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Hellfire Details

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From Reader Review Hellfire for online ebook

Lianne Pheno says

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

Ce tome était vraiment intéressant mais il est à la croisée de l'histoire, la fin d'une époque et tout juste le commencement d'une nouvelle.

Ia est finalement le capitaine de son propre vaisseau le TUPSF (Terran United Peacekeepers Space Force) Hellfire. Ia est une precog, elle est capable de voyager dans ce qu'elle appelle le "timeplan" ou elle peut voir avec précision toutes les probabilités de vie de chaque personne qui existe et qui existera. Elle a ainsi prédit une invasion massive qui arrivera environ 200 ans dans le futur et parmi toutes les voies possible, une seule et unique lui permettra de sauver l'espèce humaine. Depuis elle a mit en place son plan et elle s'y tiens.

Mais évidemment ça n'est pas facile quand on fait parti d'une force armée, de devoir justifier à chaque fois toute ses actions sans trop en dévoiler de peur que certaines personnes modifient leur comportement en sachant ce qu'il va arriver. Heureusement depuis qu'elle c'est dévoilée comme étant "The Prophet of a Thousand Years" qui est une des composante de la religion V'Dan (qui sont les humains avec des pouvoirs), ils ont décidé de lui faire plus ou moins confiance en lui donnant une carte blanche lui permettant d'agir plus ou moins à sa guise du moment qu'elle assure la victoire des humains dans la prochaine guerre qui se précise contre les Salik.

Les Salik sont des prédateurs marins, ils vivent avec la loi du plus fort et pour eux la vie n'a aucune valeur sentimentale. Ils sont arrivés dans la partie humaine de la galaxie il y a environ 200 ans, il se trouve qu'ils fuient justement la menace qui va détruire les humains et qui a détruit leur propre galaxie. Depuis ils veulent vraiment s'installer sur place et devenir l'espèce dominante, reprendre leur place en gros.

Ils ont été repoussé une première fois lors de leur arrivée et depuis un cessé le feu plus ou moins permanent a été mis en place. Mais en vrai pour eux la guerre ne c'est jamais terminée vu qu'ils n'ont pas réussi leur coup. Et depuis, alors que les humains se pensaient en paix, ils ont rebâti leur force, et l'ont rendu bien plus massive qu'avant.

Lorsque ce tome débute la guerre n'est pas encore installée mais justement les actions du Hellfire vont la dévoiler aux yeux des humains, montrant que les Salik ont envahi la zone tampon et s'en servent pour stocker des armes et des "nurseries" de futurs soldats produits à la chaîne (ils naissent dans des œufs).

Nous sommes ici dans de la SF militaire, pleine de codes et de règles et ou Ia utilise vraiment son vaisseau et son équipage comme arme. Elle les a choisi pour ça, des personnes n'ayant aucun impact sur le futur, donc des pions parfait et sacrificiable si il le faut (elle n'hésitera pas), tout en étant capable de suivre les ordre et d'être bon dans leur domaine respectif.

Le protocole militaire est très présent tout au long du tome, et très contraignant aussi, du coup on passe régulièrement par des meetings et autres rapports.

En fait pourquoi je dis que ce tome est un tome intermédiaire? Parce qu'il n'y a pas vraiment d'histoire pour le personnage d'Ia et de son équipage ici mais plus une évolution générale de la situation du monde alors que la guerre se met progressivement en place. Du coup il se présente plus comme une suite d'actions qui se lit comme une succession de nouvelles les unes à la suite des autres. Toutes ayant un objectif différent et nous expliquant une partie des actions du Hellfire et en quoi elles seront importantes pour la suite. On est totalement dans une ambiance qui alterne les longues attentes pour agir au bon moment suivi d'une successions d'actions très précises qui doivent être exécutées parfaitement pour ne pas tout gâcher ...

Du coup c'est très éparpillé comme récit même si ça reste bien sur totalement fascinant je trouve. En plus il faut se rendre compte que je n'ai raconté ici qu'une partie de la situation initiale qui est en fait plus complexe que ça au niveau des vrai plans d'Ia. Du coup la quantité d'informations est assez monumentale pour une série du genre.

