

## LoveReading Reader reviews of Eagles At War by Ben Kane

Below are the complete reviews, written by LoveReading members.

**Jo-anne Atkinson**

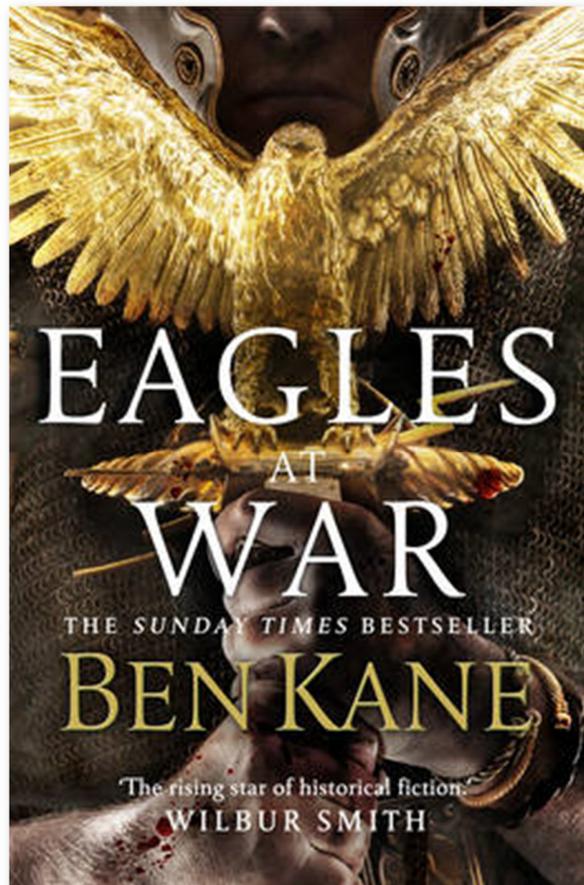
***Meticulously detailed and researched but with a relentless narrative this is top historical fiction.***

*The Roman army was not invincible and the impact on history of the defeat at the battle of the Teutoborg forest in AD9 is huge. In this book Ben Kane writes a fictional account of the events leading up to the battle and of the loss of three legions in the mud of Germany.*

*The leader of the tribes was a naturalized Roman called Arminius, a member of the Cherusci tribe who had risen high in the ranks of the Roman military, but who betrayed his former colleagues and planned an ambush with devastating precision. Kane's key figure is that of Tullus, an experienced Roman centurion who leads his men from the front but with humanity as well as. Tullus is a fictional character but many of those he interacts with are known in history.*

*Kane has very obviously researched this book in great detail. His confident knowledge and use of roman terminology is augmented by a glossary so that narrative is not slowed by endless explanations of vocabulary. His knowledge of the movements of the army and the terrain is clear and his descriptions of the battle are bloody and visceral.*

*This is top notch historical fiction, melding research, passion and quality*



*storytelling.*

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### **Pam Kennedy**

***Loved this book. I feel like I have been on a marathon. Fantastic writing, must read more of his books.***

*I love history especially Roman and Greek. I feel as though I have been through it all with characters. **Only twice in my life have I been affected in the way that this book affected me. At the end my heart was racing** because I wanted to know if Tullus and his men and the dog survived. Tullus was not a real Roman but I believe he was typical of a Roman Centurion in the real Roman Army. The writing is fast flowing and fabulous if I have any criticism it is the pronunciation of the Roman words, because I am one of those sad people who like to try and pronounce all the foreign words but that is my fault. Thank you to Ben Kane for a super super book.*

### **Mary Gibson**

*'Eagles at War' by Ben Kane is a historical novel based on a true story, the Varian disaster of AD 9. Rome has extended its empire to Germany, building forts and converting some native Germans to Rome. Two men, Tullus, a veteran centurion and Arminius, a German warrior turned Roman citizen are at the heart of this story and are strong protagonists. Arminius plans an ambush by secretly uniting several German tribes. By doing so three German legions were wiped out. The battle of the Teutoberg Forest in September AD 9 was a bloody massacre and Rome would never attempt again to conquer Germany.*

*My only criticism of this novel is I would have liked a list of characters with the glossary at the beginning. **Whilst not the sort of novel I normally read, I was drawn into the narrative by the author's impeccable research.***

### **Angie Rhodes**

*Based on real events, Ben Kane has managed to entwine fact with fiction, for his new Trilogy.*

*They tell of the massacre of three Roman Legions in the Forest of Teutoburg, three men vying for leadership, and the three Imperial Eagles lost...*

***In chilling detail, the story unfolds, plenty of battles, double crossing and friendship, keeps the reader turning the pages,***

*There is a wonderful glossary at the back of the book, for the unknown words, which is a great help,*

*I am now looking forward to reading the next books, in this great historical saga.*

### **Cherrill Deans**

#### ***Hot and cold revenge – a book about betrayal.***

*This is a book about a man called Arminius, a very charismatic, charming man who spends 25 years building a life of deceit. “Grooming” we might call it now.*

