Kris va se demander si elle n'est pas tombé en plein milieu d'un piège qui lui est destiné ... ou n'est-ce que de la paranoïa?

Premièrement ce tome est bien moins militaire que le précédent. Je dirais même que le coté militaire n'est pas du tout présent. On est plus ici sur de l'aventure politique vu que Kris se retrouve à devoir jouer à la princesse dans une situation diplomatique très complexe.

En fait tout le tome se focalise sur la difficulté pour Kris de devoir jouer un rôle important et de faire parti de sa famille. Le thème est vraiment politique, on a de nombreux bals et réunions ou chacun essaye de

convaincre les autres, un nombre impressionnant de discussions sur la sécurité et sur le protocole. Ce coté ci m'a fait penser à deux autres séries qui en discutent aussi beaucoup et que j'aime beaucoup à savoir The Indranan War qui finalement est vraiment sur le même thème, en science fiction, princesses, politique et complots et une autre série qui est bien différente à savoir les Jane Yellowrock, surtout pour le coté sécurité et protocoles qui est très important. En plus ce tome ci était assez dense et c'est exactement ce que je dis des Jane à chaque fois, du coup je trouve qu'au niveau du sentiment lors de la lecture les rend très ressemblantes dans mon esprit.

Contrairement à ce que certains pourraient croire avec une série avec un personnage de ce genre la série ne se focalise pas du tout sur la romance, il n'y en a même pas du tout depuis le tout début et je trouve ça vraiment très sympa. J'avoue que c'était une de mes peurs quand j'ai commencé la série, parce que c'est assez facile dans ce genre de séries à rallonge de jouer sur la facilité et de finir par en faire un drama amoureux plus que de la science fiction. Mais ce n'est pas du tout le cas ici, je suis vraiment rassurée.

Niveau science fiction pure, le seul point que j'ai remarqué c'est que la technologie m'a paru un peu datée sur un point. Kris a un ordinateur personnel avec lequel elle communique mentalement. Premièrement cet ordinateur est assez gros, il n'est pas intégré dans son corps comme on pourrait l'imaginer vu la taille actuelle des ordinateurs, mais non il est dans une boîte à l'extérieur. Et en plus il semble très peu puissant au final. Il est incapable de tenir deux conversations ou deux recherches en même temps, et est tout le temps en saturation de ses possibilités. On voit bien que ce livre a été écrit au tout début des années 2000, limite j'avais l'impression que son ordinateur était moins puissant que nos smartphones actuels alors que c'est censé être bien plus évolué technologiquement parlant.

Bon ce n'est qu'un détail parce qu'il y a plein d'autres technologies comme le métal intelligent qui est bien trouvé et ne m'apparaissent pas du tout limitée elles, mais je ne pouvais pas m'empêcher de le remarquer à chaque fois !

Au final un tome qui est bien mieux structuré que le précédent et qui corrige pas mal des défauts que j'avais trouvé au premier mais qui par la même occasion perd un peu de sa fluidité mais j'aime toujours autant ma lecture du coup je vais continuer la série avec plaisir !

16.5/20

Kirrus says

Ok , I freely admit, I *like* happy endings. I like super strong female main characters. I like tech and computers and AI. This book has it all. This book is also far *too* tropy. Superhero main character. Cliche villains. Deus ex machina everywhere. Seriously, the author needs to learn subtlety. There is even a muhahahaha laugh in here.

I'm all for a bit of good tropy silly fun from time to time. But this has far too little meat on its bones to make up for the reliance on tropes. I think I'm done with this series here, much as I like its primary themes and characters. They are nice.

NotTheNorm says

Kris Longknife is a privileged young woman who joins the Navy to escape her family and notoriety as a Longknife. As in book 1, Kris gets herself into a bad situation by ignoring common sense and stubbornly doing her own thing. Along the way she picks up a team of people that are interesting characters. Unfortunately, she seems to waver between a strong woman with definite opinions and a woman who falls for the enemy's son at first glance and ignores everything that points to him being like his father. All while she has not one, but two, available, likeable, and handsome men in her cadres, and she whines about it throughout the whole book. And once again, by the end of the book, everything comes up roses and she's promoted. Reminds me of the Curious George theory. Do everything wrong and never gets punished because everything turned out right.

I'll listen to other books in the series, but it's not a series that I'll be rushing back to.

