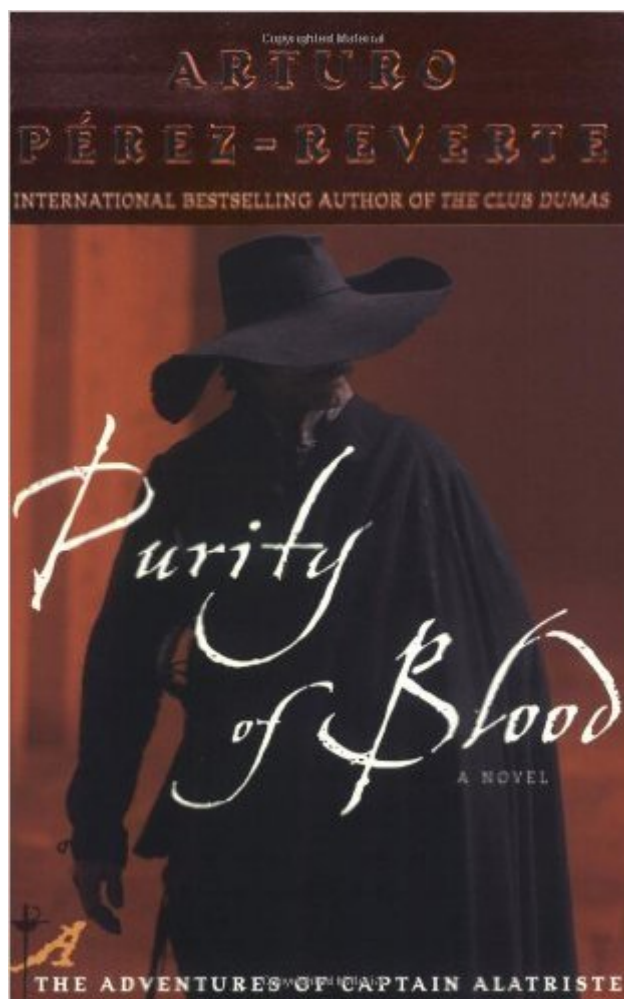


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Purity Of Blood



Synopsis

The second swashbuckling adventure in the internationally acclaimed Captain Alatriste series Captain Alatriste, Madrid's most charismatic swashbuckler, returns in Perez-Reverte's acclaimed international bestseller. The fearless Alatriste is hired to infiltrate a convent and rescue a young girl forced to serve as a powerful priest's concubine. The girl's father is barred from legal recourse as the priest threatens to reveal that the man's family is 'not of pure blood'; and is, in fact, of Jewish descent; which will all but destroy the family name. As Alatriste struggles to save the young hostage from being burned at the stake, he soon finds himself drawn deeper and deeper into a conspiracy that leads all the way to the heart of the Spanish Inquisition. A literary thriller that delivers adventure and rich historical detail, Purity of Blood captivates to the final page.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (52 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

4 and 1/2 stars."Purity of Blood" is Arturo P rez-Reverte's exciting sequel to "Captain Alatriste". Written in the swashbuckling style of Dumas and set in early 17th-century Madrid, "Captain Alatriste" introduced us to the hero of Captain Diego Alatriste. Diego is newly returned from Spain's war in Flanders and ready to hire himself out as a bodyguard and general sword-for-hire."Purity of Blood" finds Diego on a new adventure. His friend, Don Francisco de Quevado, introduces Diego to an aging father who seeks to rescue his daughter from a convent. The convent is not a place of worship but, rather a place of obscene debauchery overseen by an aristocratic priest with connections at the court of King Phillip IV. The father's attempt to seek the release of his daughter is

met with a threat to reveal the family as 'conversos' (Catholics who have Jewish blood). Exposure as a converse is a powerful threat in a country in which the forces of the inquisition can imprison torture and burn conversos at the stake. The story is narrated by Inigo Balboa, Alariste's young page, in the manner of Dr. Watson's memoirs of Sherlock Holmes. As with any Holmes story, the game is quickly afoot and Alariste launches a rescue attempt. Alariste quickly discovers that the best laid plans of mice and swordsmen-for-hire can be beset with complications. Antagonists from his first adventure, particularly the Italian assassin Gualterio Malatesta, return to seek revenge both on Alariste and Balboa for their actions in "Captain Alariste". Pérez-Reverte does an excellent job moving the story along. As one might expect in a series, the character of Alariste and the other recurring players introduced in Captain Alariste are fleshed out.

Arturo Perez-Reverte's "Purity of Blood" is second in the Captain Alariste series of historical adventure novels, currently a 5-volume series of books which began publication in Spain in the mid 1990s. The books follow the adventures of Captain Alariste and his adolescent protege Inigo Balboa as they swashbuckler their way through 17th-century Spain. The Alariste books are obviously aimed closer to the commercial market than much of Perez-Reverte's other work, evoking associations as they do with "The Three Musketeers" or Johnston McCulley's Zorro stories. "Purity of Blood" is set against the backdrop of the Spanish Inquisition. During one of Alariste's adventures, he and his companions fall into a trap and young Inigo--framed as a "Judaizer"--falls afoul of the Inquisition. The book does have its good moments, such as the scene in which Alariste, trying to find some way to rescue Inigo, confronts a most powerful politician, a bureaucrat at first disinclined to give them any aid. Pushed to desperation, Alariste, usually a quiet, stoic man, delivers a monologue in which we see the undeniable potency of melodrama: "Excellency. I have nothing but the sword I live by and my record of service, which means nothing to anyone." The captain spoke very slowly, as if thinking aloud more than addressing the first minister of two worlds. "Neither am I a man of many words or resources. But they are going to burn an innocent lad whose father, my comrade, died fighting in those wars that are as much the king's as they are yours. Perhaps I, and Lope Balboa, and Balboa's son, do not tip the scale that Your Excellency so rightly mentioned.

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