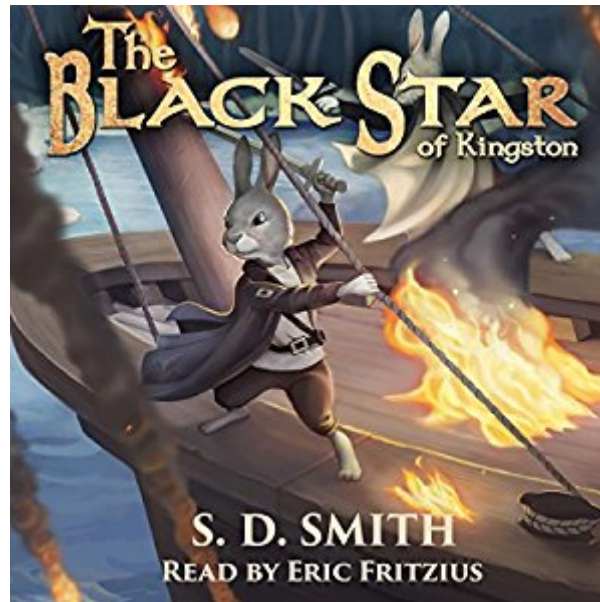




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The Black Star Of Kingston



Synopsis

A century before Heather and Picket's adventures in *The Green Ember*, a displaced community fights for hope on the ragged edge of survival. My place beside you My blood for yours Till The Green Ember rises Or the end of the world. Whitson Mariner and Fleck Blackstar face old fears and new enemies, forging a legend that will echo through the ages. Old wars haunt. New enemies threaten. An oath is born. A hero rises.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am going to venture to guess that Chesterton would have liked this book. Not because it is the most well written book. Not because it is the most artistic book. Not even that it is the best book of his offerings. But Chesterton and his wife Frances would have loved how much this book loves children and the fiction that feeds their souls. S.D. Smith is remarkable. He is not the most complex, elegant or flashy writer I have loved but he has to be one of the most humble and honest storytellers I have come across. His writing style is beautiful. I see much CS Lewis in his writing. His stories come from a love of his audience and a skill honed by the classic authors who nourished his soul. And this absolutely works. This is a story which bears the hallmarks of a love of Middle Earth but not the same intention or mission. I think that the Lord sent JRR Tolkien into his time and place to create Middle Earth to answer the need of that time. To inspire the readers of post-war Europe who were complicit in the eradication of the Shire and the values that dwelled there. In SD Smith's books we see a related but different passion. His stories speak to the hearts of those of us who are watching

the culture crash into our values and rage against the virtue of our children. His stories are told from a more tender point of view and therefore take up residence in the moral imagination of the children of this era and inspire them to love what is lovely, good and beautiful. Black Star is smaller/shorter than The Green Ember and has a different feel. It is less developed than the Green Ember and the characters are not quite as well drawn. That said, the story arc is really engaging and very powerful. This is, without a doubt, the kind of book which will support the good we are trying to do in our homes. It is the kind of story which lives in the imagination and continues to whisper truth to the readers long after the book has been returned to the shelf. Bravo, Mr. Smith. Bravo and many thanks.

We were so excited to get our hands on this prequel (actually historical sub-story) to The Green Ember, and it exceeded expectations once again. The interweaving story lines and background story adds value to reading the Green Ember, and leaves me even more eager to read the rest of the series. Although it is a physically smaller text, it is no less relevant and power-packed in terms of the intense moral struggle, and ultimate victory of the good. S.D. Smith, please keep writing!

My 5 and 8-yr-old girls loved this book! It had a few too many "big" words for my 8-yr-old (who reads at 4th grade level), and because she struggled a bit, I decided to read it aloud for us. It was hard to put down! We read "Green Ember" first because it was written first, but in hindsight, I wish we would have read this one first...since it is, afterall, the prequel.

Whitson Mariner is the king of the displaced rabbits of the Golden Coast. They are now living near Ayman Lake in the lands called Natalia and time has moved on. Whitson, married to Lillie, has a son called Prince Lander. Lord Grimble is causing trouble, wanting to clear-cut one of the glades for winter fuel against Whitson's orders. Why the discord? Jealousy! Lord Grimble wanted to be king. It is time to share a secret with Lander and give him a gift. Fleck, son of a coal miner, is now out of a job and feeling uneasy not only wondering what is in the mountains across the lake but also realizing that the rabbits need coal for heat. Fleck's father, Blackstar, had given his life to allow the younger rabbits to escape after the invasion. Now with his father's coat, Fleck, after an audience with the king, is given permission to search for coal and secure the top of the mountain from possible attack. He is now known as Captain Blackstar and is the founder of the Blackstar Star Company. The vow to king and each other: "My place beside you! My blood for yours!" What happens when one of the crew accidentally shoots an arrow towards an approaching "stranger" (Whitson)

and Fleck protects him by taking the arrow himself? The rabbits feelings are very intense with genuine concern for their lost comrade at one point. Fleck is depicted as a very caring captain. Nice to read."Terrors and flames, ruin and rage, hatred from on high!" "Coming, coming, coming....." Massive monsters? Hideous shrieking? Sweet illustrations are sprinkled throughout this very well-written book. On the Kindle there is a linked index so easy to get to whichever of the 19 chapters you want. Excellent examples of true loyalty in the face of great adversity. A good amount of suspense also. This story, at 160 pages, is a good length for youngsters and the story-line keeps your attention at all times. IMPORTANT to note that this is a stand alone book. It is not part of a series so you do not have to read the next book to read what happened! The epilogue does mention a different book about King Whitson but as far as I can discover this book has not yet been written at time of this review. (Oct 2016) I purchased this book at the full prevailing price. I was not required to write a review but chose to do so. HIGHLY RECOMMEND this book. Great for older independent readers or as a read aloud for the entire family. Thanks, Liz

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