#108 -The Knights of Dark Renown, Graham Shelby BOOK REVIEW

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"Take that and fuck off back to

Bradford!"

I think we are all agreed that the Crusades were fucking awesome and really need to happen again. So, with that settled, let's move on to things more specific with *The Knights of Dark Renown*. I found this book by DuckDuckGoing [1] "best crusader knight series" to see if I could find a medieval equivalent to Matt Helm, Mack Bolan, or Ed Noon. Sadly, if there are any long-running crusader novel series from the pre-faggot era, I am as yet unaware of them. What I did find was that Graham Shelby began this series in 1969 and wrote six in total.

That's a good start. There's a good chance that a crusader story written in 1969 won't have any of the horrible anachronisms modern historical fiction features. Only the night before, I'd been horribly scarred by season two of *Penny Dreadful* on Netflix.

Scarred how, you ask?



Only lefties could fuck this up

On the face of it, *Penny Dreadful* should be fucking awesome. It's a lavishly-budgeted all-star cast series set in Victorian London in which all the major monsters of the time are running wild. There's Frankenstein's monster (and Bride Of), the wolf-man, a coven of witches, plus a bit of Satan and his lackeys. Unfortunately, there's also Dorian Gray, he of arch-faggot Oscar Wilde's *Picture Of Dorian Gray*. Showtime insist on having Gray get picked up by a vile transgender freako and lay on a scene where the two mentally-ill degenerates are flaunting their evil in front of stuffy Victorian prudes. There's an on-screen fag-kiss and then an <u>actual bumming sex scene</u> that had me pushing my hands out to block the screen as I wailed "make it go away! somebody slaughter the fags!"

I'm sure there was plenty of faggotry in Victorian London – it's full of soft southern shites, is it not – but this was a wildly anachronistic shoe-horning of freak tranny-rights into a horror show. And the producers seemed oblivious to the fact that having a faggot and a tranny bumming each other is *far more Satanic* than a mere mauling by a wolf-man.

I think I just popped a blood vessel in my brain. Right, calm down Nick! Reduce your murderous rage towards faggots and trannies.

Whew! Right then, the crusaders.... The Kindle reissue of this book begins with the following warning:

This book contains views and language on nationality, sexual politics, ethnicity, and society which are a product of the time in which the book is set. The publishers do not endorse or support these views. They have been retained in order to preserve the integrity of the text.

Does that disclaimer not contain everything that is wrong with modern society? For a start, the publisher either (i) considered butchering a good book to appease traitorous Marxists, or (ii) felt they had to at least pay lip service to the ideological insanity of those traitorous Marxists.

Still, I got excited. With a warning like that I could look forward to a book that's full of hard-eyed Christian knights killing the fuck out of hook-nosed shifty-bearded Muslims. All the women would be

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safely tucked into the kitchen or bedroom, and anyone caught faggoting in public would surely be burned at the stake. It gets off to a good start too, opening with Reynald of Chatillon adrift in a war galley after barely escaping ambush by Saladin's fleet. Reynald had taken a small fleet into the Red Sea to harry the Arabian coast and take a chance on sacking Mecca [2]. This is how Shelby introduces Reynald:

He had fought ferociously, not only during the past hours, but almost without respite since early February. He had personally killed more than seventy Moslems, men, women and, on five occasions, children. So, whenever he slept, he enjoyed the tranquillity of mind that comes to a man who has done his work well.

Their galley chances upon a large ship full of pilgrims bound for Mecca so he boards that and slaughters all three hundred aboard. Naturally, I considered this a great way of introducing your novel's hero....

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Well, he's my hero. Even if he is ginger.

... except he's not the hero! This bravery in service of the cross is supposed to make him the *baddie*! For fuck's sake! Where can a man find a red-blooded infidel-crushing series of novels about the crusades? Anyway, that massacre causes Saladin to tear up his truce with the Franks, and then the story kicks off. What follows is a *Game Of Thrones*-lite as different factions in the Holy Land squabble, mostly between the Reynald-led faction itching to tweak the hook-noses of the Moslems, and the dovish faction led by Raymond of Tripoli who wants peace. Fortunately for the book, Reynald gets his way.

It's all based on historical events, culminating in a famous battle of 1187 which doesn't go to well for the Franks. I enjoyed it, though some of the political wrangling got a bit turgid at times. From a literary perspective, I was interested how Shelby apportioned responsibility for the war. He presents Saladin's army as monolithic outsiders and never has a scene involving them as perspective characters – they only appear when witnessed by Christians. The various catastrophes befalling the Franks arise from stupidly aggressive knights who can't bear to wait around when there are Moslems to be smited [3]. At all times in the book, it seems like the Franks could comfortably hold onto the Holy Lands but the hotheads stir up trouble for no reason and then the king in particular, Guy of Lusignan, makes a series of disastrous blunders. The final battle goes awry because the crusaders deliberately march away from an impregnable position to a shit one that has no water, walking right into Saladin's obvious trap.



"Fucking take THAT, you goat-fucking sand-nigger"

Now, I do remember reading in my history books that they really were this stupid. But... well... I don't like it in fiction. If the goodies are going to lose, it should be because the baddies are a formidable force. I don't like any fiction that relies on rank stupidity or cupidity within Team Goodies in order to create tension.

Anyway, I did enjoy this book and intend to read the next in the series. You'll be pleased to know there wasn't any bumming at all – not even amongst the Arabs – and no trannies.

If you like the idea of anal sex but **only** involving women, then you might find what you're looking for in my own memoirs. And if you wish to seek out bumming – again, only with women, I stress – try my textbooks. <u>All available here.</u>

- [1] Not Googling. I don't support the enemies of the people.
- [2] It's not too late to try again, imo.
- [3] I know, ridiculous isn't it, painting these people as the baddies.

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<u>www.TheRedArchive.com</u> Page 2 of 2