



Midshipman: David Birkenhead Series, Book 2, Phil Geusz, Legion Printing, 2012, 098298667X, 9780982986677, . .

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Lieutenant , Phil Geusz, Dec 27, 2012, Fiction, 166 pages. "Whatever you do, please, don't throw me in that brier patch!" Rabbits have been outwitting their enemies for as long as rabbits have had enemies, and that's a very long time ....

Ship's Boy , Phil Guesz, , , . .

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For centuries noble houses have struggled with the problem of what to do with their younger, non-inheriting sons. It's even tougher when one of these younger sons is a Rabbit and therefore by definition a former slave. In this second volume of the David Birkenhead series, our young hero has been adopted into the powerful House of Marcus. But... what can be done with a former slave-boy who's earned his kingdom's highest award for bravery, but who also can't shed his Rabbithood no matter how hard he tries? Send him to the Naval Academy, of course, where he must battle loneliness and prejudice as well as the rigors of military discipline. David's courage has already been proven beyond question, and it is said that the hottest furnaces produce the finest steel. Yet... how can a mere Rabbit survive such pressure? Will David crack? Or will he stand taller and prouder than ever, winning great victories for his kingdom and his fellow slave-species along the way?

This ebook has a good storyline with decent action. The author is using the 18th century British Navy as a framework but set in the future with laboratory manufactured creatures. The problem I have seen with this series of ebooks is the poor grammar and misspellings throughout the books. The publisher needs to improve its quality control before putting ebooks on the market.

As this story continues it is amazing how young David seems to become part of your family and you find yourself living through all his problems and life styles at his side. The action sequences draw you into them with there outstanding realism in the way they are described, and there handling of each senario brings you into the mindlink which has you mentally visulising every battle scene in all its gory detail. The storyline has a good base although totally unreal it has a base that can enable you to accept it as being possible although improbable. This fact mixed with the use of our ancient nobility and projected into a future of scifi enables the balance to work well.

After reading Ship's Boy, curiosity got the better of me and I picked up Midshipman. Many of the characters are unique but the story is fairly common; an unlikely hero whose efforts move him to the front of the line even though he "belongs" at the back. That the hero, Dave, is a rabbit and a recently freed slave is definitely unique but the prejudice held against him is not. As an engineered species, it seems clear that there were parameters established in the genetic development of Dave's species that would deliberately cause them to remain "inferior" to their creators (humans). If I'm not mistaken Dave, his father and possibly Freida are "different" and someone caused that "difference" by making a modification to their genetic structure. Slavery is evil but these creatures were created to be slaves and to exceed their "specification" it seems they need a genetic upgrade so I don't quite see the liberation scenario. What is displayed with clarity is the total lack of civility some humans are capable of displaying as a result of ignorance, hatred and prejudice. The author was a bit skimpy with information concerning these two primary powers that are at war. I don't really have a sense of their history. The space battles had some unique elements and moved well. All in all I think it was worth the time to read.

Book 2 of the David Birkenhead series, The Midshipman, finished pulling me in. Book 1 was good enough for me to spend 99 cents on book 2. I have since read books 3 and 4 and bought the balance for the full set of 7. Sleep, who needs sleep before going into work? In Midshipman, David's near-adoption into a ruling house activates his loyalty and honor and finds him joining the military as a result. The second book of this series still has the character acting as a youth instead of adult (I really like the series having the character truly mature through both his experiences and just growing up). And like any freed slave or lower class working above their station in a stratus society, he faces tremendous peer and cultural pressures to return to his proper place. Only his Honor of Promises Made pushes him past the worst of it. While the series is High Space Opera Military genre, the theme is about slavery and overcoming the slavery mindset, both in the individual and in the culture. While some may think that we can never go that way again, the only way to make certain that happens is in reminding ourselves and future generations. I find the series again and again touches on things I have learned over the years about cultures which have slavery and the transition times to remove it. A great series.

Phil Geusz is one of my favorite science fiction authors, specifically his transformation stories. I am not a big fan of the military science fiction. But Phil Geusz had me on the edge of my chair with each of his books in the 'The David Birkenhead Series'. The character development was stunning, the plots (and sub plots) were well paced and engaging. Upon reflecting on the entire series, I find myself thinking it hard to believe. But to Phil Geusz credit he tells the story so well that you lose yourself and the plot really does become real while reading. But the real strength of the series is the way Phil Geusz used the story to deal with discrimination, social decay, personal responsibility, loyalty, and other human-condition topics. Several of the books were so engaging, I stayed up until the early morning hours to see how they would end. I would recommend this to anyone who reads. It has something for everyone.

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