



Tenacious

Mike Shepherd

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There's no rest for a Longknife—even if you're a newlywed. Vice Admiral Kris Longknife's honeymoon gets cancelled when she hears that the space raider's home world may have been discovered. Finding where the raiders came from could be the key to saving humanity. If only uncovering their secrets was that easy...

As Kris returns home, she ends up tangling with a mutinous crew determined to take off on their own. The dissident group leads Kris straight into a new mess—a system filled with strange, deadly enemies poised to wipe another sentient civilization out of existence. Kris and her squadron are ready to prevent total annihilation, but the mutineers have other plans...

Tenacious Details

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Freyja says

Lots of action again! This time Kris learns more about the alien attackers and finds another sentient species about the be erased by the aliens. There is also rather a bit about logistics, and he doesn't make it dull. After all, it's not just armies that move on their stomachs.

Steven Allen says

These last two Kris Longknife books have been good, but the Alwa setting is getting old. One of the things I liked about this series was the constant movement of the MC and entourage finding new problems. The author does a good job not mimicking Star Trek in its many forms, while still moving the MC around the galaxy. I hope that we see more of Granny Rita in the next books. I am wondering if Rita will ever return home and straighten her husband King Ray out.

Ron Holmes says

This continues the saga of that damn Longknife and it is full of twists and turns. For my friends that care, there is just enough sex in an otherwise good science fiction book for your tastes. I am ready for the next in the series.

T J says

The monsters have learned new tricks and Kris Longknife must again take on their ships to defend others from their cruelty. This was another great book in the series and I can hardly wait to see what is thrown Kris way.

Richard says

I actually hate this series now and I've come to personally hate the author. It's been a long time since I read the early books but god almighty these books have deteriorated to the point of being absolute garbage.

Dee says

3.5 not currently rounded up

Hmmm. There's always problems with military characters - as they are promoted up the ranks their roles

change and inevitably the action becomes less front and centre. That's only to be expected and is I think better handled by David Weber with Honor Harrington than is done here. Point one - Kris is now vicereine of the planet Alwa, the only rear admiral (and thus leader) of the combined military defence sector in that space, chief shareholder of the monopolous human enterprise currently operating in the locale. . . yet deems it suitable for herself to take an exploratory mission to reconnaissance a potentially hostile planetary base. (view spoiler).

So ignoring the antics enabling Kris to keep in the middle of things there was the exploratory mission itself. I'm not sure what we were getting at with Jacques anthropological shenanigans. In fact there was an oddly smirky sexual overtone throughout the book. I'm not sure if it arose because Kris and Jack are now married but it was odd - especially in it's vagueness. There was no outright mention of sex per se just a lot of innuendo and hint. It was out of character for the series. But back to Jacques. We've had the aliens' insularity and xenophobia hammered into us, including zero contact even between tribes. Yet on his first foray down a female attempts to initiate sex with him. (view spoiler) Was there any point to this particular incident? I haven't the foggiest since it lead nowhere that I could tell. He and his wife had no argument so it wasn't to bring about a conflict there. I'm just bewildered.

Then there's the humanisation of the aliens, particularly the religious spiritual aspect. *rolls eyes* Of course! The aliens need to find God! Then they will be compassionate and stop destroying everything! Forgetting that part of it, the part of the aliens I found most disturbing and alien was the utter lack of comparative understanding and communication between humanity and them. With that gone they're just extremist zealot humans. Boring.

There were also a lot of "It would be", "Later she'd" and "She'd have more" type sentences all placed strategically at the end of chapters in a suggestive and knowing manner. It's good here and there but it was overdone and I felt oddly patronised and condescended to. Instead of thrilling me on after a bit I was left going "yeah, yeah" as I turned the page. And when the whole book ended like that I couldn't even be bothered getting interested or annoyed or anything. Which is a crying shame because when you check my reread reviews from earlier this year I gave the series near enough consistent 4-5 stars.

I feel quite disappointed by this book.

Jacob Proffitt says

This is more of what we've come to enjoy about the series. So I'm going to mostly leave it at that. The lower-than-usual rating is that I'm a little tired of the enemy that has taken over this series. Kris has been stuck in Alwa territory for a few books, now, and it's becoming more than a little tedious. I miss the human intrigue and all the setup in human space.

And I'm more than a little tired of the enemy, while we're at it. Shepherd has crafted an implacable foe with little reason and no emotional payload. They're relentless, unthinking, and completely evil and while that ramps up the urgency, it also kills every other possible plot avenue besides battle. There's *some* sign of mitigating that as Kris explores the history of the race but so far it just means they're every bit as bad as we thought they'd be.

