



Red Phoenix Burning

Larry Bond , Chris Carlson

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North Korea has one of the world's largest standing armies, capable of unleashing a massive arsenal of chemical and nuclear weapons. With an unstable government, under absolute dictator Kim Jong-un, North Korea more closely resembles an organized crime ring than a real nation-state. Millions live on the edge of starvation while Pyongyang's ruthless generals, crooked bureaucrats, and vicious secret police wage a covert war against each other to expand their rival fiefdoms. *Red Phoenix Burning* explores the implosion of this corrupt regime – a coup that triggers a bloody civil war among the North's brutal factions. The world is dragged into a violent and rapidly widening confrontation amid North Korea's shattered ruins, bringing it to the edge of an all-out war that could engulf the entire civilized world.

Fans of the original *Red Phoenix* will be delighted to see favorite characters like Colonel Kevin Little, Brigadier General Tony Christopher, and Colonel Rhee Han-Gil returning to battle, older and wiser, alongside a new cast of heroes and villains. *Red Phoenix Burning* will also offer readers a deeper look behind today's headlines of turmoil and uncertainty—a look made all the more profound by the in-depth knowledge of war, military technology, and geopolitics brought to bear by Larry Bond and his co-author Chris Carlson.

Red Phoenix Burning Details

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Matthieu says

I enjoyed most the classic Larry Bonds. At this time they were really innovative and used an accurate techno-babble.

The story is not bad. We can believe in its roots and it's more or less what we can expect from the end of North Korea. It's just that

- The story is not that interesting as nothing really unexpected happens
- Many characters are really archetypes (the good christian girl, the disabused spy...)
- We are reading a Larry Bond book. We expect detailed military descriptions with up to date tactics and so on. We only get UAV again and again.

The best parts are, as often, the small naval battles.

A major cultural mistake: calling the country "Han" is really not a good idea. Han means something like sorrow, spite, rancor or resentment against oppression... Would you cann your own country like that? Yes it's a typical Korean concept but that's all.

Nigel says

I was somewhat sceptical about this sequel to the original Red Phoenix written some 27 years after the first. How was Bond going to present a second novel involving a Korean war when the first ended in an annihilated North Korea and another peace accord? I am pleased to say as Larry Bond fan that I was pleasantly surprised by the story as it evolved.

The story starts with an event that surprises the world, an attempted assination of Kim and coup in the north. It's not long before three distinct factions emerge the supporters of Kim, the communist party and the army General Staff.

Once the situation in the north disintegrates into chaos, the south decides the time is ripe to force a reunification and invades their northern cousins. Worried about both the prospect of united Korea on its borders and fear that all of Kim's WMDs have not been found and that they may be targets also invade, ostensibly for their security. This triggers clauses in the USA South Korean pact and they send in their own troops to support their southern allies.

With all these various parties involved in fighting over the lands of North Korea how can the situation be bought to a satisfactory end before WMDs are used across large areas and render the county inhospitable.

MARTIN WITHERS says

Top class read.

A terrific story about what could happen in Korea. There are some great battle scenes and a lot of behind the

scenes planning plus believable characters. Brilliant.

Skovrodino says

This is the sequel to *Red Phoenix*, which was one of my favorite books from Larry Bond. I read this one eagerly but although I did enjoy much of it, the book had clearly been written in a hurry so it could have been better-developed and fleshed-out with greater texture.

The book depicts a violent collapse of North Korea; a multi-sided fight is way more interesting than a two-sided fight.

Stuart Dequincy says

A superb sequel

Another brilliant novel set on the Korean peninsula. A must read if you have already read *Red Phoenix*. This one is as exciting as the original but in something of a different fashion. I was especially impressed with the way they conveyed the repressive and claustrophobic atmosphere in North Korea and the vicious nature of its bankrupt political system whilst still impressing one with the sheer achievement of some of the North's vast military facilities. Read it you millstone disappointed

John Wee says

When I first read it a few decades ago; *Red Phoenix* was my first introduction to Larry Bond. It has always been my favorite book he's ever written particularly because I enjoyed the characters he'd created.

Bond has done an excellent job at giving us a picture of seeing what has happened to all of these characters while skillfully creating a realistic scenario given the massive geopolitical changes that have occurred on the Korean Peninsula over the past two decades. Namely- the reality of a conventional conflict between South Korea and North Korea is a laughable idea.

