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Alex Scarrow

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Liam O'Connor should have died at sea in 1912.

Maddy Carter should have died on a plane in 2010.

Sal Vikram should have died in a fire in 2026.

But all three have been given a second chance—to work for an agency that no one knows exists. Its purpose: to prevent time travel destroying history...

Project Exodus—a mission to transport 300 Americans from 2070 to AD 54 to overthrow the Roman Empire—has gone catastrophically wrong. Half have arrived seventeen years earlier, during the reign of Caligula.

Liam goes to investigate, but when Maddy and Sal attempt to flee a kill-squad sent to hunt down their field office, all of the TimeRiders become trapped in the Roman past.

Armed with knowledge of the future, Caligula is now more powerful than ever. But with the office unmanned—and under threat—how will the TimeRiders make it back to 2001 and put history right?

Gates of Rome Details

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Author : Alex Scarrow

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From Reader Review Gates of Rome for online ebook

Stuart says

"My fellow Romans and Americans - this happened in 54 AD"

Ave Imperator, morituri te salutant Caligula, aka 'goat legs' or if you prefer 'little soldier's boots' - I'd suggest not calling him goat legs, apparently it never ends up well for the speaker.

"Come in, come in, meet my new senator" said Caligula

"Who is it" asked the newcomer

"My horse" responded the Emperor

He LOVED that horse.

Book 5 of Alex Scarrow's *Timeriders* series sees Liam, Maddy, Sal and Bob going back to 54 AD. The timeline has been changed, Caligula is still in power, Claudius reign never took place. I'd personally swap a madman for a idiot any day. So why is this? Jumping forward to 2056, humanity is on its last legs. Wars have taken its toll, where flooding has consumed a lot of the earth mass on the planet. The ice caps have melted, famine and disease are rife. A airborne virus has decimated what is left of the populace. Desperate, a select group of the wealthy head back in time to reinvent humanity - things don't go to plan, they end up in the wrong era and have to face Caligula's madness.

Liam and Bob meanwhile are sent back to deal with this situation. What they find is a group of 'special' warriors protecting Caligula, called "The Stone Men". Whereupon they meet Cato and Marco (from Simon Scarrow's *Eagle* series). Awesome, those two are brilliant. Not in a YA book there not!! They didn't really fit in with the *Timeriders* theme, they just seemed to be put in there to boost sales. To watered down and to nice for my liking, that's not what those characters are about. They readily accepted the whole time travel theory, without even a pause.

Where Alex Scarrow did succeed was describing the environment and bringing Rome alive. He especially nailed down the madness of Caligula, which was a great read - I'd suggest reading *The Twelve Caesars* for a more, academic read on the character of Caligula. It's interesting how the theme of Caligula's professed divinity overlapped into the narrative. No orgies or blood here though, this book is meant for kids!!

My previous quest against Maddy being the most annoying character put into print is slightly sedated in this book. She seems to have levelled out a little. Gone were her childish rants and constant worries and concerns. Still worried and concerned, it was slightly mellowed by the author, something which was welcomed from my perspective, as Mads was starting to overawe the story and other characters.

Gates of Rome is a vastly improved novel in regards to character development. Alex's writing is strong, the pace is just about right. Unlike many novels I've read, all the storyline strands aren't rushed and bound together quickly at the end. What does let it down was the use of Marco and Cato. They just didn't fit into a YA novel. As talented as Alex Scarrow is, in my opinion he should have came up with his own characters. I'm starting to root for Bob, the artifical/super soldier/genebred/thing, more than anyone else! A solid read.

WhyNN ~ says

<https://b4u2bweird.wordpress.com/2015...>

Space says

I discovered something about three-quarters of the way through this book that I hadn't thought of up until now. It's something obvious, but something I just hadn't considered, perhaps because I hadn't needed to yet. And that's this: this time-travel series doesn't have near as much time-travel in it as it does adventure. And that may be fine for some people. It's not that all the fighting ancient Romans and defending ancient castles isn't fun. But it's just not as much fun to me as the actual traveling-through-time part of time-travel is.

