



Shades of Treason

Sandy Williams

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Ash would have given her life to save her teammates.

Instead, they gave their lives to save hers.

Lieutenant Ramie Ashdyn is an anomaly, a person whose genetic makeup makes her stronger and smarter than the average human. She's pledged her life to protect the Coalition, an alliance of thirteen planetary systems, but when a top secret operation turns bloody, she's charged with treason and the brutal executions of her teammates.

The Coalition needs the information Ash's team stole on their last mission, so they send in Commander Rhys "Rest in Peace" Rykus to get it. He's the man who's responsible for turning Ash into an elite soldier... and he's a man who isn't, never was, and never will be in love with the woman he trained. Or so he tells himself.

Ash wants nothing more than to clear her name and be the woman her former instructor wants her to be, but the enemy who killed her teammates did more than frame her for treason and murder: they telepathically silenced her mind, preventing her from saying anything that might point to the truth about what happened.

Now Ash is trapped and set to be executed, the truth dying with her. Unless she can prove her innocence. But taking that path could destroy the Coalition she's sworn to preserve and protect...

Shades of Treason Details

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From Reader Review Shades of Treason for online ebook

Linda says

[like how Ash and Rykus plan to start a relationship and maintain their careers, who the mysterious factions are, how Ash's old te

Talltree says

DNF

Bonnie says

My rating: 3.5 of 5 stars

'All they need was a reason, a conspiracy. Learning that telepaths existed and that they had infiltrated the Coalition would make them suspect everyone. The senators already fought and argued and threatened to secede. She wouldn't give them more fuel to burn their ties.'

Lieutenant Ramie Ashdyn and her team are sent on a mission by the Coalition to steal classified information from the Saricean's but she is the only survivor. She is subsequently blamed for their deaths and charged with treason. She's left unable to speak the truth of the situation in order to clear her name because her mind has been altered by a telepath. The proof of the existence of telepaths is the classified information that her team stole and inevitably gave their lives to keep secret because the knowledge of this may be the very thing to tear the Coalition apart.

'In three days, Rykus would lead a contingent of soldiers in a daring, deadly assault on an enemy shipyard. In three days, the Coalition and the Sariceans would be at war.'

Ashdyn is a stubborn, badass chick who has no problem taking care of herself. Growing up starving on the streets of Glory, she volunteered to become a soldier of the Coalition. She also discovered she's faster and more powerful than any human being: she's an anomaly. We're given very little of her background and the details behind being an anomaly and while it was enough to clarify most questions, I wanted more details because it was an extremely interesting concept. I loved the inclusion of Commander Rhys Rykus and the whole concept behind the loyalty training as well. Due to an issue with an anomaly's mental stability, they underwent loyalty training which made them dependable soldiers that would follow instruction and wouldn't snap under the strain they underwent. Commander Rhys Rykus was Ashdyn's instructor and he's been requested to use that loyalty training in order to get the classified information from her. It doesn't help matters that the two have a very complicated and heated rapport, both denying the existence of feelings they may have because a relationship between them is out of the question.

Conspiracies, treason, and intrigue oh my! Shades of Treason includes all of that and more (like a pretty hot relationship build-up). I hope to see more delving into the world-building in subsequent installments. Specifically, I'd love to know more about anomaly's and not just who the Saricean's are but what caused the war between them and the Coalition. Nonetheless this is still an auspicious start to an exciting series that I'm most looking forward to!

I received this book free from Book Tour in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

She-Wolf Reads says

2.5 stars; I'm a fan of Sandy Williams but this one just didn't work for me. It starts off strong but had some story elements that felt unclear, a sex scene that was totally out of place, and the pacing was a bit off for me as the story progressed.

Snarktastic Sonja says

I absolutely loved this book. It definitely ranks 4.5 stars. I couldn't put the darn thing down - the mystery of the whole thing really intrigued me. The characters were well drawn and developed. This whole book is a classic example of showing instead of telling - the author did not give us page upon page of glassy-eyed page development, she just landed us in her world and told her story. If this had any failing, it was that, perhaps, the world wasn't quite adequately developed and I'm not really sure what the "Coalition" was or who belonged to it. Or why I should hate the Saraceans . . . or even, and maybe the greatest failing, what exactly an Anomaly WAS. Could be I read it too fast for the knowledge to sink in.

I did really enjoy the characters. It is written in 3rd person with some character POV hopping, but not enough to bother me. The bad guy is really bad and the good guys are believable. For all my demand of relationships, relationships, relationships, there is really only 1 that is developed here, but I really didn't miss them - the story as it was developed just really held my attention. I read it in basically one sitting.

I'd give this one 5 stars except I deducted a star for the aforementioned world building holes. Interesting note, I noticed none of this while I was reading - it was only when I sat down to write the review.