Il y a tout de même une histoire centrale bien sur qui revient de temps en temps, et qui concerne un autre point du récit que je ne vous dévoilerai pas pour ne pas tout spoiler non plus. D'ailleurs vu comme ce termine ce tome, on sent que le prochain sera centré dessus et qu'on reprendra donc un type de récit plus normal et moins coupé comme dans les premiers tomes de la série.

On pourrait croire que c'est trop facile pour Ia vu qu'elle sait tout à l'avance mais en fait non pas du tout, elle surf avec la limite à chaque fois. Il lui faut par exemple maintenir en vie une personne bien précise lors d'une bataille spatiale chaotique ou infiltrer discrètement une zone pour poser des camera lors d'une mission plus diplomatique. Elle prend des décisions difficiles en permanence comme par exemple ne pas aller sauver la famille d'un de ses amis parce qu'on a plus besoin d'elle ailleurs au même moment.

En gros tout ce qu'elle fait est basé sur des minutieux calculs de rentabilités sur le nombre de personnes qu'elle sauvera ou pas et l'importance des personnes en question sur le futur, suivant l'action qu'elle choisi de faire.

Du coup c'est vrai que des fois elle parait limite inhumaine. Son vaisseau participe au grand jeu de sa vie, et son objectif est bien plus important que sa vie ou celle de son équipage, voir de celles de planètes entière.

Je dois dire que ce genre d'histoire marche vraiment bien chez moi. Il y a ce "facteur Waou" que je retrouve par exemple dans les Craft Sequence, ce coté émerveillement qui est très fort quand on commence à se faire une vrai idée de l'histoire générale et de sa complexité.

Encore une fois j'ai donc vraiment bien apprécié ma lecture. Après c'est vrai que si ce tome met en place la suite il était un peu plus long à lire du fait de sa forme.

J'ai conscience que ce genre de récit n'est pas pour tout le monde mais pour moi ça fonctionne très bien, je suis prise du début à la fin et j'ai du mal à m'y remettre une fois fini, je suis limite essoufflée tellement j'ai retenu mon souffle.

17/20

Frances says

I only have one complaint, then I will get to how awesome it was. This is mostly a complaint as to the printing, not the the writing, too. As the book was published as a paperback (and at 471 pages, no less), the copy my library received was cut in such a way that I had to bend the book in a way that adds stress to the spine just so I could read the words along the inner creases. In short, this book will not get as many reads before it gets withdrawn and recycled from my library and (hopefully) a new book will be purchased. This is great for the author, but not so much for the library.

That being said, I love this story. I wish the series was in audiobook, because I think that would be really awesome (even more awesome would be if it were done as some of them, with sound effects). I was heartbroken to get to the end of this book because it is where MANY authors would have left it. I am so very, very happy to see another in the lineup and know that is not the case!

E. says

“Hellfire” by Jean Johnson is part of the enthralling ‘Theirs Not to Reason Why’ science fiction series. Ia is a massive precognitive who is also known as the Prophet to some of the Feyori and has honed many of her skills, including electrokinesis and her ability to use what she calls the timeplains. She has become captain of the ship known as Hellfire which is armed with the Godstrike cannon and staffed it with a handpicked crew who are known as Ia’s Damned and who become her greatest asset in the war against the Salik. Ia constantly navigates the narrow path that she sees as the only way to save the most beings in the future but she is sorely tested in her convictions, and challenged by her need to deal with the ‘Meddlers’, the Feyori who object to her half-blood connection to them. The struggle to constantly juggle a myriad of potentially fateful choices exert a horrendous pressure upon the driven female but she never loses sight of her goal, no matter how many obstacles she has to destroy, avoid or restructure. She just has to make sure she has the right beings around her at the right time. Simple for a precognitive, right? Definitely not.

This exciting addition to a fantastic space opera series continues to provide a mesmerizing multi-layered read. It is exhausting to think of all of the constant consultations performed by the heroine to make sure that events are unfolding as they should and the stark example of the ‘butterfly effect’ made a significant impression, not only because it showed that Ia is capable of great emotion but it also demonstrated her dedication to her cause and willingness to put her body on the line for her beliefs. I was thrilled to see the reappearance of those important to Ia and enjoyed watching her crew (including the requisite spies) being won over to the cause. There are plenty of exciting descriptions of military engagements for those who are fond of such things but there is a beautifully emotional depiction of the price required to ensure that the final goal is feasible, no matter who it harms or how much regret is engendered. The understated humor and veiled insults that Ia wields in addition to her firm conveyance of the logic behind her actions is contrasted with the reactions evoked in those she interacts with, whether alien or human, and the exquisite way she tailors her actions to the audience. I think that it would be easy to fall into the spell woven by this wonderfully talented author if one hasn’t read the rest of the series but this story is best savored by starting at the beginning with “A Soldier’s Duty”. That way you can fall under the spell and join me as I cheer for Ia’s accomplishments and mourn for her losses and anxiously await the next installment of her adventures.