In this book itself, the leap backward is made early on in the book, so the majority of the story takes place in the past. And it's not like Connie Willis's past, where she paints the picture so vividly that you feel like you could go write a report about the Black Death. It's just more of a 'oh-yeah-so-we're-here' type picture. Oh yeah, we're here in 54 AD. No big deal.

And when you have three adolescents and a meat robot walking around ancient Rome, it just isn't the most believable fiction you ever read. I think it would be fantastic had these books been out when I was a teen myself, and had I gotten the opportunity to read them then. I would have loved them severely. More than *The Dungeon* series, for sure. But as it stands, it's just good. As in not great. Just good. Maybe really good. But not great.

I do like how Mr. Scarrow is letting little bits of information about the agency out in each book. Giving us little carrots to keep us reading. And I will no doubt be reading the balance of the series. I will not, in fact, break to read any of the other books I've picked up to read until I finish this series. I'm invested. And I'm still enjoying it greatly. But this installment in particular gave me a little reason to be able to put it down. I did break for a dove hunt a few days ago, but I've been less interested in picking it back up and returning to ancient Rome than some of the previous books would have made me. And some of it also had to do with the ridiculous introduction of the little lab assistant, 'SpongeBubba'. I seriously almost put the book down when he came waddling in. Maybe a ten-year-old would giggle at that, and be excited by the prospect of having a real-life Sponge Bob character in the book. But dude. Seriously? Even Young Adult audiences probably rolled their eyes at that.

I fought through it though, in much the same way we fought through Jar-Jar in Episode One. I guess at the end I'm glad I did.

On to book six!

Grw says

Another great installment in the time traveling series, that once more manages to include a brilliant main plot, great factual historical (and new historical) detail, whilst continuing the overall story arc of the series, as

to just who is the mysterious Foster who recruited our heroes, and just what is the Agency they work for..

This time the period of history that needs to be corrected from the interference of others messing with history is the Roman rule of one of the more unstable emperors, none other than Caligula himself.

If you know anything about Caligula you can only imagine what he would do if he had access to not just modern - by our terms - but future technology. Well that's what's at the core of this novel and, without giving anything away, I can honestly say that it doesn't end well.

Into this drop our time traveling heroes - all of them - with little hope of getting back to their base in 2001, when a message they sent forward in time, goes a bit wrong, and you get a very exciting book indeed. Perhaps one of the best of the series, so far, anyway.

As always the action is compelling, the plot well structured, the characters - a couple of whom are borrowed from another series, written by the authors brother - are nicely rounded, making it impossible to feel for them - even Caligula!!

Greatly looking forward to the next one.

Tezar Yulianto says

page turner book. semakin penasaran ma buku lanjutannya

Sophia Reiffenstein says

Wow!!! I can't wait to see where this story is taking me!!!

Dion Yulianto says

Kali ini empat anggota TimeRiders akhirnya bisa menjalani misi bareng. Maddy, Liam, Sal, dan Bob terlempar ke tahun 57 M di zaman Romawi kuno. Musuhnya kali ini adalah Caligula a.k.a Julius Caesar yang ternyata jadi kaisar yg luar biasa mengerikan ketika masa pemerintahannya diperpanjang. Sebuah kontaminasi waktu dr 2070 lewat proyek Eksodus menjadikan sejarah Romawi kuno berubah, dan itu turut mengubah sejarah yang kita kenal.

Seperti biasa, seri ini langganan mendapat 4 bintang karena alurnya yang seru, bergerak cepat, dan tak tertebak. Dan, di ending, tim TR dapat satu lagi teman baru. Buku ini dgn bagus mengingatkan kita untuk lebih peduli pada bumi krn Bumi hanya satu-satunya. Ketika Bumi rusak, umat manusia juga yang akan kena. Kurangi sampah plastik yuk. Bawa selalu kantung plastik bekas tiap belanja biar ga nambah kantung plastik baru lagi.