Anna (Bobs Her Hair) says

Grade: B-

The beginning of *Shades of Treason* packs adrenaline-rushing action. I was on the edge of my seat and prepared for a great ride. A gripping conflict, crackling sexual tension, intrigue, and a coalition on the precipice of war - I buckled up for safety. Then, the ride lost some of its steam, yet I still felt very satisfied with Ms. William's new series. Fans of science-fiction and/or military-romantic-suspense may also enjoy SoT.

More to come...possibly. ;D

Mei says

I loved it!!! Really!!! Even if this is not strictly a romance!

This is a gritty SF action movie made book! LOL

I admired the heroine, Ash, her determination and her force of will! She's gone through some of the toughest training and is the only woman ever to make it till the end! Even if she's an anomaly! WOW! Just WOW!

Her trainer, RIP, is also a very interesting character. He, as well as all the other people who are part of this military force, is tough as nails, but he hides well that Ash is his weakness. Nobody knows that, least of all Ash!

The idea and backstory is excellent! So very intriguing, so very interesting! I was biting my nail while reading! What other disasters could happen to her? Torture by the very people she's been trying to save? Experimenting on her to find out what's gone wrong with her? Betray her? Think her a spy for the enemy? And that's not all!! As I said: WOW, just WOW!!

This book has a kind of ending that I wouldn't consider a plain cliffhanger, but it is a kind of... Some things are resolved, but many more are left open! I'm so looking forward to the next book to see where the story will go!

So, if you like films, like G.I. Jane, I think you'll enjoy this book as much as I did!

new_user says

Loved this Bourne in space adventure, starring a wrongly accused heroine and her former instructor/sometime CO. The suspense and romance plots married well here because only Ramie and Rhys' previous relationship allows them to win because who else will believe her innocence? Plus, *Shades of Treason* actually explores the ethics of a commander/subordinate relationship.

Ramie, the heroine, convinces as a soldier, which is rare in genre fic these days, because she's practical and deploys some recognizable fighting/survival skills. Because she was so believable I liked the super soldier aspect. God-mode can kill books, but the super soldiers were just people amped up and deployed in different fields, meaning the stakes were still high and intense. Ramie definitely showed both vulnerability and strength. Both characters admired each other and were strong without taking away from each other, a hard balance to strike. It's rare I root for a couple this much.

Great plausible action too, fast-paced and researched. Sandy Williams has a light, subtle hand I appreciate. Not to say that there weren't telepaths and almost physiological brainwashing, etc. It is sci-fi! Four/five stars. Disappointed the sequel isn't available yet. Booooo.

Sunny says

ARC Review: 3.5 stars

The story begins with Lt. Ramie Ashdyn being interrogated by Commander Rhys Rykus. Ash is an anomaly, a rare group of people with enhanced abilities. They represent only 2% of the known universe. Anomalies volunteer for loyalty training in which they choose to give up their free will in order to better serve The

Coalition. Commander Rykus is a renowned trainer of anomalies. Ash was one of his students, the first female graduate of the program.

Ash has been trained to be absolutely loyal to the Commander. However, in the year of training under his command, she was a wildcard - always teasing and pushing against his stoicism. She had a talent for riling him up. Was it mere teasing, or something else?

Ash is in trouble because she has essential information for the Coalition against its enemies. However, she has been exposed to mind control, a version of psychological warfare, in which she cannot speak about the data or the circumstances surrounding her last mission without blanking out. Furthermore, it is unclear whether it is a good thing for her superiors to possess this information. Ash believes that it has the potential to tear The Coalition apart.

I really enjoyed the premise of this science fiction story. The narrative is imaginative and creative. There are heartbeat-raising moments. There is action and adventure and a pretty good romance. The sexual tension between Ash and Rykus is crackling and if you've ever had a crush on a teacher, you will easily understand her attraction. I am a fan of Sandy Williams's Shadow Reader series and her writing style continues to be very engaging. Ms. Williams puts us right into the middle of the action.

This book has lots of potential, but unfortunately, it is not fully realized. When a writer knows that he or she is going to write a series, there has to be a balance between wrapping up the current story, and yet, leave the reader wanting for more. This story is a little imbalanced. There are too many unanswered questions and not enough closure. I did not finish completely satisfied. But because I know this is a series, I can be patient and can hope to learn more in the next novel. Sandy Williams, bring it on!

IN A NUTSHELL:

This is a fantastic, albeit a little incomplete, read. Despite my disappointment with dangling storylines, I'm still happy I read the book. It is worth your investment and time because the series potential is outstanding.

Thanks to the author for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Originally posted at: Love Affair with an E-Reader

mich says

I love action/adventure stories with romance and was hoping this would be a good one.

Ash is an elite soldier chick who is framed for the murder of her entire crew and finds herself reunited with the man who trained her, a stoic commander dude named Rykus, who's been tasked with getting information out of Ash about her last mission.

