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Lines Of Departure (Frontlines Book 2)



Synopsis

Vicious interstellar conflict with an indestructible alien species. Bloody civil war over the last habitable zones of the cosmos. Political unrest, militaristic police forces, dire threats to the Solar System—Humanity is on the ropes, and after years of fighting a two-front war with losing odds, so is North American Defense Corps officer Andrew Grayson. He dreams of dropping out of the service one day, alongside his pilot girlfriend, but as warfare consumes entire planets and conditions on Earth deteriorate, he wonders if there will be anywhere left for them to go. After surviving a disastrous space-borne assault, Grayson is reassigned to a ship bound for a distant colony—and packed with malcontents and troublemakers. His most dangerous battle has just begun. In this sequel to the bestselling *Terms of Enlistment*, a weary soldier must fight to prevent the downfall of his species—or bear witness to humanity's last, fleeting breaths.

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Customer Reviews

This is book 2 of a new series by Kloos and while you can probably get a good deal out of it without the first book, *Terms of Enlistment*, you'll likely do better reading that one first. While technically military sci-fi, these books delve a bit deeper than just details of battles and their attendant

strategies. There is more than one interesting character but the protagonist is, of course, most featured and his POV is dominant. Both volumes are interesting as Earth faces a vastly superior, implacable and fantastically aggressive foe which comes out of nowhere known to throw humanity back on its collective heels time and time again. Again, in both books, the protagonist develops, the stages he finds himself on vary quite a bit and his interactions with others mature as he himself matures. As with so many of this genre today, the underlying sense is one of pessimism unlike, say the 'humans learn instant tech and dominate' common to the antique scifi of the so called golden age of the '30's, '40's and '50's. This pessimism is deeper than most. Not only is the Earth severely threatened and humanity facing extinction, but the humans aren't sure that's a bad thing. The Earth itself is vastly overpopulated at over 10x it's current population most of who live in welfare sucking squalor piled into 'projects' and living a Hobbs-like life which is brutal, nasty, poor and short. Many complete it by being solitary. At several points in the book, humans speculating on their own and their species extinction, say it may not be a bad idea. The implication is that since humans failed to control their own population, they deserve an outside influence to so control it. Many future oriented books set the future as dystopian but few take it this far.

The adventures of Andrew Grayson, now a sergeant, continue in this second volume. The story starts almost five years after the end of the previous book. The bitter and losing war against the Aliens on the one hand and against the Sino-Russian Alliance (SRAs) on the other for the space colonies continues, and Grayson has been involved in it up to the neck. The situation is getting steadily worse, both in space, as the colonies fall one after the other, and in the North American Commonwealth where the welfare rats' living conditions worsen steadily as their weekly food allowance is steadily cut to save money for the war effort, leading to increasingly bloody riots. I'll stop here to avoid spoilers. Suffice is to say that the book contains the same themes as volume one and that our hero meets again Master Sergeant Fallon and two disciplinary battalions from the ex-Territorial Army who are sent on exile to a far-away colony as a punishment, and cut off from the rest of humanity. This book also has the same qualities as book one, and perhaps also the same limitations. It is entertaining, exciting and easy to read. You also need to suspend belief at times, for instance when senior officers (lieutenant colonels no less!) defer to Master Sergeant Fallon who, of course, will let no one mess around with her or her grunts. You also need to be aware that the story is a rather predictable one, but it's nevertheless entertaining. For fans of military science fiction (and that includes myself, of course), the book has some interesting features of various types of drop ships, ground attack craft and an

orbital combat ship (OCS, in the jargon) with exceptional stealth capabilities.

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