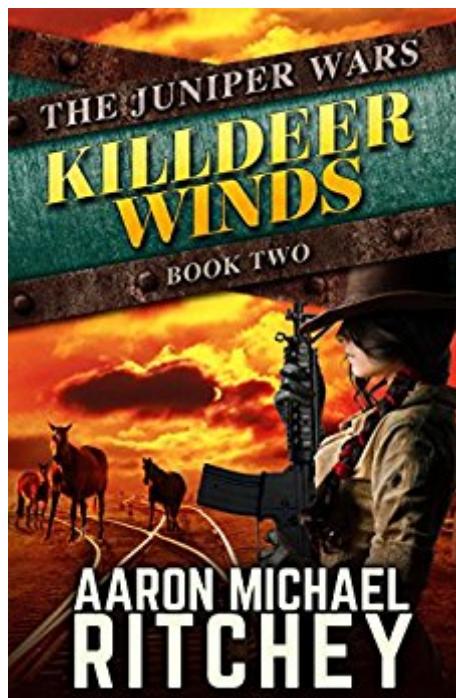


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# Killdeer Winds (The Juniper Wars Book 2)



## **Synopsis**

It is the year 2058. The Sino-American War has decimated several generations of men, and the Sterility Epidemic has made 90% of the surviving males sterile. Electricity does not function in five western states. Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, and Montana are territories once again. Collectively, they are known as the Juniper. It is the most dangerous place on Earth. Cavatica Weller and her sisters have one chance to save their family ranch--a desperate post-apocalyptic cattle drive across a violent wasteland. Having escaped from Denver, the Weller family will have to face the worst of the Juniper's outlaws, the Psycho Princess. And still an inhuman army dogs their every step. The mystery deepens--who is the lost boy Micaiah and why would the richest man on earth spend billions to find? And will Micaiah's secrets tear the Weller family apart?

## **Book Information**

File Size: 1281 KB

Print Length: 255 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: WordFire Press (September 5, 2016)

Publication Date: September 5, 2016

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01L2ID3OS

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #450,065 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #80 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Literature & Fiction > Westerns #102 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Westerns #151 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction > Steampunk

## **Customer Reviews**

If you stumbled on this one first, know that it is the second in the series. You can tell, 'cause it says

"Book Two" on that there cover. If you read the first, and are still on the fence about whether you should spring for the second, just know this is more of the same. Same explosive action, same immersive voice, same undefined, but definitely not traditional spirituality. Loads of reveals, and loads more loose ends to ensure the series drives on. Still not quite a perfect book, but has enough hits to justify reading, and the misses aren't so bad you can't forgive them.

You're a cruel author, Aaron Michael Ritchey. You're cruel to those poor Weller girls, and you've cost me several hours' sleep. I loved the book, even so. We learn more about Cavatica and her sisters, and how they do love each other in spite of all their fighting. Even Wren becomes more of a person, and she's a tough character to like. We see the dangers to them, and to Micaiah, get even worse than they already were--and they were already dire. We learn quite a lot more about Micaiah. Heh. Go read it; I don't do spoilers. If you haven't already read "Dandelion Iron" the I strongly recommend you do that before starting this one. Ritchey's world building is solid, intricate stuff, and though he refreshes our memories nicely in book 2, you really need to have read book 1 first so that you understand the limitations that bind our characters, and why it's so important to get those cattle across the wild lands of the Juniper that people are willing to risk death to do so. The struggle to get the cattle through the Juniper is one thing that makes this book different from the usual quest novel. Not all of our band of adventurers are dedicated to The Cause; some are just hired hands, and understandably reluctant to get killed on its behalf. The logistics of getting the herd through many miles of land where their food and water must be supplied by dirigible are a welcome comic relief at times. And oh, I loved the Wind River people and their single-rider zeppelins. I'd like to have seen more of them. The Madelines are a prom nightmare gone metastatic. As for the Vixx sisters, and the Regios, all I can say is that Ritchey has enough villains for several series in here. Somehow, it never feels crowded; maybe that's the effect of all those empty places. Read it. Just don't pick it up when you have to get somewhere next morning.