It was an enjoyable read.

Vicky says

For a reviewer of techno-thrillers, I knew eventually I was going to have to review a military techno-thriller series especially since the military thriller, starting with Tom Clancy's *The Hunt for Red October*, gave birth to this genre. So when I was given an opportunity to get a free copy of Larry Bond's newest addition to his *Red Phoenix* series, I had to jump on it like a politician on super PAC money. Larry Bond was a cowriter on Tom Clancy's second novel *Red Storm Rising* which was released in 1986 and was a tremendous success. Bond then went on to write his own novel *Red Phoenix* in 1989 which hit the New York Times best seller list for several months and established Larry Bond's place among the top military thriller authors. Now it is

2016, 27 years later and Bond is releasing a follow-up of *Red Phoenix*, entitled *Red Phoenix Burning*.

Both novels deal with the tensions between North and South Korea. In *Red Phoenix*, the North Koreans take advantage of student uprisings in South Korea and political shenanigans in Washington D.C. to orchestrate a blitz known as operation *Red Phoenix* to unify Korea. Twenty seven years later, North Korea is once again in the limelight in *Red Phoenix Burning*, but this time the North Koreans have an arsenal of nuclear and chemical weapons at their disposal. However, in this go round the North is not attacking the South but instead are attacking themselves as an all-out civil war takes place. Both the US and especially China are quite concerned on what will happen with the North Korean's stockpile of nuclear weapons and who will take control of them.

Thrillers have received the bad rap of being plot driven with poorly developed characters and after reading Larry Bond's *Red Phoenix* series, that distinction now makes perfect sense. In *Red Phoenix*, there are only a handful of characters that have the slightest amount of character development. One of the main characters is Kevin Little, a recent ROTC graduate, and as wet behind the ears as one can be, who is assigned his first commanding role along the DMZ when *Red Phoenix* was implemented. Little is very dependent on his platoon sergeant and Second Lieutenant Rhee Han-Gil, a South Korean to guide him through his assignment. Eventually he becomes good friends with Rhee, as they both share the scars of battle. Another main character is pilot Tony Christopher who develops a romantic relationship with Anne Larson, an army civilian and computer expert. I don't believe romance novelist Nora Roberts will be asking Larry Bond to co-write with her anytime soon. Of course, no military thriller would be complete without at least one badass general which would be General Jack McLaren.

Some of the characters from *Red Phoenix* are making a show in *Red Phoenix Burning*, namely Rhee Han-Gil, who has a significant role as the commander of the Ninth Special Forces 'Ghost' Brigade. Kevin Little and Tony Christopher are there but have a significantly diminished role. There are two new characters, Cho Ho-jin, a North Korean citizen that is a spy for the Russians, and Kary Fowler, who is a missionary in North Korea and is the daughter of Blake Fowler, who played the role as a national security advisor in *Red Phoenix*. Cho and Fowler develop a relationship that I feel is one of the highlights of *Red Phoenix Burning* and shows that Larry Bond may actually know how to develop decent characters.

I found *Red Phoenix* to be a very long book and difficult to get through, without decent characters to rally behind, I found the techno-heavy battle scenes to lack luster which made me wonder why this was such a hit back in the eighties. After doing some research, I found that the military thrillers were very popular back then and was probably as a result of the political climate of the Reagan administration. Reagan help to bolster the military which took a tremendous morale punch after the Vietnam War. A new respect for the military occurred along with a growing conservative movement which I am sure help to drive sales for military thrillers at the time. In the military thriller the American characters just needed to be highly patriotic and outstanding citizens whereas the communist which included the Soviet Union, China, and North Korea where sneaky, conniving, and evil.

A lot has happened in the last 27 years, two gulf wars, 911, ISIS, and a significant economic crash. American attitudes have changed significantly with a growing sense of distrust in our government which is now being reflected in our recent political race. *Red Phoenix Burning* may not get quite the reception that *Red Phoenix* had 27 years ago, but I think that those that enjoy military strategy will find it to be an enjoyable read especially with the latest show by Kim Jong Un. Bond does seem to be trying to reach out to a broader audience by developing better characters and I believe that he does achieve that to a certain extent particularly with the new characters. It would be to an advantage to read *Red Phoenix* before *Red Phoenix Burning* mainly to get a better understanding of some of the main come-back characters. Additionally, Bond

changed history in *Red Phoenix* which has some influence in *Red Phoenix Burning*. Though Bond does maintain recent events that are now happening in the Koreas, he does incorporate some of the events that occurred in *Red Phoenix*. Without knowing this, it may be confusing to those that are history buffs and have a good understanding of the Kim regime in North Korea.