15SharpeG says

It was very good book as it had very good words in. I liked the time travel aspect of it.

Darren Hartwell says

We are half way into Alex Scarrow's brilliant TimeRiders series and I am finding it increasingly difficult to review these books for fear of giving away massive spoilers. I tried to write a review for TimeRiders: The Eternal War when I had read it but found it so difficult I eventually gave in, and simply writing "It's brilliant, read it immediately" was, I felt, a little too brief for a blog post. Now that I have finished this fifth book, Gates of Rome, I am still a little hesitant (it could be a very short review), but feel that I owe it to Alex Scarrow and the good people at Puffin who very kindly sent me a copy to review.

Every time I finish a TimeRiders book I sit back and marvel at the quality of Alex Scarrow's storytelling. He is slowly weaving an incredibly complex nine volume story, and I feel I should be prostrating myself before him, doubting my worthiness. Steven Moffat really should get in touch with him as I would love to see a Doctor Who episode written by Alex Scarrow.

At the end of The Eternal War we were left with more questions than an episode of Mastermind. The first three books in the series introduced us to the characters, and the emphasis was on how they would react to the various eras in which they found themselves, whilst also giving us morsels of the growing mystery surrounding the purpose of their agency. And then BAM!, the end of book three and then the fourth book added layer upon layer to the overall story arc. I think The Eternal War is still my favourite book in the series so far - much as I love the fast-paced action of the first three, this one slowed things down a little and really made my brain fizz with excitement as it tried to process the mystery aspects of the story arc.

The opening chapters of Gates of Rome alternate between Cheyenne Mountain, 2070 and the now familiar setting of New York, 2001. In 2001 Sal and Maddy are continuing to try to fathom out some of the questions that began to form in their minds in previous books, and Maddy finally shares with Sal some of the secrets that are burning a huge hole in her brain. Sixty-nine years into the future and we watch as the Exodus Project begins to reach zero hour. In 2070 the environment has been pretty much killed off, with billions living in squalor, and a team of scientists, soldiers and politicians are readying themselves to travel back to AD54 to take over the Roman Empire and establish a new society based on American values. Unfortunately, a catastrophic event means the project is accelerated, calculations are rushed and the group end up being sent back at AD 37, the survivors finding that they have arrived during the reign of Caligula, an emperor who was renowned for being more than a little mad. Unfortunately for our band of TimeRiding heroes the ensuing time waves hit 2001 NYC at the same time as a group of lab-grown assassins arrive, their mission to destroy Maddy and her friends. In the process of trying to evade their pursuers, Maddy and Sal find themselves escaping back to AD54, joining Bob and Liam and leaving no-one behind to get them back to the 21st Century. Not good!

Thanks to the arrival of the Exodus team Caligula has become even more insane, thinks he is a god, and has managed to avoid being assassinated as he would have been if the time stream had not been contaminated. Somehow the team must survive the dangers of a brutal Ancient Rome, discover what event changed to accepted version of history, find a way back to 2001, survive the assassins that may still be waiting there for them, and finally mend history (again). If that seems like an impossible task for three teenagers and a support

unit then you may be right this time.

This book comes with everything the previous books had - great action scenes, brilliant characters, answered questions and then more questions created, and a vivid depiction of the historical era that the tram find themselves in. I must confess I have never been a fan of books set in Ancient Rome (in fact, I rarely read any historical fiction set before Tudor times), but I found that Alex Scarrow's descriptions of the horrors of Rome under Caligula completely absorbing, and written so well that I found it very easy to picture the sights, smells and sounds in my mind. In this book Caligula is even nastier than history portrayed him, and so we are treated to descriptions of torture and violence that will have teen boys gagging for more.

