



Water Viper

R.J. Blain

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During Starfall, magic flooded the Earth and destroyed most technology while humans developed strange new powers. As the scion of a male-dominated clan, Jesse should have risen to become a hero.

She chose to become a woman instead, ruining her hopes for the future.

Years later, weary of life as an assassin, she retires to enjoy raising horses and delivering messages. When her plans fall apart, she has one final chance to set everything right. Should she fail to redeem herself, she'll lose everything she's ever held dear, including her friends, her family, and her life.

Water Viper Details

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From Reader Review Water Viper for online ebook

Josephine says

Like many of Blain's works, it reads like multiple books rolled into one volume. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it does mean that the book deviates from the traditional climax story structure, which may throw some readers off. Personally, I don't mind getting a little more story than I was expecting and I always enjoy Blain's characters.

Amy Venosky says

A great read

This story is something I usually don't read. Post apocalyptic world stories never have interested me, but this book is a truly great read! The characters by play and the evolution of the main female character is awesome! To have such a strong female lead is amazing! I can't wait for the second book!

Marsha says

Water Viper by R.J. Blain

This is the toughest review I have had to write so far this year. It maybe should have been 3 stars because of what I don't like, but what I do like, I like strongly enough to add the extra star.

What I like: This is a long book, really long, but it stays consistent and it tugged me along for the ride. I love the plot and all of the characters. It created a new world and stayed true to it throughout. The descriptions were spot on every time and maintained vivid images for me.

What I didn't love: There are some pretty glaring editing errors, but given the overall size of this book, the ratio is pretty small. Mostly it was not too difficult to fill in the blanks. But what I really, really didn't love was the ending. And here is the spoiler, so stop reading now. I happily followed Jesse through this entire journey and stayed solidly behind her the entire way...until the end. As a book 1, I expected a cliff hanger. I did not get a cliff hanger. I don't feel like I received an ending at all. It feels like a "deadline reached, lets stop now" thing where every single one of the threads unraveled. There was zero sense of anything. Jesse melted at the end, but didn't follow any of the predetermined patterns. I get it, she is a new shifter so a lot changed in a hurry. But I didn't get a sense that any of the basic premise of the book had been met. A solid foundation appeared to have been built only to drop off drastically at the end.

Now, because I loved the things that I loved, I will probably attempt to read the next in the series if/when it becomes available, but I am definitely going to need more answers. I unfortunately have no real desire to read more from this author as I feel cheated by this book.

Drew Shiel says

A peculiarly rambling book in a very peculiar setting. I didn't dislike it, per se, but I couldn't in all honesty

recommend it to anyone. It's vaguely like Laurel K. Hamilton fanfic, with a protagonist who is saved from Mary-Sue-ness only by lacking violet eyes. She turns out to be advantageously special at every turn in a world where there are five or six ways to measure that. So... probably not one to chase down.

William Howe says

Unique and fun

Several interesting ideas wrapped around standard romance tropes. A couple of really great lines, but overall a bit too long. It's really a short story and two novels all bound together. It made some of the banter feel repetitive. There were also a few continuity grey areas. Better editing would help.

I would love to read another in this universe. I'd pay full price without flinching.

Jennifer says

The world-building in this story is so well done. The author eases us into it as if it is something we already know rather than dumping it as a one-off prologue. It is constantly reinforced throughout the novel so that the locations seem like characters. I love the characters although we get far more on Jesse with mostly comedy from everyone else. While on the subject, the humor was great. I have a love/hate relationship with Jesse. She is sometimes so obstinate as to make her completely unlikable. I think you can only use the "tiger-temper" reasoning so far. Jesse does often redeem herself though...but she is walking a thin line with me. One thing about this story shocked me and it was the 6-year time lapse. The story was moving so well and then, bang, she ran. That wasn't surprising as she had already admitted to being a runner but where did a 6-year gap come from? I get that the courier service really moved the plot forward but it was so jarring. I am super excited to follow-up on these characters. I loved this book (especially the horses)!

Debbie says

This is definitely one of the best stories I've read in a very long time. It was BIG...very, very big. I'd go so far as to call it a "sweeping epic". There was a lot of chaos and mayhem fit into one book. I cannot imagine where it will go in a second book, but I'm glad there will be another book coming. Naturally, with such a big story, there was a lot of world-building. The world itself wasn't entirely unique. In some ways, it was very similar to the world of Ilona Andrews' Kate Daniels series. To be fair, there were some portions of the story that I didn't follow or that I felt didn't hold together, but still, I couldn't stop until I got to the end.

Virginia says

Wow, amazing book to read!

This book is exceptional and I will most definitely be watching for more books by RJ Blain. The way the characters grew with the storyline was awesome and I particularly enjoyed that Jesse wasn't a meek little pet,

she has claws and knows how to use them. I cannot wait to see what happens next!

Paranormal Books R Us says

Amazing! The detail put into creating the characters was incredible and I especially enjoyed being able to see Jesse change and adapt over large chunks of time. It was almost like being there to watch her grow up. As I've come to expect from this author there was plenty of humor to go with all the butt kicking and a whole lot of crazy thrown in for good measure. Also as usual with Blain's books it sucked me in and I can't wait to see what happens next. I think its safe to say I loved Water Viper and I definitely recommend it.