If you are interested in learning more about the Red Phoenix Series check it out on my blog **A-Thrill-A-Week**

Mitchell Valtz says

Red Phoenix:Burning is a worthy successor to the original Red Phoenix. It brings back some of the original main characters from Red Phoenix who are now more developed as military leaders. Red Phoenix:Burning is a book that all readers of the original should enjoy.

Christian D. Orr says

A worthy sequel

"RED PHOENIX BURNING" by Larry Bond

A few of the events and plot elements stretch credulity a bit, but overall, this is an outstanding sequel to the original "Red Phoenix," not to mention eerily timely, given the state of current events. Nice to see the return of familiar characters like now-COL Kevin Little, now-Col. Rhee of the ROK Special Forces, and now-Brig. Gen. Tony "Saint" Christopher, USAF.

If only the DPRK's vile, despicable communist regime were to suffer the well-deserved fate in real life that it does in this novel....

RANDOM STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS (and noteworthy passages):

"He'd make a lousy rancher. You had to like cows and horses to be a good rancher. And he hated cows. And horses. Especially horses." Ouch!

"The striped-pants folks in the US and Korean state departments"

"It was usually the predator you didn't see who pulled you down."

COL Kevin Little now carrying an M9 Beretta and M4A1 as opposed to the M1911 and M16A2 (A1?) he would've been carrying as a brand-new 2LT in the original "Red Phoenix" 28 years ago.....

"Dowa juseyo" = "Please help me."

"Where was the exhilaration, the joy, the sheer fun you experienced when you climbed into a high-performance aircraft and roared skyward? By comparison, a low, klutzy, unfeeling UAV, with a limited field of view, was a very poor substitute."

Wow, 16 August timeline, what a coinkydink!

--p. 44: "Leak investigations were always hell." Again, what a coinkydink!

--p. 64: "There were rumors he'd make general soon, but he was actually happier as a colonel. He'd seen too many energetic leaders promoted and tied to a desk, turning into sedentary lumps with hands." Haha, good one.

--p. 79: Type 66, NK copy of the Makarov pistol--also a 9x18mm, I presume?

--p. 104: Vive Le Throat Punch!!!

Eh, 9x18mm rounds ain't powerful enough to explode a human skull except with contact shots, but hell, why nitpick?

--pp. 105-106: SPOILER ALERT: Hot damn, the son of Major Sik (DPRK SF Commando) from Book #1! But why would one of his superiors show him the secret file on his dad without need-to-know basis??

--p. 114: "Digger" Graves, haha.

--p. 116: "Seonsaengnim?" Same as "san/sama" in Japanese? Ditto for "yang?" "Dongji?"

--p. 122: Aw jeez, another misguided Christian pacifist!

--p. 127: "It was like D-Day and Christmas at once."

--p. 139: "But as long as the U.S. doesn't go north of the thirty-eighth parallel, China can't justify her own intervention."

--p. 140: "...and Pyongyang could join Beirut, Karbala, and Sarajevo in popular memory as urban battlefields."

--p. 143: "Only....women of any age, could be considered true civilians." Sounds awfully complacent; doesn't the KPA allow female soldiers within its ranks?

--p. 147: "ajumma" reserved for mothers and "mature" women; used with younger women, gets your slapped. Haha!

--p. 160: "Soldiers he could trust--politicians, not so much." Ain't THAT an enduring truth!!

--p. 162: "ssi?"

--p. 172: Russian government officials still using "comrade" this many years after the collapse of the Soviet Union?

--p. 209: K5 pistol and K7 rifle? Made by Daewoo?

--p. 211: Saluting in a combat zone when there are still unaccounted-for hostiles out there?

--p. 216: "'gese-kida?'"

--p. 217: "'shipcenchi?'"

--p. 219: "dicker" AKA haggle?