© Night Owl Reviews

I received a copy of this title in return for an honest review.

Lizzy says

Yes, I don’t need to confess how I enjoy military science-fiction. It’s out there in my reviews for anyone to see. It’s one of my hobbies, a rest from the mainframe of more serious readings.

Jean Johnson's Hellfire is #3 out of the 5-book *Theirs Not to Reason Why* saga. Being in the middle is a drawback; I know that from experience since I am a middle sister myself. So I know how hard it is to shine out in that spot. All the novelty has gone, and you know the end emotion is way in the *future*. Pun intended! Nevertheless, *Hellfire* is still a great book for us military science-fiction aficionados! Ia is back as Ship’s Captain, and there is plenty of action, though a bit too aptly as she applies her '*precognition*' to even the

tiniest of details. For me, in *Hellfire* Ia simply lost part of her drive, some flair or her *élan* if you will. But the last fifty pages do sizzle and lend me hope that the sequel just may bring Ia fully back to the pillar of strength and resolve that I sorely missed. And from already having read it, I can tell you it's all there. So, don't give up.

Hellfire is a great entertainment a pleasure to read, a 4-star book and outright recommend.

Lyndi W. says

I have a hard time reconciling the fact that this series is one of my favorites, but the same author wrote a book that I wanted to beat people with and another book that I couldn't stand past 5%. I don't really get it.

Rich says

My one note I wrote to myself while reading this book was "same old same old." To a great degree, that's what you're going to find in this third number in the series.

I love the idea behind the books, but I'm not in love with Ia. Her character growth has taken her from interesting to dull to annoying. Even while she speaks about the burden of knowing the names and fates of every person in the universe she can't save, she comes across as almost mechanical and emotionless. The only time she seems to show real emotion is when her plans almost come crashing down around her ears.

There were only two real moments that saved the book from being a complete reread of the others, and one of them was the ending. I hope Ia's future is less predictable and more random. What the books are missing is mystery. I worry that by giving us so much foresight concerning Ia's goals, the author has diminished our opportunity to be surprised.

DemetraP says

Ia is finally getting her higher ups in the military to respect her talents for seeing the future. We learn some more about how she's trying to save humanity 300 years in the future.

I really like reading about strong female characters who you can relate to. She makes mistakes and does her best to save everybody, but sometimes you can't save everyone.

There are 5 books in this series and the series is complete. The author is going back in time and writing books about the First Salik War.

If you want a good series to binge read, it's complete, no waiting, read this book.

Shiori says

I don't know why I keep reading these books. The same things bug me /every single installment/. More of the

same here in Hellfire -- promisingly intense scenario gets dragged down to mediocrity by Ia and her ability. There's just no tension when you know essentially everything that's meant to happen. And yet here I am with three of these books on my shelves. Idk, man.

Full review to come.

Marlene says

Originally published at Reading Reality

Damn if this isn't a middle book. It's a damned good middle book, but it is definitely a middle book, suffering from all of the attendant problems of a member of that dreaded breed. You need to have read the previous books in the *Theirs Not to Reason Why* series (*A Soldier's Duty* and *An Officer's Duty*) and you need to wait impatiently for the next and hopefully finally book in the series, *Damnation*, to be published, probably next summer.

It's going to be a hellishly long wait.

Ia is finally the Captain of her own ship, the Terran United Peacekeepers Space Force (TUPSF) *Hellfire*. Her crew will come to be infamously known as Ia's Damned. She knows exactly when and in what circumstances they will acquire that nickname because Ia is a massive precognitive. Her coming has been foretold by one interplanetary religion as *The Prophet of a Thousand Years*. Ia has only one purpose in her life; to save the existence of all sentient races from an invasion that will wipe them from the galaxy, 300 years in the future.

She walks the timeplains, always seeking the one and only one choice that has a dim chance of success. For her people. For all "people".