I LOVED this at first. There was good tension between Ash and Rykus. Ash's POVs were awesome (Rykus not so much, but whatever), the action scenes were exciting, and the plot was suspenseful.

It was all going great until it wasn't :P

Sex Stuff comes out of nowhere (seriously man, it was awkwardly done and just plain weird given the circumstances) and the romance as a whole was super gag (and Rykus's POVs got progressively worse and

worse).

The Sex Stuff and Romance were written too cheesily for me, and it somehow suffocated the better parts of the story.

I really enjoyed the telepathy aspect of the plot and I still think Ash is a great character, so I may continue this series.

TJ says

Man, this is a very hard book to rate and review. My feelings are totally bi-polar in so many areas, I'm not sure this will even make sense! BUT... here goes...

Overall, this book is a high-octane, edge-of-your-seat, non-stop, action-packed science fiction thrill ride. From the moment the first page is turned to the minute the last page is read the story never stalls. Usually that is a great thing (and it did keep me up until the middle of the night reading). The downside for me, however, was because of the way the story was set-up, for over half the book the major emotion was incredible stress!

To explain: Ash is accused of horrifically killing all her team and is set to be executed for treason if she doesn't speak up. BUT, she can't speak up because the people who really are responsible telepathically blocked her mind so every time she tries, she blanks out. To everyone but herself, it looks like she just spaces out and won't answer. She is repeatedly interrogated and tortured but there is nothing she can do but try and escape. On top of that, the man she cares most in the world for is the one assigned to get the information from her. See what I mean? STRESSFUL to read! It's genius on the author's part because the reader knows the truth and experiences the same desperate emotions Ash's character does. Still, I'm not sure I like being totally stressed out throughout 2/3 of a book I'm reading for enjoyment.

So - while it's incredibly well done - I'm not sure I liked it.

AND.... as a side note - the one area I think the author really went off-track was the sex scene. Made absolutely no sense given the circumstances. Completely awkward placement in the plot and not needed. There were MANY other ways to solidify the relationship that would have worked better and not felt like it was included only as a requirement for publication success.

Christen (GoldiloxReads and Whimsify) says

Sandy Williams' Shadow Reader series is one of my favorite urban fantasies out there, so when I heard she had an upcoming sci-fi romance I jumped up and down with glee! I was not at all disappointed. Shades of Treason has non-stop action and is riddled with great characters, terrific twists and turns, and a promising romance.

Let's start with the obvious...this is sci-fi. Some of you might lean more toward fantasy and paranormal, as I tend to do. Make no mistake, this is definitely a science fiction story. However, it is not at all overwrought with science-y terms or so futuristic that you can't enjoy the story. Readers who enjoy UF will really be able to get into this story and not get hung up on the science. I was fully engrossed, and there were only a few times that I had to back up and reread to fully understand. A large part of the story takes place on a ship (think outer space, not the sea) and a few of the descriptions of things on this futuristic ship were the only times I found myself really needing to read again.

Now, the characters. This story is told from the alternating POVs of Ashdyn and Rhys Rykus. Ash is the only female "anomaly" to be a part of a loyalty training program that makes her a stronger and better soldier but attaches her mind's loyalty to a commander. She is a bit feisty and bucks against authority, despite her loyalty to the Coalition and her job as a soldier. She is a complex character, balancing logic with impulsiveness, indoctrination with rebelliousness. Sometimes her attitude reminded me of a grown up Rose from Vampire Academy. She wavers back and forth between admirable and infuriating. It's a purposeful waver, as it gives her character a lot of layers. Sometimes you love her and feel for her and sometimes you want to jump through your book and shake her! She has the added challenge of not being able to actually speak about the events that took place on her previous mission, the events that led to her entire team being murdered and her being named a traitor. This challenge causes a lot of the action and conflict in the story that I both loved and bit my nails while reading.

Rhys Rykus is a beloved and decorated Commander in the Coalition's military. He is also the Commander to whom Ash's loyalty is attached. With a certain voice and intent, he can give her a direction that she almost always has to follow. He's the strong and silent type for sure, more action than words. It was good that we got to read from his POV because I don't know that I would have really understood him as well if the entire story had been from Ash's POV. He is constantly having an internal battle with himself about roughly five different things at any given time. One of those battles is over his feelings for Ash...first because everyone thinks she is a traitor and later because he is her Commander. Their romance is sure to be complicated over however many more books we can expect in this series.

The last thing I MUST talk about is all the action in this book! There was something exciting happening nonstop. I tore through this book in a very short period of time, which is reminiscent of Williams' other series. This is why I suggest this book to lovers of UF. Those readers will greatly appreciate all of the action: multiple mysteries, never knowing exactly who to trust, well thought out fight scenes, a kick-ass heroine, etc.

