



Retreat, Hell!

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It is the fall of 1950. The Marines have made a pivotal breakthrough at Inchon, but a roller coaster awaits them. While Douglas MacArthur chomps at the bit, intent on surging across the 38th parallel, Brigadier General Fleming Pickering works desperately to mediate the escalating battle between MacArthur and President Harry Truman. And somewhere out there, his own daredevil pilot son, Pick, is lost behind enemy lines--and may be lost forever.

Retreat, Hell! Details

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From Reader Review Retreat, Hell! for online ebook

J.W. Thompson says

one of my favorite in the series---being a Marine Veteran I really enjoyed this series of his books. read it years ago

Emerald says

Really good series and well worth the read regarding our troops in Korea and what it was like for them. If you like military history or military fiction this series is a good read. I almost rated this last book a 3 star instead of 4 but since it delved into actual factual history of the Marine Corps I couldn't rate it that low for that reason alone. But, I wanted to and here is why.

One thing I found missing at the end of this series and was looking forward too was what happened to many of the characters like Griffin provided in his Brotherhood of War series. What happened to them after their service? No epilogue on what happened to them and I was sure Griffin would have provided that and he didn't do this for this series. I would have given this last book a five star if that had been included.

What happened to the wench McCoy hooked up with which was the minister's wife in the beginning in China? Griffin sort of left it there with no indication on what happened to alot of the characters in the beginning of the series. Did Colonel Banning's wife survive from her cancer? It was just left up in the air I guess for readers to come to their own conclusions. What happened to the woman that he had an affair with who lived in the NE of the Country when his real wife was finally located finally escaping China? Did the woman McCoy and General Pickering had an affair with did she get around to telling the general's wife after she got out of lockup from the looney bin where they stashed her to keep her quiet? Did they ever find out about her and her husband's smuggling? There was alot of story lines left open ended in this series and for this to be the end of the series was disappointing having read the entire series. Unless these characters go forward in the CIA series.

Still a great cast of characters, throughout the entire series. This series is funny where it needs to be and serious in other areas of the books. The books do show the pettiness and politics that goes on in military life.

This series also gives the reader an idea on the next phase of the OSS from WWII which became the CIA. How intelligence gathered behind the lines in Korea if had been correctly analyzed, then General Douglas MacArthur might not have been relieved of duty. I think the whole point of the last book was to make this knowledge known or to make this point. Alot of good men died due to that failure of MacArthur's intelligence staff, which is an actual historical fact that Truman did relieve him of Duty.

I have two uncles that served in Korea and they both said Korea is the forgotten war. This series at least gave me an idea on what their service might have been like.

Fred Bayley says

I really enjoyed this series. I wished some of the story lines were tied together a little tighter at the end.

Billie Bogart says

This series is a great read, but you should start from the beginning as it is really just one long story. I love all the military detail. You'll like the books if you liked John Wayne war movies. It captures an idealized culture where men are men and women are accessories.

Tom Hollern says

Good stuff

Griffin write really good stuff. Any of his series are worth a look. They are true historical pieces get them in order and read.

James J gallmanSr says

Another great WEB Griffen saga!

Great chacters weaved with true historical figures and events. Griffen is the best writer of historical fiction. A must read if you like military history and historical fiction.

Valerie Curtis says

At first I was just going to say that I didn't enjoy this. It was totally unbelievable the way that all the military people were being disrespectful, etc., etc. But then, I started thinking – all the books have been like that. The only problem with this book is that the story line sucked. I really didn't "feel" with the characters. I read for entertainment and this book made me feel like I was working to get through the chapters.

Okay, I've finished the book and I'm still not "satisfied". This is the end of the series and there are so many unfinished threads.

Jon says

Doh! Not the smartest to start with number 10 in a series but that is what I did. I listen to books during my nearly one hour drive to work and grabbed this one because I vaguely knew W.E.B. Griffin was a top author. Anyhow, this was an exciting tale with lots of action. The characters were believable and the author plugs in lots of interesting details about the actual battles, weapons, vehicle and aircraft. I enjoyed it enough to go get #1 in the series.

PS It is a small matter but the Corbis Photo on the front cover was taken during WWII not the Korean War.

Helen-Louise says

Typical Griffin: a page turner. This is #10 in "The Corps," copyright 2004, and as far as I can tell, the last in the series. It ends as the Chinese are coming across the line at the Chosin Reservoir. This is NOT where I want to leave these guys in the Korean war!

Benjamin Thomas says

This is the 10th book in WEB Griffin's fictional series involving the US Marine Corps. I almost always enjoy Griffin's work, especially the historical tidbits that make it all interesting. He takes ordinary people and thrusts them into extraordinary historical circumstances, a technique which allows us to go along for the ride and see perspectives on events that you wouldn't normally experience in history textbooks.

