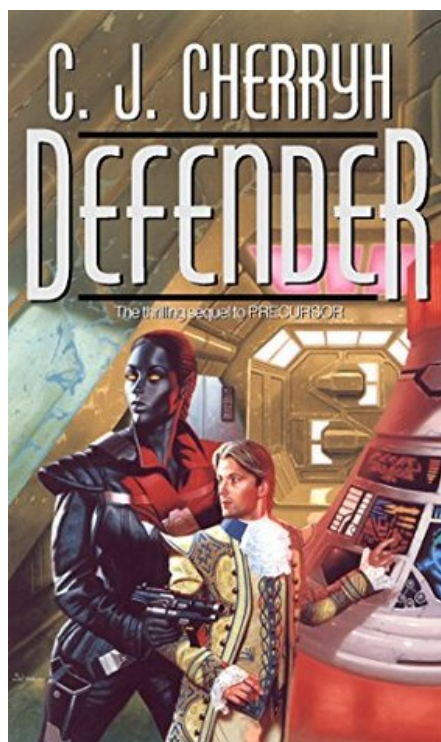




Defender

C.J. Cherryh

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Nearly ten years after the unexpected return of the starship *Phoenix*, the alien *atevi* have three functioning space shuttles, and teams of *atevi* engineers labor in orbit to renovate the space station. But these monumental advances not only add a dangerously powerful third party to an already precarious diplomatic situation, but rouse pro- and anti-*s[ace* factions in *atevi* society to incendiary levels. To help negotiate these treacherous diplomatic waters, Tabini-aiji, the powerful head of the *atevi*'s Western Association, has sent the only human he fully trusts into space: his own *paidhi*, Bren Cameron.

However, the threat of possible invasion by hostile aliens who attacked *Phoenix*'s station in a far-off sector of space hangs over them all. And when one of the senior captains of the *Phoenix* confesses that this station was not completely destroyed, as had been previously thought, the crew mutinies. How can Bren hope to mediate on a station overcome by a rebellious crew intent on taking the *Phoenix* on a rescue mission back into hostile alien territory?

The long-running *Foreigner* series can also be enjoyed by more casual genre readers in sub-trilogy installments. *Defender* is the 5th *Foreigner* book. It is also the 2nd book in the second subtrilogy.

Defender Details

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Author : C.J. Cherryh

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From Reader Review Defender for online ebook

Mark Edlund says

Science Fiction series - Cherryh continues this second of umpteen trilogies. Bren and his troupe are now in space to embark on a voyage to find the Reunion craft. Lots of intrigue and back stabbing. No Canadian or pharmacy references.

Fred Dearman says

Launch to deception station

Starship refueled, who else but Bren and Illisidi. Sabin difficult. Lies about station's destruction revealed somewhat. Been finally can stop dialog about Barb mom Tobey - hooray!

Sandra says

This was especially good. Bren and his atevi associates leave for a far star. The process of getting to that point is incredibly complicated with political secrets, intrigue, and bold moves, shaking Bren's confidence and his sense of safety. A great series. On to Explorer

Nathaniel says

I love this series. Thankfully, it's broken into trilogies. I can usually stop between trilogies, but I can't stop between books within a trilogy. I finished Precursor yesterday, then finished this book today, and I've already started on Explorer.

The reason for only three stars is just that, relative to the other books in this series, not a whole lot happened in Defender. I can't tell yet if it could have been skipped--so far it seems as though Explorer might follow directly on its heels--but the summary (which I won't give because of spoilers) could easily be one sentence, and is kind of an obvious continuation from Precursor.

So, it was still a fun read, but it felt like passable filler between the first and last book in this particular trilogy.

Lazette says

A deathbed confession, overheard by the wrong person, sets a wildfire of emotion through both the station and the ship crews as they learn there may be survivors on a station they abandoned when they ran back to the Atevi world.[return][return]Betrayal, anger and distrust are rampant in every interface between the various human groups and even with the Atevi. However, with the ship refueled, there is no reason why the crew can't go back to get the missing people. A year-long journey and a chance of a hostile alien encounter

are only part of the problem. A decade has passed since they abandoned Reunion. What will they find when they return?The hope that friends and family might still be holding on in the partially destroyed station is going to lead to a mutiny if a rescue isn't immediately launched -- and even that would take a year to reach the station -- then there is going to be serious trouble.Into this atmosphere, Bren Cameron must try to work a solution to everyone's liking -- but he's working blind in one respect. He has had no instructions from the Aiji or the Atevi government. Urgent messages go unanswered at a time when he most needs the guidance of his friend. He knows friend is not a word he can apply to any Atevi. He knows that he doesn't feel what they feel, and yet he can't help but feel a level of betrayal when he learns the Aiji has been working with another rather than with him. He's been cut off with no one but his loyal Atevi companions to stand by him in a dangerous situation where he can only guess what the leader of the Atevi world will want. Add the pressure of family commitments he can in no way deal with, and believing himself abandoned and betrayed, Bren can only do what he's always trained to do -- mediate between groups of people who are one step away from open warfare. When the indomitable Illisidi and the Aiji's young son come to the station, intending to travel aboard the ship, the situation grows even more complex.Defender is an exciting book from start to finish, with enough twists and turns to keep the reader guessing just what might be the truth and what enemies might Bren faces. As always, the alien society is exceptionally well-written and the plotting superb. This book is a real treat for fans of the series.

