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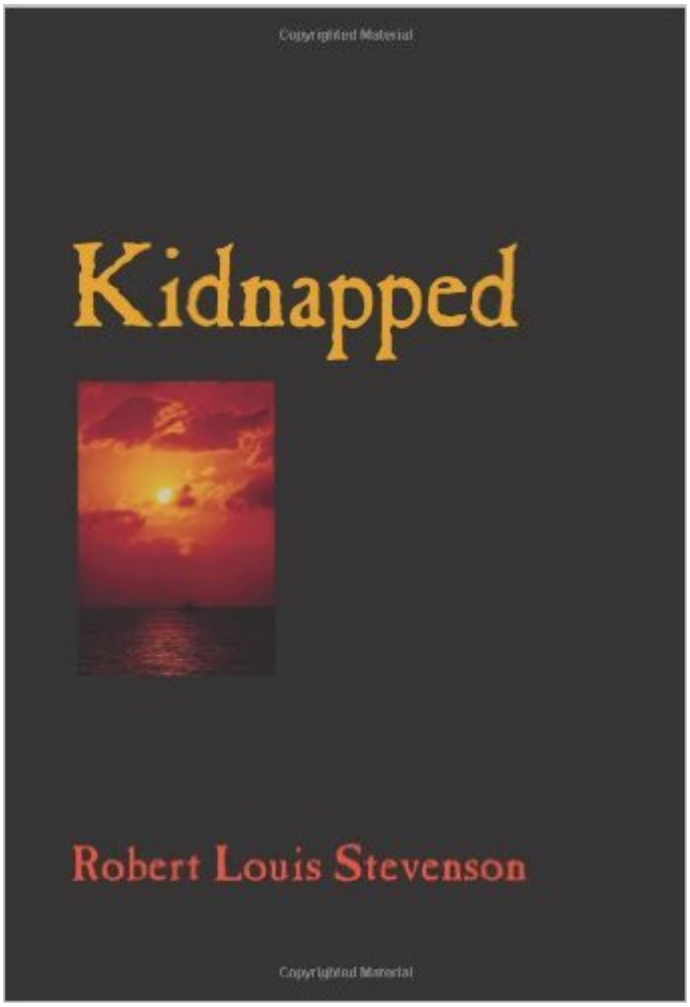
Kidnapped



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Synopsis

David Balfour, a young Scotsman orphaned by the death of his father, is betrayed by his uncle, shanghaied, and carried to the New World for a life in bondage--until a swashbuckling highlander, Alan Breck Stewart, comes to his rescue. Balfour escapes to the Highlands with the help of his friend but encounters further danger and intrigue as he tries to clear his name and regain his rightful property.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Originally written as a boy’s adventure novel, modern readers will probably consider it more a book for adults. My father gave it to me when I was eight, after I’d read _Treasure Island_, and I disliked it then immensely, put off by the lack of plot movement, the Scots dialect, and the total absence of pirates. Re-reading it now on the Kindle, I admit it’s a lot more enjoyable, partly because the Kindle’s dictionary helps translate some of the Scots dialect, partly because I’m a more mature reader. The plot is fairly straightforward (skip this paragraph if you want to avoid spoilers): Our Hero, David Balfour, is tricked out of his rightful inheritance by an evil uncle, shanghaied, shipwrecked, partnered with a historical figure (one Alan Breck Stewart) and caught up in the events of an unsolved historical mystery (the "Appin Murder"). The body of the novel is a day-by-day description of their flight through the Scottish highlands, on the run from the Redcoat troops searching them out. Overall, the novel succeeds in creating some degree of tension and suspense, especially in the first half or so, with some classic melodrama elements. The latter half of the novel drags a bit, though,

and would probably be less appealing to younger readers and more enjoyable for readers more interested in Stevenson's prose style. There is a great deal of Scots dialect, but the most obscure words are footnoted and some (but not all) of the less-obscure words are in the Kindle's dictionary. Overall, I'd recommend this highly to a fan of books like Sir Walter Scott's _Waverly_ or _Rob Roy_, or to anyone who had a particular love of historical fiction set in the 18th-century scottish highlands.

It's true that this sequel to "Kidnapped" takes a very different direction from the original story. In fact, Alan Breck Stewart (everyone's favorite character) makes only a few (albeit quite entertaining) appearances, and most of the story focuses on David Balfour's lone adventures and, in the second half of the book, his rather botched wooing of Catriona, a lovely Scottish lass (to say more would give away the story).I must admit that "Kidnapped" is my favorite book of all time, so I am somewhat prejudiced toward liking "David Balfour" no matter what its faults. However, the truth of the matter is that this is really quite a good book in its own right. It would not have been disappointing to anyone except for the fact that it happens to be a sequel to "Kidnapped," and people (fairly enough, I suppose) expect another rousing adventure story, which "David Balfour" is not.Some aspects of the two books are very similar. Stevenson used quite a bit of dialect in the "Kidnapped," so it should come as a surprise to no one that he does the same in "David Balfour" (although there may be a little more broad Scotch). Also, David's and Alan's characters are quite true to the original characterizations, I think.The part of the story that people seem to object to most is the love story between David and Catriona. I admit it, the main problem is that Catriona is a rather flat character, and as such does not keep the reader's interest (or sympathy) very well. That being said, most of the book (and especially the last 20 pages, which I liked very much) is quite entertaining. I have read better love stories and better adventure stories, but "David Balfour" isn't bad for a love story sequel to an adventure story.Finally, a word about the illustrations in this edition. They are by N.C.

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