My only problem with the TimeRiders books is that there are so many layers and mysteries to the stories that by the time I read each new book I have forgotten some of what went before. There are four more books scheduled in the series, with the next one, City of Shadows, scheduled for an August 2012 release (less than six months away - whoop! whoop!). I have a feeling that come the publication of the ninth book I may have to take myself away to a cabin on a remote island somewhere with nothing to do but read the entire series back-to-back, if I am to get my head completely around all of the many plot strands that Alex Scarrow is so carefully weaving together.

Ekin says

Secrets are finally coming out! Problems are being solved and of course created! I found this book funnier and more gripping than the others.

Γι?τα Παπαδημακοπο?λου says

Φτ?σαμε αισ?ως στο π?μπτο βιβλ?ο της σειρ?ς "Οι Φ?λακες του Χρ?νου" του Alex Scarrow, και η δρ?ση παραμ?νει στα ?δια υψηλ? επ?πεδα με τα προηγ?μενα κεφ?λαια της ιστορ?ας μας. Αυτ? τη φορ?, οι ?ρω?ς μας ταξιδε?ουν στη Ρ?μη, με τη Ρωμα?κ? Αυτοκρατορ?α και ?λα ?σα την συνθ?τουν, να αποτελο?ν το ιδανικ? σκηνικ? για μια ν?α περιπ?τεια, που με ανατροπ?ς και εκπλ?ξεις μ?ς καθηλ?νει απ? την πρ?τη σελ?δα μ?χρι και την τελευτα?α, επιβεβαι?νοντας πως η επιτυχ?α της σειρ?ς αυτ?ς, και κατ' επ?κτασιν του ?διου του συγγραφ?α, δι?λου τυχα?α δεν ε?ναι, τουλ?χιστον ?σον αφορ? την πορε?α της σειρ?ς στο εξωτερικ?, αφο? η αλ?θεια ε?ναι πως δεν ?χω σαφ? εικ?να για το πως ?χουν π?ει τα βιβλ?α στην Ελλ?δα, αν και κ?τι μου λ?ει πως δεν ?χουν τ?χει της αναγν?ρισης που τους αξ?ζει.

Ο Λ?αμ, η Μ?ντι και η Σαλ, λοιπ?ν, αναλαμβ?νουν την Αποστολ? ?ξοδος, σκοπ?ς της οπο?ας ε?ναι να μεταφερθε? μια μερ?δα Αμερικ?νων απ? το ?τος 2070 στο 54 μ.Χ., προκειμ?νου να ?χουμε την κατ?λυση της Ρωμα?κ?ς Αυτοκρατορ?ας. Β?βαια, τα πρ?γματα δεν εξελ?σσονται ?τσι ?πως θα ?πρεπε, με τους Αμερικ?νους να φτ?νουν μεν στον προορισμ? τους, 17 χρ?νια νωρ?τερα ?μω? απ' ?τι θα ?πρεπε, την εποχ? που ο Καλιγο?λας ?ταν ηγ?της της Αυτοκρατορ?ας, σπ?ρνοντας τη β?α και τη διαστροφ?. Σε μια ?τυχη στιγμ?, οι ?ρω?ς μας παχιδε?ονται στο παρελθ?ν, με το αρχηγε?ο τους να βρ?σκεται αφ?λακτο και τους ?διους να μην ?χουν δι?ξοδο ?στε να επιστρ?ψουν στο δικ? τους παρ?ν, ?τσι ?στε να διορθ?σουν τα πρ?γματα. Τι θα κ?νουν, λοιπ?ν, προκειμ?νου να φ?ρουν και π?λι τις ισορροπ?ες και να εμποδ?σουν τον Καλιγο?λα να αξιοποι?σει προς ?φελ?ς του τις γν?σεις που αποκτ? για το μ?λλον;