Narrated by Dina Pearlman who does a good job with average writing.

Katrin von Martin says

I very much enjoyed "Kris Longknife: Mutineer" as a lighthearted space opera featuring a fun, quirky character surmounting difficult obstacles. "Deserter" follows the same vein set by the first book with some pleasing differences. Spoilers follow.

"Deserter" opens a few months after the events of the last book. Lieutenant Junior Grade and now-Princess Kris Longknife is involved in a series of tests for a new type of ship when she receives word that Tom, her best friend and constant companion in the last book, is missing. With some leave time, her bodyguard Jack, and the addition of the mysterious, ever-prepared maid Abby, Kris heads to the planet Turantic to find her friend.

After she arrives, another character named Penny joins the story, and Kris rescues Tom, Kris learns that the situation regarding her friend's kidnapping hits closer to home than she expected: the kidnapper, Cal Sandfire, was responsible for trying to kill her in the last book and, more importantly, orchestrated the abduction and accidental death of her little brother, Eddy. Now he's trying to create his own navy to declare war on neighbouring planets. Taking advantage of her role as Princess (and with a lot of help from Abby), Kris navigates the foreign world of diplomacy, politics, and social gatherings; at the same time, she also disguises herself to uncover Sandfire's plans. Things become a little complicated when Hank Smyth-Peterwald, the charming heir of her family's rival, enters the picture. Kris manages to foil Sandfire's plans and, upon returning home, receives a promotion to Lieutenant. She will also be getting her own ship.

Much like with the previous book, the story is a lot of fun and doesn't seem to take itself too seriously. Despite the lighthearted nature of the book, there's actually quite a lot going on and various points connect to the last novel pretty well. I very much enjoyed that the setting was outside of the navy, which, while perhaps taking the "military" out of this space opera, gave the characters a chance to shine and perform outside of military restrictions. It also made for some nice variety in themes and setting. Honestly, it's a great example of a second book in a series: it holds its own contained, intriguing plot while bringing in elements from the last book that will, assumedly, play a role in future books, too. The story is also pretty fast paced, making for a quick, enjoyable read.

Shepherd's casual, sometimes tongue-in-cheek writing style continues to work well for the series. Little things, like noting Kris's use of the royal "we" came from something she had read in a novel, give the story

more character and flavour while not bogging it down with unnecessary prose. It's generally very easy to figure out what's going on, as the author doesn't waste time with unnecessary description; we know enough to get a good picture of the setting, event, or character, and then the story moves on. For the most part, the dialogue is snappy and varied, though it can get a bit cheesy at some points (notably between Kris and Jack). The characters have their own voices and speaking styles, which, as a reader, I appreciate. My one gripe would have to be all of the consistency errors; for example, Kris's younger brother will be "Eddy" on one page and then "Eddie" on the next. I'm not sure if the author or the editor is to blame here, but it tends to interrupt the reading experience when the errors are so common and noticeable.

Kris is a very fun main character. Here, we get to see her more feminine side, complete with dresses, high heels, foreign undergarments (a pushup bra? Kris is thoroughly confused), and various body image and confidence insecurities. While it can become a tad tedious to read about every one of Kris's dresses, seeing the main character in this light makes her more realistic; she IS only twenty-two, after all, why shouldn't she enjoy being pampered and girly sometimes (even if she initially resists)? Her lack of knowledge on all things social makes for some amusingly tongue-in-cheek, sarcastic reading. The character manages to be capable without being overbearing; sure, she can go from acting the part of princess to playing the role of a prostitute in the seedy part of town, but she has bouts of being very unsure of herself. The various insecurities, whether they be work, past, image, or relationship related, are part of what make Kris such an intriguing leading character. She actually has to overcome these things to achieve her goals.

However, Shepherd does need to be careful in future books: Kris is treading dangerously close to Super Woman territory. In this book, her position as Princess, wealth, military knowledge/place in the Navy, almost-sentient computer Nelly, family connections, and knowledgeable staff work very well and, surprisingly, don't come off as being too much in this book. At the end, though, Kris gets promoted once again and it seems like Nelly will become even more amazing. It's all good and well for Kris to have so many resources at her disposal, but at some point, it becomes too much.