I highly recommend this start to the new Anomaly series! I was totally absorbed in Shades of Treason the entire time I was reading it. I look forward to what happens to Ash and Rykus next!

This review is based on an advance copy of the book, provided by the book tour.

Jo (Mixed Book Bag) says

Shades of Treason is first rate space opera with a slowly building romance woven into the story line. Ash is an anomaly. She is smarter and stronger than the average human. The Coalition wants and needs anomalies to serve as soldiers but it does not trust them. Their solution is to wire their brains with a loyalty training that demands allegiance to the Coalition.

Commander Rhys Rykus is Ash's fair safe, the person who can make her answer questions and follow orders. When Ash is the only survivor of an important mission and she refuses to answer any questions Rhys is called in to get answers.

This is a great premise for the story that follows. Ash is one of those great characters that light up the page. Rhys is an honor bound follow the book officer who always tries to do right. Ash loves to get under Rhys' skin while Rhys is attracted to Ash but does not admit it even to himself.

Ash's silence both hides a big threat to the Coalition and at the same time triggers her loyalty training to protect the Coalition. It looks like Ash is a traitor but Rhys does not believe it. What follows is a tightly written exciting story that kept me reading. This is book one in a series and I can't wait to see what happens

to Ash and Rhys next.

Shari Kay says

3.5ish ★ but rounding up because I immediately wanted to start reading the next book.

Ash is an Anomaly and in hot water. Her beloved military unit has been killed and the Coalition thinks she is responsible. To make matters worse, Ash can't defend herself against the accusations, her mind telepathically locked by the enemy. Any time she tries to explain what happened, she blacks out...or seizes.

Rhys is Ash's 'fail-safe', the Coalition's defense against the insanity that sometimes corrupts an Anomaly turning them into mass murderers. The result is a lethal soldier with a combination of mind control and powerful compulsion manipulating their actions. All anomalies want to please and obey their fail-safes.

When Ash won't talk about the failed mission and the information she holds in encryption...they call in Rhys to force the information out of her.

So, this story had a high level of tension and action. Almost too much. The hopelessness of Ash's predicament is soul-sucking. GF can't catch a break. The situation seems impossible. The romance more so. A relationship between a fail-safe and one of his Anomalies is a huge no-no. The emotional dependency is too great. It'd be unethical as they can literally control their Anomalies with the right tone and command.

Ash and Rhys have always cared about each other more than they should. Neither acting on their feelings...neither even ADMITTING it to themselves, let alone others.

Romantic history:

Rhys was engaged during Ash's cadet training (3 years ago) but his fiancée broke it off before Ash graduated because he was...absent/distant. She thought he was having an affair. (he was not) She shows up again as the doctor in charge of Ash's care. It's obvious Rhys still cares about her but beyond a few lines of remembering how 'passionate' Katie was and checking her out when she first arrives on the ship, you don't feel like he wants her back. We don't know of any other hook-ups he's had, but I assume he did. He was with Katie for 2 years.

Ash is engaged when the book opens, but she doesn't love him. She very flirty/inappropriate with Rhys as a coping mechanism. She tells us she could have and *DID have* most any guy she wanted over the years as she's beautiful. She slept with her fiancée on numerous occasions. No detailed sex scenes with OP for either H/h.

Ash is very badass, but the mind control and booster dependency made her seem weak at times. I wanted her to be able to break the influence on her and it was frustrating when she couldn't.

I liked Rhys from the beginning, but he is very conflicted about his feelings for Ash. He's an honorable man...at least he tries to be. There is a lot of push/pull. A lot of doubting each other. A lot of denial and misunderstandings. He didn't *always* feel like an Alpha and I didn't like how he physically hurt Ash as her commander.

The reason I couldn't give SoT a higher rating even though I DID enjoy the story overall is because the situations felt 'contrived' at times. I didn't always believe how they got from point A to B.

I didn't like Ash's personality for the most part or her decisions. She's just not 'my kind of girl'. She really does have a big heart, is loyal and brave. She is self-sacrificing to the point of martyrdom and we don't always know if it's her...or the brainwashing motivating her actions.

The sexy/romantic moments seemed to come at odds times and the ending was pretty abrupt when it came to the Happily-for-a-Split-Second with a very unsure future. Nothing is really resolved, which is to be expected in a trilogy...still annoying.

Oh, and Rhys ex-fiancee didn't bug me until the very end. She was quite likable until her 'flippant' attitude in regards to the (view spoiler). I got a almost smug/bitter impression from that scene since she knew the truth of his feelings for Ash.

I may wait for the third book to come out to make sure it *does* since it's been 2 years and no publish date has been set.

Sandy Williams says

Yep. Adding this to my to-read list because I cannot freaking wait to be done with these edits. It'll be nice to read the story without having to make any tweaks. :-)