So yeah, I may be winding down on the series. Still, I've already checked out the most recent one so I'll probably at least read one more...

Hali Sowle says

Another winner in the series the now vice-admiral and Viceroy and US (United Sentients) Representative And Her Highness Princess Kris Longknife is in charge of defending the Alwa colony and world from those disturbingly human looking aliens. All Kris wants to do is enjoy some belated honeymoon time with Jack but that is not to be when Penny comes back from her voyage of exploration looking for the alien home world. When Kris gets out there what they find sets off another seat of the pants adventure that kept me turning the pages from start to finish.

L.E. Doggett says

Three and a half stars actually.

Good descriptions. Main characters to care about. Good action. Good plots with twists but some things you know ahead of time. Still it's on my second level. That doesn't stop me from recommending it or wanting to read the next one.

Joe says

This is a vey good book, a great read.

We have gone in a new direction.

The stakes are higher.

Love blooms in the air.

Read this one, take the ride.

Dan says

The books in this series just get better and better.

Mitchell says

Book#12 in a series I read for the Endeavour Award. Basically military sf starring a young smart attractive Mary Sue. And yet the ideas around the big bad aliens are kind of interesting and different. And some of the technology choices are a bit different. Not a huge fan of the plot or the characters. The ideas themselves are a bit better whether it is the AIs or Smart Metal (and what you can do with it) or the all-body-combat-sock.

Ronny says

It was unfortunate that I read this just after a rather well written book, the authors weaknesses became pretty glaring. The parts involving battle, discovering new planets or people, are entertaining and goes fast, but whenever they stop to talk too much, it just falls apart. The dialogue is just not very good.

Heidi says

Not sure if this was not up to the standard of the rest of the series, or if the fact I read the rest of the series in quick succession made it seem better than it was. This installment just didn't engage me, although it was a quick easy read.

Avandol says

I truly liked the other parts of this series, but:

This novel disappointed in so many ways I actually started taking notes. It is the worst part so far and doesn't rate more than two stars at the best of times.

Several reasons:

SPOILER WARNING

- A huge lack of respect vs Kris Longknife.

All her subordinates give her constant lip in front of everyone. This would kill the respect in any organization fast. Characters who act like a child or get treated like one repeatedly cannot command fleets. Anything else just feels construed, it completely destroys any suspension of disbelief.

- What I totally didn't get: The whole crew cries for some faceless, nameless, characterless creatures which aren't even described properly, no emotional context at all. Do you do that everytime you go to a pre-historic museum, too?

- Now don't misunderstand the following criticism. I was raised and live my life fully emancipated. Yet I noticed, that ever more characters around Kris, pretty much the whole inner circle are women. That in itself might be refreshing or a good story setting. Sadly, Mike is totally missing the realities of such constellations. Mostly women driven parties tend to heavy backstabbing actions and jealousies in work related settings. That is, at least, my experience of twenty years of working life in many big companies and the military life. As a man I try to avoid any department consisting of more than 50% women due to this reason.

Nonetheless, Mike Shepherd completely negates this whole area of plot-relevant characterization as in all his protagonists are paragons of human behaviour.

- And in turn: Jack is reduced to some bland aye-sayer. His character never was the brightest bulb in this sea of light, but this time he's reduced to an almost burnt-out candle stub. Boring and bland isn't catching it at all.

- repeatedly Vengeance is sworn publicly vs a race that so far hasn't hit a single human planet. Pre-emptive, extreme prejudice. Bit hard to believe. Why fight something that wasn't even aware of you until short time ago? Why go so overboard with the posturing and hate? I wasn't able to shake the feeling Mike has some personal axe to grind somewhere and this finds reflection in the novel.

- Same old: Repeatedly Kris hates or swears hate or promotes it. Why?