C.M. Skiera says

A cataclysmic event sets the stage for a reinvented North America where combustion engines and electricity no longer function. Within this world, chronic loner Jesse Alexander struggles to find her place. The teenage assassin approaches her twenties with a plethora of problems to deal with--not least of which is the type of animal she'll eventually shift into.

Filled with a cast of characters who embrace their animal halves, growling and biting as often as not, Water Viper is full of action with a complex plot. I enjoyed unraveling the mysteries of Jesse's past and tagging along as she barrels head-first into a tangled web of deceit and danger. I found the world setting unique and creative, blending magic into a post-apocalyptic world with touches of steampunk and the wild west to boot.

Hildegard says

Enjoyable

I have read all of RJ Blaine books, enjoying some more than others. I love the "Requiem for the Rift King" series, with its one-armed hero, and almost sentient horses. Didn't care as much for "Playing with Fire" (I guess I do have a limit as to how much snark I enjoy in a heroine). Water Viper is closer to the Rift King in style, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The only reason I didn't give it give stars, is the missing words and a few other things that slipped by the proofreaders.

Caitlin O'Connor says

Starfall changed everything, leaving some cities in ruins while survivors in others developed magical abilities. Jesse Alexander, once the pride of her clan, ran away after accidentally choosing to become a woman and is now a respected bodyguard who moonlights as the infamous assassin, Water Viper. A fateful encounter in a sinking Miami leaves her with a pulsing Starfall stone that could burst at any moment and a high bounty on her head. With herself, her secrets, and her friends in danger, Jesse skips town and

disappears, retiring to raise horses and work as a courier. A promise forces her to return to her erstwhile home in Charlotte and Jesse finds herself at the centre of a dangerous situation. This could be her chance to right all the wrongs of her past, if she survives.

The post-Starfall world RJ Blain has created is realistic, exciting, and populated with memorable characters. It's always refreshing to encounter a post-apocalyptic style setting where the government hasn't fallen apart. The prose is direct and evokes vivid descriptions with a minimum of exposition. In general, I avoid books involving shifters, but *Water Viper* is one of the few that incorporates them while maintaining a balanced plot and allowing the characters to retain their higher thinking processes. There's a trick to creating strong female characters and Blain has mastered it. Jesse strikes the perfect balance between physical strength, skill, and vulnerability. *Water Viper* is the most enjoyable book I've read this year, and the latest addition to my list of favourites.

(Reviewed for Reader's Favorite)

Laura says

4.5 STARS!

At first the length of this book intimidated me, but it was such a fun read!! The world building was sooooo interesting and I liked Jesse. Yes she can be a bit cocky at times, but she's funny, confident, witty and has a taste for trouble. Her refreshing disposition really carries the book and I love each relationship she has with the characters. ESPECIALLY her love interest— it's funny and I can't wait to see where they go.

This book can be broken up into parts because it's so long and I think I enjoyed her post-shift story arch more so than her pre-shift line because I just rly enjoyed her arguments with Nate! The book actually didn't seem too long and I'm glad that it wasn't one of those instant love kind of books where by pg 100 they fall in love and by the end of the book they're married. Can't wait to read the next book!

Sandra says

3.5 stars Good story and characters but it was too long. The same story could still have been told without quite so many things happening. And whilst i enjoyed each of the events and interactions in their own right there were just too many of them for best readability and absolutely nothing would have been lost by substantially reducing them. Also given how freaking long the story was having no resolution or progression with the romance was frustrating in the extreme. Especially when it is clear they are into each other and there are no impediments to their relationship. That being said overall it was still a good fun UF read with a pretty kickass heroine.

Jeannie Zelos says

Water Viper ,(Jesse Alexander 1), R.J. Blain

Review from Jeannie Zelos book reviews

Genre: Sci-fi and Fantasy

My first novel by this author, got it as part of some free book offer, I'd read the amazon sample and wanted to read more. Sadly I didn't note exactly how I came by this book, just found I'd filed it in the review collection....

Its a long book at almost 500 pages, and usually I love long books but TBH at times this felt a bit Padded, a little too much Filler and – heresy for me saying this – I think if it had been a little more succinct it would have been better for me.

There were story-lines which looking back the day after finishing I can't recall what was their purpose, nor what the resolution was in some of them. I'm thinking here of who was behind the second bounty/kidnapping attempt, the one where Henry and Anatoly find her? There are other parts too which were funny the first and second times but after a while....they got old. Its frustrating reading plots and then finding they don't actually add anything to the story.

I didn't see how on earth, even cleverly disguised, she thought she was still getting away with fooling everyone about who she really is/was when she was day to day living with people who she classed as friends, who knew her very well.

Set against those moans though was some subtle humour, some terrific characters, and a really interesting new world post Starfall, with a good mix of paranormal creatures. Sometimes the shifter/magic types stories feel like I'm reading the same ones but with minor plot changes and new names. This was very unusual and I really liked it.

Overall, even with my caveats, I really enjoyed the story, and would be happy to read more Jesse Alexander stories, or other characters set in this world. I think it has a lot of potential, and is an interesting take on a genre that can get tired from all the stories set in it.

Stars: Four, an interesting read, one I really enjoyed but which dragged at times, losing it a star.