By the point where she takes over the Captaincy of the *Hellfire*, she has revealed herself to her superior officers in the TUPSF and to her crew. Forces have aligned themselves against her; not because they oppose her ultimate purpose, but because they are playing a game, and can't believe that Ia is playing for such high stakes that their game will be rendered meaningless.

Hellfire is a book about the hurry up and wait involved in waging a long, slow war...because there is an enemy who comes before the ultimate enemy, and Ia has to defeat them first, so that the TUPSF still has something left when the dark days come.

It turns out that even a massive precog cannot account for all the possible chances.

Escape Rating A-: Notice that in the "format read" section above I have both an ebook copy that I purchased and I bought a paperback at WorldCon just so I could get the author to sign it. This probably gives a hint on my thoughts about the series as a whole.

Ia is a fascinating character. She knows everything, and yet, sometimes she still can't control everything, which becomes the central tension in this story. She may see all events, but she can still be tripped up by her physical limitations. She can only be in one place at one time.

The story drags on in the middle by the need to describe the military logistics of the "hurry up and wait" wear and tear of a long campaign. It's a necessary part of the story but it just wasn't as interesting to this

reader as focusing on the human (or Gatsugi, or any other sentient) aspects of the story.

The parts that sing for me were the times when the focus closes in on specific actions. The early scene where Ia returns to her homeworld of Sanctuary and gets to seriously tweak the nose of the religious zealot bureaucracy was much too much fun.

Near the end, there is a scene that should bring tears to any sentient. The aftermath of the scene explains much about the price that Ia pays for her knowledge and power. It's about page 339 in either the paperback or ebook.

Ia's story is definitely being sent into the light. Read it and you'll be enthralled into understanding.

Moira says

1.6.2017 - 3,5*

Bylo to... místy vážn? nudné. Chápu, že autorka musela projít i ne tak zajímavé ?ásti, ale ur?it? se to dalo napsat i jiným, ne tak *únavným* zp?sobem. Taky to bylo p?íliš idealisticky... ne jednoduché, spíše vše šlo *p?esn?* podle plánu a to bylo vy?erpávající zase trochu jinak. Konec to ale zvedl a *tam* jsem zase ?etla se zatajeným dechem. :)

btw - má výtku k minulému dílu, ohledn? Ai, která se realisticky nemá kam dále posunout? Autorka si s tím *zatracen?* dob?e pohrála. Jako by v?d?la, co v?tšin? ?tená?? vadí... což nejspíše také v?d?la, díky recenzím, ale stále, klobouk dol?. :) Te? jsem už jen zv?davá, *kam* to posune po tady tomhle kousku. *smích*

Aurian Booklover says

I have been waiting for this third book in the series a whole year, but it was well worth the wait. And waiting for the fourth book will take another year, and that is so killing me! Beware, gushing review follows!

As Captain of her own ship, and with the Admiral-General of the Terran Forces behind her, Ia is having carte blanche in where to use her ship in fighting and ultimately destroying the Salik. As the most powerful precog ever born, Ia can see the timelines of everything than can possible happen, and what she needs to do to ensure the best possible outcome, to save the most lives. This is not easy, as sometimes she has to sacrifice people in order to save others. She knows everyone who dies, all their names, and how they die. In order to stay sane to carry this burden, she needs to stay in action, see the results what happens when she saves this colony instead of that spacestation, check the timelines time and again.

She needs the trust of her crew to be able to do the most good, they need to have confidence in her abilities to guide them, and to follow her orders without hesitation. She knows the powers that be have planted some spies in her crew, but she knows who they are, and how to circumvent them if necessary. But she would prefer to sway them to support her.

The Hellfire is the fastest and most deadly ship out there, and her secrets have to be kept a secret. There can be no chance of it falling into enemy hands. The canon that is the core of her ship, is capable of such destruction, when it misses its target, its fire will be deadly for months. This makes Ia the only person capable of shooting it, as she can see where her enemy will be in the next ten seconds.

She has her friend and chaplain Benny with her, and some of her friends she trained in the academy, and she

needs Meyun Harper in engineering, even though it will be very hard to keep her distance from him. There can be no relationship between them whatsoever, except that of good friends. She also needs him to make a weapon that will make her a full blood Feyori when the time is right, and for that, they will need to visit the Timesafe on Earth, where the Immortal stores her knowledge of the ages. Ia will need more technology than is available at the moment to be able to win the war against the Salik, and to prepare the galaxy for the next war.

