



Krispos Rising

Harry Turtledove

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Driven by crushing taxes from the farm where his family had lived and died, Krispos had come to Videssos with a single goldpiece to his name, little dreaming that it would carry him to the topmost heights of the Empire -- if it didn't get him killed first!

Krispos Rising Details

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From Reader Review Krispos Rising for online ebook

Kendra Schaefer says

Meh. A passable take on the farmboy-becomes-king storyline, but nothing outstanding.

Nathan says

I read this book a long time ago, but I find myself thinking back to it regularly. I plan to finally read the next one soon.

Al "Tank" says

I was sad when I ran out of books in the Videssos / Roman series. But along comes the story of Krispos, set in the same "world", but well before the Romans "arrived" in Videssos.

Who can't like a rags to riches story? Certainly not me. Krispos starts out on a poor farm and ends up ... well, that would be telling, but his journey is filled with danger, opportunity, difficulties, courage, and all the things that make for a fun read.

I love Turtledove's style and this book didn't disappoint.

Curtiss says

The first volume of Harry Turtledove's "The Tale of Krispos" Trilogy, which I found particularly entertaining for both the integrity displayed by its unlikely hero, and for Turtledove's use of fantasy-appropriate, but actual, vocabulary terms - one of the few authors who uses terms I feel compelled to look up in the dictionary or online. The other notable vocabulary connoisseurs in literature being Rex Stout's usage of language in his Nero Wolfe mysteries, and Howard Philips Lovecraft's use of bizarre and archaic terminology in any and all of his horror oeuvre.

Brentman99 says

A really good series that I thoroughly enjoyed. Krispos rises through the ranks and the story of how he gets there is fun. I love the characters and Turtledove does a good job of keeping the world of Videssos alive. I enjoyed these books.

Gio C says

Best book I have read by Turtledove yet. I am working my way up chronologically and had just finished the

Abivard and Maniakes tales. I found this book must more to my liking.

Although it is a rag to riches story it has its own pizzazz to it that sets it aside from others. The characters are easily to relate to. Iakovites is a great and funny character. I think it was Iakovites' character that really made this book enjoyable as his temper tantrums and sass make for a great comic relief. Cant wait to read the next book in the series.

Mikhail says

Harry Turtledove was my favorite author throughout my high school years, before I got tired of him fairly suddenly sometime in my late teens. For some reason though, I decided to revisit the rows of books of his I have, and re-read Krispos Rising, one of my old favorites.

Looking at the book from the vantage of about a decade, both of my life and of how the field has changed, it's clear that the book hasn't aged terribly well. At the same time, it's also clear that Turtledove has genuine talent, and a way of doing things that explains why he's the best alternate history author out there (and this is more AH than Fantasy, for all that magic plays role).

On the one hand, the attitudes towards women and towards homosexuality expressed in the book are awkward. Iakovitzes is a dirty old man, and women are defined more than is comfortable by their appearances. At the same time, it's not as bad as it might be, since there's a lack of malice to these attitudes. Iakovitzes is a lecher who badgers his male underlings, but he takes no for an answer and is one of the smartest and most entertaining characters in the book. The end result is that Turtledove comes off more as your out-of-touch grampa rather than as a reactionary.

At the same time, Turtledove is a master at conveying a setting. Videssos is based on Byzantium, and as Turtledove has a PhD in the subject, he makes Videssos live and breathe. It's realism, not in the hyper-cynical style of G.R.R. Martin or Joe Abercrombie, but in a very down to earth, practical sort of way.

Really, that's the feel of the entire book. It's down to earth, competent, and pleasant. It doesn't soar, but it works instead.

Fantasy Literature says

The opening chapter of The Tale of Krispos really sucked me in. There is realism, which I'm always a fan of, and there are hardly any wasted words. At least that's how it is at first — but more on that later. Harry Turtledove does a great job of describing what is going on by working the information you need into the narrative in natural ways rather than just straight-out telling you certain facts.

The three books that make up The Tale of Krispos — Krispos Rising, Krispos of Videssos, and Krispos the Emperor — are based on the life and times of Basil I, the founder of the Macedonian dynasty of Byzantium. As such, this story rests in the fantasy sub-genre of alternate history. There is a ... Read More: <http://www.fantasyliterature.com/revi...>

M.J. says

"Krispos' Rising" is a fun, if superficial, fantasy novel that is not an essential read for anyone's list, but sufficiently achieves its aims.

I should disclose up front that this hardly qualifies as a real book review. This is more a trip through nostalgia. A retro review, if you will. When I was twelve each trip to the local library (before it moved and expanded) was met with a quick trip to the small fantasy section. I read this book multiple times. I can remember the countless creases in the spine and the dilapidated cover.

This book was probably my first introduction to the Byzantine Empire, even in its fictionalized form. It was also my introduction to Harry Turtledove's alternate history novels that I devoured in my early teens (most notably his series detailing an alien invasion during World War II).

The book is a very quick read—I breezed through its 368-page book in a couple of days—largely due to, for good and for ill, Turtledove's very unadorned and somewhat minimalist writing style. Moreover, while the novel has a fairly straight-forward direction, it tends to feel more like a collection of moments in his young protagonist's life than a strong, single narrative. This is not really that surprising given that we watch Krispos move from a boy in a village at the edge of an empire, to the servant of a nobleman in the City of Videssos (the fantasy equivalent of Constantinople), until he is eventually involved with the powerful players in the empire.

There isn't much going on behind Turtledove's prose in this novel. The book doesn't meditate on the events of the novel or try to find meaning in them and certainly it doesn't tackle any major issues; it is designed solely with the aim of telling a story that entertains (and making use of a previously developed world from an earlier series I later discovered). In that, it is successful enough.

My wife asked me if I was disappointed after reading the book again so many years later, and I think I can safely say I wasn't. It wasn't as complex as I remembered (in fact, it is almost absurdly simple at times), but it was enjoyable all the same.

Peter says

I really enjoyed this series. Typical fantasy series but well written.

L. says

This book is, in my opinion, one of Turtledove's best. One of his problems is that many of the characters in his varied series are essentially the same; this does not happen here. The story too is relatively fresh. While it is a basic rags-to-riches plot, the execution is relatively flawless and the details are wonderful. The plot itself is loosely modeled on the rise of Byzantine Emperor Basil I (book two is largely based on Basil II) but the interaction of magic and other various details makes this book unique. It's a well written and exciting read. Moreover, minor details tie it in to the other two Videssos located series, the "Videssos Cycle" and the "Time of Troubles" cycle. Well worth reading, I give it full marks.

Jonathon says

This was a pretty good read about a peasant farmer who ended up as Emperor.

I read the Kindle version which had some real glaring misspellings. Things like "mat" for "that" and "I V" for "I've" and what have you. Getting past that did not sour the reading of the book however. So if you enjoy the fantasy style books this is pretty good, although like most Turtledove books this can slow down in places and drag some. However his character building is very good as his world building I thought.

Tavie says

Not sure about this one, but we'll see.

...abandoned. Can't get into it.