--p. 244: Soju-class missile boats? Just like the infamous alcoholic beverage?

--p. 246: ROK Navy using nautical miles instead of kilometres?

--p. 264: "oppa" = big brother/generalised term of endearment

--p. 269: "Federal agencies had piled onto his operation like he was giving away toasters" Haha

--p. 274: "dongmu" = Comrade

--p. 279: "Snipers were for sissies." Oh snap, haha!

--p. 303: "halmeoni" = grandmother

Generalised question: So, when Col. Rhee is addressing his ROK subordinates in COL Kevin Little's presence, is he doing so in English or Korean? The author is unclear on this.

--p. 335: Haha, a self-deprecating "Ugly American" reference!

--p. 336: Ooh, and a de-Baathification reference, ouch!!

--p. 347: "nappeun nom?"

--p. 360: Ugh, shit, Flankers.

--p. 380: USS Gabrielle Giffords, meh.

--p. 381: "Any similarity to science fiction starships probably came from similar design goals. Probably." As Spock would say, "Fascinating."

--p. 389: the ship's own Skipper not cleared for the signals intercept van??? WTF, over!?

--p. 394: Shit, Guam, how timely. ??

--pp. 419-420: "kut = Korean cleansing ceremony

--p. 428: "'It's best not to hunt duck hunters with ducks.'"

--p. 433: Typo; should be Kunsan, not "Kusan" [sic].

--p. 438: The 1st Shirt himself doing the hands-on tinkering on a plane?? Highly irregular, unless the unit is that desperate for manpower.

--p. 442: Ginger gum an anti-motion sickness tool?

--p. 444: Air Battle Manager reference!

--p. 456: "'Bogey'".....or HOSTILE??

Dev Purkayastha says

An ok book

It is relatively well-written. But the plot does not move fast. Good for a lazy afternoon. The romantic sub-plot is a redeeming feature.

Gregory C. says

Too long but a fun read

Way longer than it needed to be. But a fun read. A bit dated now. Never thought I'd say this but too much military detail and a bit weak on story

Pieter D says

This was a strong continuation of the previous novel Red Phoenix. Setting is 20 odd years later with many of the previous characters. It was well believable, with DPRK imploding into all out war with the demise of Kim Jong-un. Very strong character building without having to read the original. Beautifully laid out Timeline wise and pertinent with today's building tensions due to the "Donald" and the Kim.....both with bad hair and egos....

Scott Parsons says

After scanning the first chapter I initially set this novel aside. The list of military characters in North Korea, South Korea, the US military and China given at the front of the book turned me off. But after a period of weeks I received a notice from the publisher wondering whether I had reviewed it. I decided to give it another try (my copy was provided via NetGalley). I'm glad I did because once I got a few chapters in I became engrossed by this novel.

It is initially set in North Korea and involves a coup against the regime of Kim Sung Un by a segment of his army. Kim survives the first attempt on his life but is soon killed in a second strike. A civil war ensues in North Korea among three factions: Kim supporters, the Army Staff segment and a portion of the military aligned with the Korean Workers Party. The country is paralyzed by the warfare. Nuclear and chemical weapons remain under the control of the Kim faction.

The South Korean government decides to take advantage of the chaos as an opportunity to unify the two Koreas. The US military forces stationed in South Korea are ordered not to cross the border but to provide backup to the South Korean forces by taking over some of the tasks they normally performed. As North Korea crumbles northern civilians begin to flee south and seek asylum in the South.

The head of the Army Staff wing becomes concerned that the Chinese will intervene to seize some Korean territory so he forges an alliance with the Party faction and proposes that they negotiate a deal with the invading South Koreans to take out the Kim supporters and seize control of the hidden weapons. Meanwhile China sends some forces across the northern border. Following US-China negotiations, the combined anti-Kim North Korean forces join with the South Koreans to flush out the Kim supporters and thwart their attempt to wreak destruction with the nuclear and chemical weapons.

The story ends with a unified Korea. If you like military techno thrillers you will enjoy this novel.

Bookbear says

3.5 stars maybe. Good read, but just not the page turner the first book has been.

Greg Dunlap says

Great followup

Good followup.to.Red Phoenix. Kept me turning the pages to see what's next throughout. Recommend for anyone wanting a good action read.