This particular entry in the series was one of the best of the entire Corps series. It follows the series regulars as they interact in Korea in 1950. We get to experience events surrounding the Inchon landing all the way up to the final confrontation between MacArthur and Truman. An interesting subplot involves the issue of medals for valor being awarded like candy, often to those who don't deserve them. I was happy to see the protagonists of the story fight against this practice and attempt to turn them down. I believe this is the last book in his "Corps" series as most of the loose ends were tied up and it ends on a happy note. It's been a good run.

Suzi says

I love listening to this series in my car. Romance, cute nicknames, and not much war at all. Harry S. Truman is always around to comment wisely and there's a lot of anti-MacArthur stuff. We -- the USA and the Marines -- are always the heroes. I especially like this one because I am in love with the narrator James Naughton. Please do not tell my husband! Great story for patriotic holidays.

Cedar Bristol says

I had spent a year in Korea with the 503rd Infantry at Camp Casey before I read this book, and I knew the bullet points of that war, ROK (Republic of Korea) + Task Force Smith pushed back to the Naktong river aka Pusan Perimeter, Macarthur lands at Incheon destroying the Nork army then racing up the peninsula and then stopped and pushed back by the Chinese counter-offensive. I did not understand the details of how daring an operation the Incheon landing was, or how much it depended on secrecy to work, how badly it could have gone if the enemy had known about it.

Another thing I did not really appreciate was how similarly impressive the Chinese infiltration of something like 800,000 troops into Korea was. When your enemy owns the air and has learned everything there is to know about photographing the ground from a plane and studying the images just 6 years prior, and you decide to infiltrate through his lines, that takes some discipline.

I'm partly talking about the previous book in this series Under Fire. This one is the 2nd in the Korean War part of this series.

Byron says

I actually loved the book as a conclusion of the Korean War story. As always Mr. Griffin told a compelling story. As with the earlier books I think he spent way too much time rehashing the previous parts of the series. Some review is needed if a reader is picking up the series somewhere other than the beginning but Mr. Griffin seems to go a bit overboard and his ardent fans have to slog through the better part of half the book to get to the new story line. But all of this is minor when you're a true Griffin fan - and I am.

Usually I rate all of Mr. Griffin's books with 5 stars and would have done the same with this one but for one failing - Mr. Griffin ended the series way too soon.

As a Marine who served in Vietnam I really wanted to see how Mr. Griffin addressed the Corps in the coldwar era and especially the '65-'72 timeframe. It was a time of great upheaval and not the most complimentary to the Corps but it was the fodder for a story of great impact.

Young officers who grew up during the beer and motorcycle gang era were trying to lead a mixture of equally young people who were torn by influences from "the peace generation", racial intolerance and radicalism, feminism and drug experimentation. And they fought inter-service battles that pitted body counts against winning the hearts and minds of the people of Vietnam. It was during this period that all our generals now embroiled in the Middle East earned their battle credentials as Lieutenants.

I'm very disappointed Mr. Griffin never undertook to tell these stories. I believe he would have done them justice they didn't receive in the aftermath of Vietnam and its unpopularity with the American public.

Terri says

Kudos! (Audiobook)

The Corps Series is superb! I didn't want to put it down (figuratively, actually I didn't want to remove the earphones). The next book in the Corps series was being purchased before the one prior ended and I even had to go to the library & actually read the 2 books that were missing from audible (I got absolutely nothing done for 4 days while I was consumed in the pages).

This series inserts several fictional characters in the middle of historical events & people. My dad & his brother participated in the Pacific during WWII and it was fun to hear some of the quotes & sayings/proverbs dad has made throughout the years in this series along with the background as to why that saying or quote originated.

I really wanted to strangle MacArthur's Bataan at several points in the book for withholding information from MacArthur. President Truman really had his hands full but at least knew enough to find knowledgeable people to tell it like it really was and not what they thought he wanted to hear.

I thoroughly enjoyed the character of Ken McCoy who while only being a Major had those of higher rank

following his directions in short order. A sign that gave me hope that the idiots of this world will not rule in the end.

This had the feel of the last book in the series and if so, WOW what an end to the tale.

Bob Conner says

I fell in love with Griffin's series about the Corps and have read all his awesome works. I can't recall reading a more engaging series with characters all so rich and colorful each of them could be an awesome novel of their own. But Griffin smashes them all together into one nuclear story.

Amazingly colorful characters - Kenneth "Killer" Kelley and his gorgeous wife Ernestine Sage, Jack "NMI" Stecker, Pick Pickering, Sgt Zimmerman, etc..... The list just goes on and on and they never lose their color, their connections to one another, or their vitality throughout the entire series.

I found Griffin's ability to play his characters off of historically real people, events, hell, even US companies were woven into this amazing work, from hotel chain owners to ship builders were played into his storyline.

Once I read the first - "Semper Fi," I was waiting in line for the bookstore to open on release day for the next in the sequence.

Most certainly my all-time favorite military fiction novels. Well, until the Brotherhood of War series came out and claimed some shelf space for my favorite(s).

If books were drugs, there would be no rehab that could fix this addiction.