Τα δ'ο πρ'τα βιβλ'α της σειρ'ς, και 'να μεγ'λο μ'ρος του τρ'του, επικεντρ'θηκαν -κυρ'ως- στο να μας συστ'σουν τους πρωταγωνιστ'ς μας, με τον συγγραφ'α να χτ'ζει σταδιακ' 'να ολοκληρωμ'νο ψυχογρ'φημα, διαφορετικ' για τον καθ'να, δημιουργ'ντας μια ομ'δα της οπο'ας το σ'νολο ε'ναι 'κρως 'ρτιο και λειτουργικ'. Το τρ'το βιβλ'ο, σε αντ'θεση με τα δ'ο πρ'τα, 'φτασε στο φιν'λε του σε μια εξαιρετικ' δυνατ' κορ'φωση του δρ'ματος, κ'τι που 'γινε ακ'μα πιο 'ντονο στο τ'ταρτο βιβλ'ο, και για μ'να, το καλ'τερο της σειρ'ς μ'χρι στιγμ'ς, που σε συνδυασμ' με την αμε'ωτη δρ'ση μας καθ'λωσε. Τ'ρα, ο π'χης 'χει αν'βει πολ' ψηλ' και αυτ' 'χει ως αποτ'λεσμα να ε'ναι πολ' μεγ'λες και οι προσδοκ'ες μας. "Οι Π'λες της Ρ'μης" ε'ναι μεν 'να πολ' δυνατ' βιβλ'ο, γεμ'το δρ'ση και αγων'α, αλλ' η αλ'θεια ε'ναι πως στερε'ται της τ'σο 'ντονης συναισθηματικ'ς φ'ρτισης που χαρακτηριζε τον προκ'τοχ' της. Δεν θ'λω να κ'νω σ'γκριση, κ'τι τ'τοιο 'λλωστε θα 'ταν 'τοπο, αλλ' δεν μπορ' και να μην το αναφ'ρω καθ'λου.

'σον αφορ' τον Καλιγο'λα, νομ'ζω πως αποτελε' την πιο ε'στοχη και ενδιαφ'ρουσα επιλογ' χαρακτη'ρα που θα μπορο'σε να 'χει κ'νει ο συγγραφ'ας. Εμμονικ'ς, εγωπαθ'ς, 'νας 'νθρωπος που π'στευε πως του 'νηκε ο κ'σμος, διεστραμμ'νος και αυτοκαταστροφικ'ς, συνθ'τει 'ναν χαρακτη'ρα που σε συνδυασμ' με τα στοιχε'α της σ'γχρονης εποχ'ς, 'χει τρομερ' ενδιαφ'ρον να παρακολουθε'ς την εξ'λιξ' του μ'σα στην 'λη πλοκ'. Ο Scarrow θα μπορο'σε να 'χει επιλ'ξει οποιονδ'ποτε αυτοκρ'τορα, 'μως πραγματικ' θεωρ' πως επ'λεξε τον ιδανικ'. Εξ'σου ενδιαφ'ρουσα ε'ναι και η αλληλεπ'δραση που 'χει με τους γν'ριμους σε εμ'ς χαρακτη'ρες, με το 'λο σκηνικ' να θυμ'ζει κ'τι απ' περιπ'τειες δρ'σης που κατ' καιρο'ς βλ'πουμε στη μεγ'λη οθ'νη.

'νταση, αγων'α, ωρ'α σκιαγραφημ'νοι χαρακτη'ρες, συνθ'τουν την εικ'να μ'ας ιστορ'ας που σε παρασ'ρει σε κρατ'ει σε εγρ'γορση μ'χρι τ'λους, 'στω κι αν υποσυνε'δητα ξ'ρεις πως οι 'ρω'ς μας θα τα βγ'λουν π'ρα για μια ακ'μη φορ', 'πως κ'νουν π'ντα 'ταν 'χουν να αντιμετωπ'σουν δ'σκολες καταστ'σεις. Μυστ'ριο και γρ'φοι που πρ'πει να λυθο'ν, δρ'ση σε υψηλ' επ'πεδα, 'στω κι αν μ'σα σε 'λα αυτ' θα θ'λαμε λ'γο περισσ'τερο 'ντονες δ'σεις συναισθ'ματος, που προσωπικ' κ'πως μου 'λειψαν. Παρ' 'λα τα'τα, μια δυναμικ' συν'χεια, 'πως αρμ'ζει σε μια σειρ' 'πως "Οι Φ'λακες του Χρ'νου", που αποδε'χτηκαν κ'τι περισσ'τερο απ' αυτ' που περ'μενα 'ταν ξεκ'νησα να τους διαβ'ζω, και που δεν σταματ'νε ποτ' να με εκπλ'σσουν.

