

Raptor's Revenge

Jim Malloy

XlibrisUS (Dec 8, 2008)

Hardcover \$36.99 (516pp)

978-1-66419-759-6

Raptor's Revenge is a thrilling tale of revenge and romance set on the high seas.

In Jim Malloy's fantasy novel *Raptor's Revenge*, a boy with vengeance on his mind sets out to become a legendary pirate.

In England in the late Middle Ages, violence reigns supreme, especially for those on the edges of society. Jamey is just a teenager when his family is murdered, with a ring left behind as a clue. Jamey pursues the owner of the ring for a decade. In the process, he adopts a pirate's persona, calling himself El Raptor. He hears that the man responsible for his family's murder is in Jamaica, but on his way there, he is waylaid by a distracting romance.

Jamey, driven to find and destroy those responsible for his trauma, is a focused lead whose singular interests result in dangerous living. Though he begins the story as a naïve boy, he becomes a feared pirate through a fascinating process of self-formation that highlights the cyclical nature of revenge. He, too, leaves damage in his wake. However, flashbacks to his happy life with his parents make him sympathetic in his quest, during which tension is sustained throughout.

The novel includes historical and cultural details in a seamless manner, incorporating information about the differences between the lives of royalty and those in the working classes, for example, as well as about life on board a ship. Further, as Jamey travels, he is made privy to new languages whose words are incorporated in the text. People speak in a clipped manner, too—particularly the book's pirates. Such references are immersive, so that by the time the book arrives at action sequences in which Jamey's life is at stake, investment is ensured.

When the novel's focus is on Jamey's quest, its pacing is methodical. However, uneventful periods in his long tale are passed over without comment. Because information takes awhile to travel to him, he is left waiting for the next step in his plan to unfold. Some such periods, though lengthy, are referenced in the span of a few sentences. But Jamey persists despite such lags, determined to confront those responsible for his family's murder. An explosive sequence near the end results in some satisfaction—as well as some personal growth on the part of the book's hero.

Followed by a tidy epilogue that ties up its secondary cast's stories, *Raptor's Revenge* is an often thrilling tale of revenge and romance set on the high seas.

JOHN M. MURRAY (March 28, 2022)

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