In the previous book she made an enemy out of one of the Feyori, and he is actively working against her now, not having a clue what her final goal is: to save the galaxy from being destroyed 300 years from now. And this means, she needs a Feyori ally herself, something she hoped she did not have to do for a while yet.

Ia also needs to be formally acknowledged as the Prophet of a Thousand Years by the V'Dan, and to earn their trust and loyalty.

I loved the book very much, it is chock full of action and fighting. Ia keeps helping her home planet and the rebels on it and I love to read how she thwarts the church officials. Ia is a great captain, a good leader even though she knows how to act to get the most result. Still, Harper is a mist for her, and she cannot predict him or the things around him, and it keeps her on her toes. Ia hurts for everyone she loses, for every battle she cannot fight, every hard choice she has to make. And I so admire her strength and her loyalty. Yes, the book had me in tears a few times, and laughing at other times. I was totally immersed in the story while reading. Jean Johnson's writing style is perfectly matched to my reading tastes.

The ending blew me away, and I hate to have to wait a whole year for the next book. Still, if you have read my interview with Jean Johnson, she is planning plenty more books and stories to keep me a happy reader in the coming years.

11 stars.

© 2013 Reviews by Aurian

B.T. Jaybush says

Ia had lost her spark.

Somewhere along the line in book 2 (Officer's Duty) Ia simply lost her drive, lost her flair, her elan. No, wait, I know exactly when it happened: when she let herself be bullied by her supposed friend and counselor Christine Benjamin into shacking up for a weekend with her hormonally resonant roommate, Meyun Harper. Now, I'm no prude; I appreciate sex as much as the next meioa, in or out of fiction. But! The effect of the coercion (though possibly not the sex itself) was devastating to Ia, sending her careening off the rails... ..until well into book 3 (Hellfire). There, in one particular twenty-minute (and subsequent hour) of respite from her life-long mission she CHOOSES to be with Harper. Then as if my magic - the magic of hormones, anyway - the Ia we had grown to love in Soldier's Duty and the first ten chapters of Officers Duty came back. I can only mourn that this doesn't happen until page 421 of 473. But the last fifty pages do sizzle, and lend me hope that book 4, when it arrives, just may bring Ia fully back to the pillar of strength and resolve that I sorely missed.

Oh, as for the story of Hellfire - it's fine. Plenty of action, though a bit too pat as Ia applies her precognition

to even the tiniest of details. Certainly a pleasure to read, and even recommend.

But I regret not being able to give it that elusive 5th review star. Ia is more than the protagonist of this series, she is the meioa-e that we all must love, unconditionally, for the story to work - and you just can't feel the love when the character herself isn't sure.

So, Ms. Johnson, kudos for creating a character I can enjoy, even adore on many levels...but take care.

Allowing her to be side-tracked, even by her (half) humanity, runs the terrible risk of making her less than she can, and MUST, be.

Dawnita says

I loved this book!!! I have also loved the 2 previous books. After reading A Soldier's Duty two years ago, I eagerly waited for the second book---it did not disappoint. Again I waited a year for the third book---and again I loved it. However, it is important to read them in order. I am eagerly waiting for the continuation of the story.

Layla says

Loved the book ! Ia is one awesome character and the series is so good that I just wish it won't end with Damnation.

Dreamthiev says

"This is a bloody terrible book," I quipped.

I really enjoyed the first book in the series, but I feel it's been going progressively downhill in the last two books.

For the uninitiated, the series about Ia, the most powerful precognitive *ever*. After looking forward in time, she decided to become a soldier because she learned that the only way to save the future is to stop and tell every single person she meets, at least three times, how she's fated to save all life in the known galaxy.

It's not just that the books are filled with repetitive phrasing and dialog (Ia keeps having essentially the same conversations over and over with practically everyone), it's also that these repetitions seem to happen instead of actual plot-advancement. While Ia having the exact same conversation for the hundredth time takes up page after page, the story leads up to encounters, battles, etc only to skip over them to another conversation where Ia convinces yet another person she's fated to blah, blah, blah all over again.

Besides that, the level of Mary-Sue-ism is absurd, to the extent it's pretty much killed my suspension of disbelief. All in all, I'm through with this series.