KILLDEER WINDS nearly kill-deer-ed my soul. The second book in Aaron Michael Ritchey's JUNIPER WARS series punched me in the gut. I still haven't forgiven Mr. Ritchey for the h-e-double-hockey-sticks he put me and his characters through, yet I'm anxious for the next book. KILLDEER WINDS picks up right where DANDELION IRON left off. Our heroine and her pals face the Cuius Regios, but they're the least of the characters' woes. In this story, we learn more about the mysterious Micaiah and why his evil aunts (and the rest of the dang universe) are

after him. We see Cavy Weller stepping up as a total bad@\$. Pilate reveals some shocking secrets. And there's a tragedy. Lots of tragedy to make your heart clench. Suffice it to say, where DANDELION IRON set the stage for the Weller girls herding thousands of cattle across the Juniper against all odds, KILLDEER WINDS throws even more tumbleweeds into the fire with the appearance of the Psycho Princesses, aka the Madelines, an increased surge of attacks from the Vixx sisters, the appearance of the elusive Wind River People, and a bitter clash among family members. Readers finally learn some key information about the Sterility Epidemic, and it's a doozy. Like, BOOM-doozy! Our favorite characters shine even more brightly than they did in the first book. Pilate hasn't changed a bit: "I whispered a prayer for Pilate. I could picture Jesus scratching His head. "Did someone really pray for Pilate? Gee, that's a new one." And neither has Wren: "She turned and threw a sleeping bag at me. That was Wren, always throwing stuff" curses, words, sticks, machine guns. "Okay, maybe Wren did change, but she's still the same crotchety, mouthy Wren with a few upgrades, and I love her. :)" Mr. Ritchey also deals with important issues along the way that strike a chord with adult and young adult readers alike. The ever-present topic of female empowerment is handled respectfully and subtly. In addition to being physically strong, the cast of predominantly female characters is also painted in brilliant hues that highlight their intelligence and ability to think quickly on their feet. Gender equality isn't directly addressed, but it is shown through strategically placed lenses in appropriate contexts throughout the story. I love how Mr. Ritchey turns sexism on its head by portraying the males in his world in much the same way as females are often depicted in the real world. It certainly gives the reader something to think about and challenges us to see sexism for what it is. Post-Traumatic Stress is also addressed through the eyes of a couple main characters who are portrayed as strong and determined fighters battling internal struggles that can't always be seen on the outside. Mental health is a hard subject to tackle, but Mr. Ritchey deals with it respectfully and realistically in KILLDEER WINDS. I felt the characters' regrets and guilt over tough things they had to do to keep each other and their country safe. The bombshells dropped near the end of KILLDEER WINDS had my heart racing and kept the pages turning. I couldn't put the book down, especially once I got to the last few chapters. I eagerly await the next book in the JUNIPER WARS series, BINDWEED HIGHWAY. If you haven't read DANDELION IRON, I highly recommend it along with KILLDEER WINDS. These books totally rocked my world!

Prolly the best book I read this year. I have always loved westerns, and also science fiction, and this is the best of both. The first book was so good, I expected to be disappointed by the second, but I was wrong. The future world of the Juniper that Mr. Ritchey has created seems so rich, I almost wish I could live there (except for the lack of technology, plumbing, and prolly toilet paper, which is key for me). The characters came alive, even more so than in the first book, and many questions were answered. SPOILIER ALERT ----- I absolutely loved the train heist, I prolly the best one in any western ever. Great book, can't wait for the next one to come out!!!

Read both books, this one being the 2nd in Ritchey's series of the Juniper Wars. He has quite an imagination, and keeps one interested to keep moving on thru the book.

"Prolly" even BETTER than Volume 1 ...HIGHLY RECOMMEND ... Is there a Volume 3, please!?!?

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