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Janissaries (The Theogony Book 1)



Synopsis

The war with China was over and Lieutenant Shawn 'Calvin' Hobbs just wanted his life to get back to normal. The hero of the war, he had a small ream of paperwork to fill out, a deployment with his Navy F-18 squadron to prepare for, and a new girlfriend to spend some quality time with. Life was good. Until the aliens showed up. They had a ship and needed to get to their home planet, but didn't have a crew. They had seen Calvin's unit in action, though, and knew it was the right one for the job. There was just one small problem--a second race of aliens was coming, which would end all life on Earth. Calvin's platoon might want to do something about that, too. Having won a terrestrial war with 30 troops, winning an interstellar war with nothing but a 3,000 year old cruiser should be easy, right?"Janissaries" initiates "The Theogony," a trilogy that will take Lieutenant Hobbs and his Special Forces platoon to the stars. It will also show them that there's much more to Earth's history than is written in the history books!

Book Information

File Size: 2184 KB

Print Length: 408 pages

Publisher: Chris Kennedy Publishing (January 28, 2014)

Publication Date: January 28, 2014

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00I59QVLO

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #31,034 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #67 in Books > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy > Military #317 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Colonization #319 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Alien Invasion

Customer Reviews

This is a interesting direction to take with the characters from the previous series. The story line has

many hints as to where it may go down the road involving the Main character. This entry leaves you wanting the next episode as soon as possible. The editing is very good with minimal errors, so it does not distract from the story line. As a Retired US Navy Chief Petty Officer, and having Served on a Cruiser like the Vella Gulf, I can understand how the crew would be able to adapt as well as they did. Our Sailors are all very intelligent and well trained. So, I am awaiting the next episode with eager anticipation.

Falling somewhere in believably between campy '60s scifi and a modern pop culture origin story, I couldn't quite connect with Janissaries. The plot is solid enough, aliens needing humans to provide a willing defense from an alien invasion, but everything from plot development to characterization needs serious work... the bad aliens want to eat us, all the races think/act mostly like humans... that's the best we've got? A number of subplots are present as well, which I'm not certain add to the story (acquiring rare materials on the open market without anyone noticing, global politicking), although I'm willing to admit they could come back later in the series. The characters come off as a multicultural grab-bag of G.I. Joe figures lacking in depth. Some repeated words in sentences could use some editing and calling out government starting "Centers of Excellence" as a cover story more than 10 times feels excessive. Maybe things even out in the follow-on books, but right now it's hard to track with this one.

First Contact / Mil SciFy Lieutenant 'Calvin' Hobbs is a hotshot F-18 pilot who nimbly jumps from flying to ground combat. He is a young officer, a hero in terrestrial war, and is drafted into a new arena- outer space. There are bad aliens and good ones, (supplanted by dependable comrades) and exposition to explain them- but that's O.K., since this is start of a new story arc. Much text is devoted to introspection concerning the purposes of the good aliens, their ship, or his surroundings. This stretched credibility- Unlike other series where the protagonist concentrates on improving their primary skillset (like practicing in a flight simulator), he seems born knowing how to fight in ground skirmishes also. He is assisted by a diverse group of troops, and a bumbling ambassador. Where is the pain of losing good troops? (Ans: None, we never lose.) So far, this is a YA fantasy romp. (three stars)-----Spoiler Alert-----Improbability Zone Ahead-----Later, the old spaceship is called upon to battle modern ships... more fantasy. Some tactics are lifted straight from Black Jack Geary's The Lost Fleet: Dauntless. And cutovers to the bloodthirsty alien appetites are just plain cheesy. (minus one star) Try comparing this to Siobhan Dunmoore (3 Book Series) (space

combat ship -vs- ship), or *On Silver Wings* (6 Book Series) (with separate actors for ground ops and space battles).

This review will be for all three of The Theogony Trilogy. The first book of the series, *Janissaries*, begins as most first books do, establishing characters and setting the scene. Unfortunately this takes the first half of the book which feels like a chore to read. Also due to the large number of characters it is very difficult to connect with any of them. The second book, *When the Gods Aren't Gods*, is the weakest of the trilogy as it takes a turn from sci-fi to sci-fantasy. The final book, *Terra Stands Alone*, is the best of the series with lots of action and a thrilling conclusion. Overall the characters are so numerous that most, particularly the human characters, feel underdeveloped. The story is also very flat with the actions taken by the characters not making much sense, for instance the amount of trust the humans give the aliens after they first reveal themselves. I believe this is because this series is setting the scene for the following series. This is not the best sci-fi/fantasy series I have read but neither is it the worst. If you like other Chris Kennedy novels you'll probably like The Theogony Trilogy. Note: There is a prequel series that follows the events of a Sino-America war, which is referenced in The Theogony Trilogy multiple times which you may want to read first, although it is not necessary.

This series has the same problem as the author's previous "Invasion of Seattle" book series: interesting ideas buried under clichéd, hackneyed writing, one-dimensional characters, and atrocious dialogue. Nobody talks in real life the way that these characters talk in the books. It's like the novelization of one of those really bad SyFy movies. However the central idea behind the plot is actually kind of interesting so the author does have good ideas, he just really needed to take more writing workshops and work harder on the craft of writing. I can't really recommend these books because there are so many other books out there with good ideas *and* good writing. Don't waste your time on this series unless you have a really high tolerance for clichéd characters and cheeseball dialogue.

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