

A book Review by Nancy Kvorka

Survival Instinct is Book 1 of the Cerberus Tactical K9 books by Fiona Quinn. The main characters in this book are a Search and Rescue (SAR) GSD K9 named Valor, her handler, Harrison "Tripwire" Williams, an ex-SEAL now part of the search and rescue group, Major Dani Adams, a military surgeon-veterinarian stationed in Afghanistan home on a leave to attend a co-worker's funeral (Lei Ming), another co-worker also attending the funeral (Tiana), and extreme weather.

Themes explored in the book are canine-human partnership as demonstrated by successful SAR work, love, and grief.

Lei Ming asked her co-workers Dani and Tiana to do a pilgrimage in her honor to the West Virginia Hills if she died in Afghanistan. Lei Ming passed away in Afghanistan and Dani and Tiana came to West Virginia to fulfill her request.

A side story was the successful rescue of a Hollywood star and her crew out in the West Virginia Hills taking pictures to post online in the same storm. Other members of the SAR group rescued them.

One of the plot lines I enjoyed most in this book is that the book demonstrates how a GSD, her handler and the subject being rescued; (Valor, Tripwire, and Dani) worked together through the storms to make their way back to the basecamp (lodge) where they were staying; along with safely rescuing Tiana.

All the separate stories came together in an enjoyable read. I learned about the SAR team and dogs working together and with the public. I appreciated the insight regarding active-duty veterinarians in a war zone. I also appreciated the impact the severe weather had on the story and how the characters dealt with it. Everyone had a job to do in the book. Teamwork was critical.

Fiona Quinn is an author of many books on working dogs and their handlers. I know I will read more of her books. I recommend all of you do too.