The other characters are also very enjoyable. Jack and the ever-mysterious Abby fill similar roles while being entirely different characters. Tom is the same as he was in the first book, but with a slightly different focus...specifically, he seems more concerned about his new more-than-friend Penny (which brings out some interesting jealousy issues in Kris). Sandfire, the villain, is perhaps a tad stereotypical, but he plays his part in the story. Hank needs a little more fleshing out as a character, but his general attitude and family's relationship with Kris's make him interesting enough. As I mentioned above, the characters are all very distinguishable from one another with unique voices; sometimes they come off as a bit simple, but they're all individuals with different viewpoints.

I do have a couple complaints about "Deserter." The first is regarding the relationships between characters. Tom and Kris's feelings for one another get a bit jumbled here. In the first book, they're portrayed as two really good friends with Tom often getting dragged into Kris's plans and the general trouble that follows her for being "One of those Longknives." Here, however, it seems like he wants to get away from her because of the trouble that follows her; it is a pretty big jump from how loyal he was in the first book. Also, for the first time that I can recall, Kris seems to have a crush on him and is, therefore, angry and disappointed when it becomes clear he's interested in Penny. Again, nothing about this was indicated in the first book, so I didn't quite understand where it suddenly came from.

The second issue has to deal with cultural stereotypes. I mentioned in my review of the first book that all of the cultures portrayed are done so very stereotypically, and the problem continues in this novel. Kris does some reconnaissance work in a traditionally Muslim area with a very stereotypical population. The characters from this group refer to Kris as an "infidel," the women remain completely covered at all times, gender roles are traditional, the men seem to work primarily as taxi drivers, Kris's inappropriate clothing is constantly commented upon, and so on. The handling of cultures wouldn't be such a problem if Shepherd would give some explanation as to why, after many years of space travel and colonization of new planets,

these communities have held so strongly to their cultural roots. However, it's just tossed in and glossed over with no reasoning given.

On the whole, "Deserter" is a great second book in what is turning out to be a lighthearted, fun series. The plot is fast-paced and enjoyable, intriguing on its own while still bringing in elements from the first book; the dialogue is snappy; Kris continues to be a complex, capable main character; the supporting characters are very distinguishable and unique; and the extra-Navy setting puts the characters in situations we otherwise likely wouldn't see. However, there are a lot of printing errors, the relationships between characters gets a bit jumbled, and the cultural stereotypes become very tiresome. If you enjoyed the first book, you'll like this one, too. A very solid four stars.

This review is also posted on Amazon.com.

ThomyZ says

Meh. The story was okay and I actually liked the character interactions, but I wanted to read military science fiction -- what I got with this book was James Bond [IN SPACE!] with some Mission Impossible mixed in. The plot just jumps from scene to scene with the protagonist outperforming all her adversaries with little effort, I never really felt the stakes. The main antagonist and his motivations are so cartoonish it almost made me laugh.

Another problem for me is that the author really doesn't create a believable future, most planetside scenes could just as well take place in present day. The best part of the book is once again the space stuff, where Shepherd creates an interesting vision of space combat. I hope he sticks to that more in the next one instead of writing a Hollywood action movie.

Michael says

This is the second book in the Kris Longknife series and like the first it's a great read. Action packed Military/Space Opera Science Fiction. In this one Kris finds herself on the beach (a military term for officers who are on limited/no duty at half pay). Her friend Tommy leaves her a message from another planet saying that he is in trouble. She goes to his rescue along with her security man and her personal servant who is much more than she seems. She knows that it is a trap by her family's enemies to trap her, but she walks into the trap for her friend. The trap seems to work for a while but Kris and her team quickly upset her enemies plans. With the help of the people on the planet who are tired of the way things are being run she turns the tables on her foes and they find a caged Kris Longknife is more than they bargained for. A must read for Kris Longknife/Mike Shepard fans as well as fans of Military/Space Opera Science Fiction.

Joe says

High jinks, thrills and a backtalking computer.
Great read.

Jacob Proffitt says

Second book in the series and the quality trend is definitely up—especially impressive as the first was pretty good to start. This book has the added benefit that Kris is better established as a character and the side characters are given many opportunities to shine.

I particularly enjoyed the (lack of) romance. I know that's strange to say for a guy who reads so much romance, but this feels very natural and I love that Shepherd doesn't seem inclined to match her up with the nearest semi-available male. Even better, (view spoiler). But I also liked that (view spoiler).