- Sentences, story parts and most if not all dialogues are on a teenager level (made a nasty face, sees love eternal etc.) cliched beyond the pain threshold. Honestly, this annoyed me to hell. I know Mike has had a better writing style so why do I get the feeling this book caters for the teenage crowd?
- The description of breast feeding lacks actual biological fact and research. It simply doesn't work that way. Read it up.
- Major gripe: Neither Admirals, nor rear admirals nor vice admirals and least of all governors lead from the front and there are a thousand good reasons for it. You grew up Navy, Mike, and yet you come across with such lame notions on leading from the front. Is that supposed to be the anti-thesis to armchair generals? If so, you make the weakest point ever.
Demote Kris quickly or let her do the planning. Doing both is ridiculous, unrealistic and impossible. For a lot of good reasons which can be discussed in proper form, but not here. If you know this topic, you know what I mean. It's a topic which is regularly included in military sci fi but always on Lieutenant-Captain level. Once you reach the management level your swashbuckling days are OVER.
If you don't want that for Kris, hell, don't write it that way.
- Do we REALLY have to have a stupid court martial in every book? Really?
- Cat people ... 20th century humans with fur (and super dangerous claws!!). No more can be said about this whole brand new race of aliens they discover. Do I actually need to go into why this is uninspired, boring and lame? I cannot honestly say I have ever read about a more boring new alien race than in this book. Totally exchangeable.
- I found the easter egg rant against paper media. Could have left that one out, since you also left out the pros and cons. So why bother at all.
- Major gripe: There is no reason whatsoever to land on Sasquan and talk to the cat people. No reason whatsoever. Yet they not only land there, but have to talk to them in person and get shot at. Been some time since I read such a (badly!) construed interlude in a scifi novel. Especially since they had already decided not to share tech with them.
Any military worth its cannons and his orders would have wiped out the raiders and moved on, catnips none the wiser.
The reader doesn't even get a construed deus-ex-machina reason why they talk to the catnips. What a waste of words.
- Major gripe: AI. You don't even scratch the surface of AI morals, AI problems, fears and whatnot. Instead you give us the self aware AI super nanny. Gratulation, that's the worst depiction of AIs I ever read. I was so hoping through the books leading here that this would take on some steam along the way in regards to AIs. Instead we get Nelly the super nanny. Honestly, destroy this piece of deus ex machina junk please. It impacts negatively on your story.
- a lot of overly long winded description of the festivities and daily business. I skipped whole pages missing nothing of the actual plot but useless descriptions of the forward lounge and what crewman x had for breakfast.
- Major gripe: The Longknife rants. We get it. Gods, we got it five books ago. Even the cross-eyed guy in the dark corner over there got it. The bad Longknives (or is it BAD(tm) Longknives?). Those awful Longknives. The Longknives again. Honestly, skip these repetitions. We got it the first couple hundred times and it's

simply annoying nowadays. Instead of actually WRITING about what is awful, you keep saying it. And its annoying and boring. And totally not funny anymore. And annoying. And boring. And stupid. And annoying. See what I mean? Same with the anti-Longknife rants.

- The useless ruminations about being unable to take a trip home to Wardhaven. Sorry, but did I miss some unwritten law that heads of state don't travel? Oh, yeah, I get it. she is indispensable because she has to lead from the front, do all the research, plan all the battles, do all the planetfalls and sit on the weapon controls. AKA Micromanage everything because the author has to paint the picture of the super heroine. Skip that please or at least come up with some actual reason for her not to travel.

- The constant banter of the core crew might be funny if the characters get a more adult overworking. The way they are now I most of the time think I am reading about a bunch of teenagers.

- Names do not get translated, you translated Friedrich der Grosse to english. thats a no go so cut it out.

- Major gripe: the constant promotions. Powergaming at its best, again. It took several books to make her a captain in her own right and in one book she gets two promotions in the highest level in about as many weeks. Thats horrible style. Thats not character development, thats pushing and deus ex machina. You can do and did better than that. E.g. Capt.J.L.Picard of the Enterprise was a captain for decades and had more clout than this upstart chick. He never needed a promotion. why does Kris unless you write so badly that its the only way to continue your story.

Last but not least: Love eternal? And what is it with you and the constant sex scenes between Kris and Jack? Over ten books without C-Movie niveau sex and all of a sudden we have to listen to some teenager wet dream fantasies? If you have to include them, for gods sake, at least write some decent, mature scenes (mind you, DECENT, not x-rated).

That all said, this whole book is just an interlude, a filler. Nothing remarkable happens with the sole exception of the raider home planet which was totally inconclusive and more or less just a byplay. And why again did they have to kidnap mongrel neanderthals from its surface again?? Same reason they landed on Sasquan aka to fill some more pages with irrelevant chatter?

I am very happy for having been able to finish this book. It was boring, long-winded, construed, unlogical and absolutely not able to build any suspense. There wasnt a single piece of action where it was unclear that our heroes are wouldn't win.

I dont think I will be looking for the next installment, maybe when its on promo offer for a buck or when I have trouble getting to sleep.

Even to hardcore fans I give the advice to skip this one and wait for the next in which she will probably fight against the raiders full time. Spare yourself the waste of time called "A day in the life of an administrator" respectively Kris Longknife: Tenacious.