Philip says

More fun with the boys and girls, this time in ancient Rome.

Mr Scarrow continues to give us little tidbits about who and what the 'agency' is. I think I know and have guessed the end.

4 more to go.

David says

“Liam O’Connor should have dies at sea in 1912.

Maddy Carter should have died on a plane in 2010.

Sal Vikram should have died in a fire in 2026.

But all three have been given a second chance—to work for an agency that no one knows exists. Its purpose:

to prevent time travel destroying history.”

–From the book jacket. Because it’s easier than trying to explain the premise every time.

This time, the Time Riders get swept up in a plan to transport 300 Americans from the year 2070 in something called Project Exodus, back 2000 years to Roman times to overthrow the Roman empire and replace it with a more American style of government. Democracy through greater firepower. Unfortunately, it goes dramatically wrong, and half the team winds up at a spot 17 years too early, during the reign of Caligula. The coup fails, Caligula survives and now, with a new sense of purpose, grows stronger. This changes the future and causes a time wave that effects the world of 2001 in which the Time Riders team live. But when they attempt to investigate, they find themselves under attack from robot support units from the future. Their only escape is to throw themselves into the past and hope they can find their way back.

The world of Time Riders is bleak. The world is dying, overpopulated, underwater. But somehow hope is never completely dead. Time must run its course, and it is up to three teenagers (along with their robot support unit, Bob) to make sure the timeline is kept intact. To this end, Maddy, Liam and Sal are all game to face whatever challenges come their way. They deal with extraordinary hardship, all the while never quite understanding just who it is they are working for. There are mysteries that unravel throughout the course of the series and this edition moves that along nicely.

Gates of Rome is an excellent entry in this series. It is a recovery from what I thought was a bit of a letdown in the Book 4, The Endless War. Though it is a book aimed at Young Adults (and I am pretty far past that), I count myself a fan and look forward to the next one!

Fleur says

Gates of Rome sees a group of environmental refugees from 2070 travel to the Roman Empire with the aim of teaching natives “the American way.” They end up face-to-face with the mad emperor Caligula and in the process, somewhat ironically, wipe out future America. It’s down to Liam, Maddy, Sal and Bob to put history back on track.

This is my favourite of the *TimeRiders* series so far. It is fun and fast-paced. Humanity’s desperate, last-ditch Project Exodus; the delusional, unhinged emperor; and the mysterious *Terminator* -style introduction the not-so-supportive support units make this a great read. It did start to drag a little around the 300-mark since the plot focuses on Cato and Marco’s plans to make Rome a Republic. More sci-fi needed here, I guess. But the story picks up the pace again once Maddy finds the mysterious cage. Wait a second - that's not a lion in there.

Best moment: “‘Are you an ox or a man?’ one of them laughed. Bob scowled. ‘Neither.’ He lunged.”

Read for: Hebban Challenge, Book #45 A Book Set in Multiple Times

Ananya~Fantasy bookworm~ says

This was a good book but for some reason did not have me glued to the book or leave me hanging in suspense. Liam, maddy and Sal, the main characters are further developed and there is a surprising turn of events as robots sent from the future start attacking them and New York suddenly turns out to be like Ancient Rome. The three friends and their faithful (or programmed to be faithful) meat-robot, Bob helps them gain a place among the people of Rome.