One of the things that Shepherd does way better than expected is keeping Kris both an officer and a lady. And by that I mean that she feels like a strong female with command potential rather than a commanding male given a feminine veneer. This thinned a bit in one of the more whacky plans near the beginning. Her reaction to the plan was within what I'd expect, mostly, but the internal adaptation to it seemed a little thin. That's vague, I know, but I don't want to spend any more time than this on what is a very minor niggles in what I felt was an otherwise stellar portrayal.

Anyway, as in the first book the plot and pacing were outstanding. I stayed up essentially all night reading it, finally giving up on "one more chapter" in the not-so-very hours and settling in to finish scarily close to dawn. I was completely hooked and while I hate the consequences I still love when that happens.

Jesi says

I have to admit, about 40% of this book (roughly the entire middle) put me to sleep. Politics can be an interesting topic, but not the way Shepherd did it here. I'm not entirely certain that I can blame it on the topic - the writing itself was just bland. The characters surprised me, in that they DIDN'T have any twists that happened to/with them. There was all of this suspense, and then nothing. It was almost as if my mind, so bored with what the writer was saying, started building drama to spice things up.

What DIDN'T work for me in this book was: 1) the politics - it was blindingly obvious what was going on, to the point where it was inconceivable that the characters didn't see it until it was "almost too late," creating an unbelievable atmosphere of suspense. 2) The dialogue - with certain exceptions, it was remarkably stale and boring. Anything having to do with Abby or Jack was acceptable, however. 3) The REPETITION - Kris is hung up about her brother. Nelly's acting weird. We got it, thanks. Move on please. 4) The strange new behavior in our characters - Kris is suddenly acting jealous when it comes to any guy of her acquaintance, when in the last book there was no overture of romance. Where's this coming from, exactly? An otherwise intelligent man, coming from a ruthless business family, can't see beyond his nose when confronted with the truth and turns into an emotional weeny? Not very likely.

What DID work for me in this book was: 1) the explosions/action scenes. Say what you will of Shepherd's writing, the man can write an action scene. 2) The dialogue - the banter was great. Sometimes authors try too hard, making it seem overblown. Shepherd doesn't have this problem. 3) Abby being a Sonic Screwdriver - sometimes it's annoying when you have a character who brings the right toys to the party. This time? It worked.

All in all, it wasn't great, but it didn't suck, either.

Scott Holstad says

I have to admit that I didn't give this book much of a chance and quite reading quite early. Normally I give a book 75-100 pages to prove itself to me, but in this one, Kris, an actual princess who's also a navy lieutenant, is such a trite character that I couldn't believe I spent good money on this book. Early on, she has to go to a ball and her new maid from Earth has to bathe and dress her and then she spends a good bit of time determining whether to go in a princess-type gown or in military dress, which pales in comparison and I couldn't believe I was reading this crap! Where the hell was military sci fi it advertises itself to be? Where's the book that so many other reviewers like? I must have been toward the end, because even supporters of this book write that the middle's boring. What a waste. I'll not read this author again.

Xan says

Me temo que Kris Longknife es un quierito y no puedo. Quiere ser una serie a la altura de "Honor Harrington", que a su vez es una copia de las aventuras navales de Horatio Hornblower, pero no llega a estar en la misma liga. Si tengo que asignar referentes creo que juega en la misma liga que "La Flota Perdida" de Campbell y el western espacial de Mike Resnick. Lo que quiere decir que solo se pueden leer sabiendo que es material de relleno para pasar unas horas entretenidas antes de abordar libros más complejos. Y en este caso no es un leogio de lo simple, es que simplemente son productos de usar y tirar.

Kris no tiene ni la personalidad ni el carácter de Honor Harrington, ni de lejos despierta las emociones que despertan las locas ideas de Miles Vorkosigan. Sin embargo el autor le asigna unas habilidades casi sobrenaturales para salir indemne de las locas misiones en las que se mete por casualidad, habilidades que nunca explica cómo ha adquirido.

La sociedad en la que se mueve, siendo uno de los ejes principales de la trama, está descrita a grandes rasgos y no consigue que te sumerjas en sus peculiaridades.

Por último los combates...bueno, mejor ni mencionarlos.

Me temo que es el equivalente a los telefilmes de domingo por la tarde: pueden distraerte un par de horas muertas después de comer o arrullarte en la siesta.