Michelle says

Too short.

A nice expansion of the universe this series is set in.

Noel Roach says

The book starts with a memorial ceremony. Bren does not understand why he has been summoned down from the space station to the planet to attend. Neither Bren nor we the reader ever find out why. Much of the book is similar pointless confusion and unresolved plot points. In addition the first quarter of the book was devoted mostly to recapping the first four novels in the series and bringing the reader up to speed on the state of the story universe. Having just reread those books within days of starting this one, that got really tedious. This one was definitely not up to the standard of the first four books or *C. J. Cherryh's* usual high quality.

Christopher says

Review to come! :D

Veronique says

fifth book - 2nd of second trilogy

"Actually, you're the alien"

Another great instalment in the Foreigner Saga. A few more years have passed by since the previous book and the space programme is well under way. The orbital station is finally operational, served by several shuttles, and the new ship in construction. Once again we have politics galore, and with the news that the senior captain of the Phoenix, Ramirez, has died, everything that could go wrong threatens to do so. Not only this but Bren has been kept out of the loop...

Defender does very much feel like a transition book, and yet it is still a very entertaining and taut intrigue. Apart from the memorial service for Tabini's father, the setting is firmly on the station, which has become Bren's 'home'. There is also the ubiquitous family crisis.

I really can't wait for the next novel and to see how the change of setting will shape the narration.

Nilchance says

Still loving Bren, human disaster. I love that other humans are, rightly, wondering where his loyalties are and how human he still is, after years of living in the mental space of an atevi. I love that the dysfunction of his family relationships are written so wince-inducingly well; I don't doubt that Cherryh has either been there or knows someone who has.

Still loving atevi diplomacy. Got a problem? Throw Illisidi at it. Then it won't be a problem because it'll either be handled or levelled and you can rearrange the rubble in pleasing patterns.

Bradley says

Still loving the series! It's like a warm glass of SF milk by a fire on a stormy winter night, so comfortable and steady. I mean, seriously, what's more steady than the slow retrofitting of a space station and the refueling of an interstellar spacecraft while juggling aliens, lies, and family problems back home?

I mean, besides a cool drink of poison?

Is this the beginning of another coup attempt? Poor Bren has been left out of the loop again, but at least he thinks quickly on his toes!

And yes, time has passed, and yet that's all for the good because the Phoenix has been refueled and now we've got to deal with the Captain's lies. Time to go off to uncharted realms? Oh yes, I like where the series is headed. And of course, the Atevi will find a way to be in the center of it. :)

Bren feeling inadequate. Again. (Not that this is such a bad thing. I really like him and it's always a pleasure to see him get richly rewarded for being himself.)

I love this series. It's like a competence-porn soap-opera of diplomatic relations and translation errors in the middle of assassination attempts. What's not to love? :)

Kristin says

Not as interesting as Book #4, but still a quick read. This was definitely a transition book; getting the characters from Point A - the Space Station - to Point B, the space ship, where they can then start to transition to Point C, the abandoned space station.

My main complaint with this book is the characters don't seem to have evolved or matured. Bren is still wrestling with family issues, even though he's been on the space station and out of communication for two years. Jase is still behaving like a petulant teenager rather than a mature ship-captian. The Atavi continue not to tell Bren-padhi anything, leaving him to run in circles and scream and shout. The Ship continues not to tell Jase and Bren anything, leaving them to grouse and shout. And then events force all hands and they have nothing more to do than to react.

But oddly, I still enjoy this series and I am looking forward to reading the next one.

Ozymandias says

Story: 4 (Slow-paced and doesn't go anywhere)

Characters: 7 (Same as in previous volumes)

Thrill to the Adventure of Boarding a Ship!

Marvel at the Discussion of Relative Interpersonal Authority!

Stand in Awe of Fish in Space!

This book is the least impactful of the series so far. Everything that happens here is what we know will happen after reading the last book and the only major new mystery is left unresolved despite an underwhelming cliffhanger that was built around answering it. Instead we have to wait until book six to get all the interesting stuff. The book starts with the sudden preparation for departure in search of their lost base and ends with the departure in search of their lost base. Things happen in the interim, but nothing all that exciting.

Rob Hermanowski says

This middle book of the second Foreigner trilogy has even less action than usual - essentially the entire novel takes place as an interstellar spacecraft is being prepped for a multi-species mission. There is A LOT of intrigue and political drama, though, and I am thoroughly entrenched in Cherryh's epic series. Perfectly read, again, by Daniel Thomas May.

Krista D. says

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