*The setting is Germany, east of the Rhine, in the time of the rule of Rome. Arminius’s father makes sure his 7 year old son knows where his allegiance lies. He makes sure the boy understands who his tribe’s enemies are, and how to hate them.*

*We meet Arminius again as a grown man, as a distinguished high ranking career soldier. He’s risen to the rank of equestrian in the Roman army.*

*What follows is the story of what really happened in Germania in 12BC, and even though this is a work of historical fiction and many of the characters are the invention of the author, many were real people and the battle of the Teutoberg Forest really happened.*

*That such cold revenge could grow inside a man even after he made so many friends over so many years, is astonishing.*

*That he should wreak this revenge in battles that wiped out one tenth of the Roman legionaries with the help of the Germanic tribes he persuaded to side with him against Rome and its punitive taxes almost beggars belief.*

***This is a big story, very well told, and I loved it.***

### **Jennifer Merville**

*The story starts off with Ermin of the Cherusci being taken as a young boy by his father to a forest to witness the murder of Roman Soldiers. Ermin and his kin are sworn enemies of the Romans and will do anything in their power to stop them taking over their village and their people.*

*Ermin as he grows into a young man changes his name and joins the Roman legions in order to find out their weak spots and inform his own people of their whereabouts and activities in order to give them the upper hand.*

*The book is about following Ermin and the life he leads in the Roman army and yet how he remains loyal to his family and his people.*

*Through battles and the toll of every life and struggles it shows how people can pledge allegiance and keep it through to eternity*

***The language and the fabulous descriptions in the book has given the author the right to draw you into the book and the story and keep you on your toes as to who lives, who dies and who trusts whom.***

***A book to get your teeth into.***

**Carolyn Huckfield**

***I enjoyed sharing this adventure, actually based around real events. The story is fast paced and it is very violent in parts because you are with an army fighting barbarians.***

*Ben Kane has already built up a following with books about Hannibal. Spartacus. Forgotten legions trilogy and Eagles of War is first of his new trilogy.*

*We meet Arminius first. He is a German who serves in the Roman legions. However the prologue to this story when he is a child is atmospheric and magical but turns to revenge against Roman prisoners. It is no surprise that Arminius follows his fathers' wishes and plots against the legions from within. He causes the worst defeat the Roman Army has ever suffered and the loss of three Imperial eagles. The recapture of these eagles will be the basis of the rest of this new trilogy. Lucius Tullus is a Roman centurion who manages to rally his troops to escape and even fight a rear guard action. I am sure we will meet him again in the later part of the trilogy.*

*This is not my usual choice of read but I really enjoyed sharing this adventure, actually based around real events. The story is fast paced and you share the fear of Tullis's Roman troops as they battle to survive. It is very violent in parts because you are with an army fighting what they consider to be barbarians.*

*Maybe they are barbarians and terrorists or maybe they are tribes uniting against what they consider to be an army of occupation. Make up your own mind.*

## **Helen Jones**

***This is the first book I have read by Ben Kane and I certainly want to read more.*** It is superb military historical fiction about the defeat of the mighty Roman army at the battle of Teutoburg Forest. The two main characters are utterly believable Tullus the Roman Centurion and Arminius the Chieftain. It was interesting to read about and understand both sides of the story.

*The main themes are:*

*A Time for Vengeance the uprising planning and attack by the German tribes against the oppressive yolk of the hated Roman conquerors.*

*A Time for War Arminius' plan to catch the Romans unaware, Tullus' is not believed when he senses that an ambush is planned.*

*A Time to die the horror and massacre of the battle with the terrible toll on their army and the loss of three eagle standards.*

*A truly memorable book and I can't wait for the second instalment.*

## **Rebecca Cockeram**

***Exciting and interesting novel.***

*I enjoyed this book thoroughly.*

*It's an exciting and enthralling story of revenge and draws you in.*

*I must admit that on occasion I did struggle and had long periods without reading and had to force myself to pick it up but every time I did I wasn't disappointed*

*A very good read*

## **Maggie Patterson**

***The excellent first book of a trilogy. I can't wait to get my hands on the next one.***

*'Eagles at War' is not only a meticulously researched historical drama telling the story of the battle of the Teutoberg Forest, but also a gritty, gory, realistic story that I couldn't put down. Its battle scenes are not for the faint of heart, and that is one of the reasons it was so excellent; I really felt like I was there*

*seeing or fighting in these horrific scenes.*

*It is also full of interesting characters, and I was really conflicted because I loved—and hated—characters on both sides of the conflict. My only complaint was really that all of the women in this story exist to be rape or murder victims, which in turn motivates the men in the story to seek revenge. That's an overused way to write female characters; hopefully the girl mentioned in the last few pages will exist in the next book as something more than a plot device.*

*This is the first of a trilogy and I will be eagerly awaiting the second installment!*

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