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Louis L'Amour

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Joe Harbin hadn't killed a man for a fortune in gold just to sit in prison and let Rodelo collect it. But when he and his men break out and head for the stash, they end up with a pair of unwelcome partners: Rodelo and a beautiful woman with a hidden past. To get fifty thousand dollars in gold across fifty miles of desert, the desperate band quickly learns how much they need each other—and how deep their greed and suspicion can run. At the end of the journey lie the waters of Baja and a new life in Mexico, but first they have to survive the savage heat, bounty-hunting Yaqui Indians, and the shifting, treacherous nature of both the desert sands and their own conflicting loyalties.

Kid Rodelo Details

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Author : Louis L'Amour

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From Reader Review Kid Rodelo for online ebook

Schmacko says

I read this, because my dad used to love Louis L'Amour westerns. I never got to know my Dad well (nor he I for that matter). Well, in reading some of his favorites, I've come to realize my dad was geeky, with a taste for pulp. He also loved Raymond Chandler. So, I get it now; Dad had a bent for chewy, manly crap written with too much style and swagger. (Although I still love Chandler, I admit, for this very reason.)

A couple web sites said Kid Rodelo is one of L'Amour's best. REALLY!?!? Bwahahaha!

People are going to hate me for disparaging this stuff without proof. So, I'll give you the first paragraph of this book:

"The Yuma Desert, east of the Colorado River mouth, was like the floor of a furnace; but of the four riders, three were Yaqui Indians and accustomed to the heat, as were the buzzards swinging in lazy circles above them. The fourth rider did not mind the heat. He was dead."

You can practically hear L'Amour drawling around the chaw in his mouth to spit out this ham-fisted stuff. YAY! Is it fun? Yep. Is it serious? God, no. It was purely escapist fluff varnished in Old West toughness. Everything here is heroic and manly in simplistic but gargantuan ways that I – intellectual, gay - could never measure up to for my Dad. (Nor do I really want to, seriously...yick...) Yessir, Pops loved L'Amour books for their machismo and fantasy. In fact, this book is probably only slightly more violent and less silly than the stuff my dad read when he was 12.

I kind of like the old man a bit more now.

Lexie says

This review is for ALL my Louis L'Amour books! (In order for me to put an actual review for each book by him, I would probably have to RE-read them all). But I CAN say this about his books:

I was NEVER disappointed in ANY of his books! Each one kept 100% interested, wanting to know what was going to happen next! His description of the scenery in each setting was explicit, making me able to picture it and feel like I was actually there! As you got to know each of his characters, you could feel their sadness, happiness, anger and so on. Reading a Louis L'Amour western was like sitting back and watching a movie! (There were movies made from some of his books->The Sackets) The Sackets series was absolutely awesome, when you finished one book you couldn't wait to get your hands on the next one!! Louis L'Amour researched history and the land in order to make his characters, and the land they lived in, to be more real! I read all Louis L'Amour westerns when I was a teen and into my mid 20's, at least once, several books I read twice!! My stepmom is also an avid Louis L'Amour fan, she has EVERY Louis L'Amour book ever written. She is the one that got me hooked on reading westerns, shortly after her and my Dad got married, when I was about 15. Today I'm more of a YA paranorm reader, but STILL love throwing a Western into the mix now 'n' then! Please, give a Louis L'Amour book a try and just see if he's not the best western writer of all time!! I've read westerns from other authors, and altho they are very good, none can compare to a Louis L'Amour novel!

John says

not one of his great books but a pleasant read. just OK

wally says

this here marks one of many l'amour stories i will read...the first in the ago, stationed on board the u.s.s. john s mccain, 32nd street naval station...i get on board the day before the cap'n informs ship's crew that the mccain will be no more...will be decommissioned...so much for seeing the world...saw instead mess-cooking, emptying the ship...shore duty, really, silly me for wanting more.

and...i had to go out of my way to walk on grass...non-skid, asphalt, and concrete all around...so, these covers from l'amour appealed to me...i read a ton of them, enjoyed each and every one...i think my favorite might have been To the Far Blue Mountains...

saw this one at a used-book sale yesterday and i could not resist.

begins

the yuma desert, east of the colorado river mouth, was like the floor of a furnace; but of the four riders, three were yaqui indians and accustomed to the heat, as were the buzzards swinging in lazy circles above them. the fourth rider did not mind the heat. he was dead.

the part of the desert they were now crossing was hard sand. before them and on their right were sand dunes. four days earlier the dead man had ridden his horse to death in those dunes. obsessed by the desire to escape, to reach the boat awaiting him on adair bay, he had not realized until too late how hard he had ridden the animal.

i think it curious that one reviewer insists on crediting another reader, a relative, with his privy-knowledge of what and why these books appealed to the other, thereby laying the base for him to declaim any and all such motivation. but if you read the above--the setting--that is one reason among many these reads appealed to me. i said i had to go out of my way to walk on grass...perhaps the other reader, the reader's father in this case...found that same, or a different appeal?

but then, fashion begs to differ...as it always does, nessay pas...if only to be fashionable?

location/time/place

yuma prison, gold city, an almost ghost town...time? ago...adair bay...the yuma desert, east of the colorado river mouth...the devil's road

characters

danny "kid" rodelo, our eponymous hero, opens, he is being released from yuma prison
tom badger, inmate

isacher, the dead man in the opening paragraphs...escaped, caught, killed

miller, a guard
joe harbin, an inmate, knows where the 50,000 in gold is buried...he buried it
gopher, another inmate
doc, dr. wilson, at yuma
the warden
the yaqui indians
turkey...a guard
perryman...guard
old sam burrows...at gold city...keeps saloon, store
clint, clint wilson...a man, one of two, w/a woman, who provide a ride to dan to gold city
jake...the second man...jake andrews
nora paxton...the woman
hat, the yaqui indian leader
harbin wonders if danny "kid" rodeo is a gunman...like jim courtright, ben thompson, commodore perry
owen, doc haliday, john bull, farmer peele
nora reilly...nora paxton's other name
sam burrows has two good friends: one is emilio kosterlitzky who commands the rurales
yuma john, one of the dozen or so men with hat, trailing the escapees

update

finished, 7:58 p.m. e.s.t. 1 jul 12, sunday evening...a full two hours+ before sunset...

good story! it is a chase story...dan kid rodeo is released from prison...we learn he was innocent of the charges against him, an innocent man imprisoned for a year. his release and his words, relayed through a guard to joe harbin (the bad guy) motivates a prison break by joe and his friend, tom badget.

having just come off another read--

In the Rogue Blood by James Carlos Blake, it was interesting reading these two back-to-back. whereas in blake's story the people on the page kill and are killed, easily, they take what they want when they want it...here in l'amour's story, there is a governor idling the movements and motives and deeds of those presented. it is a kinder, gentler western, even though lines of good/bad are clearly drawn...perhaps too well...there are no shades of gray as was found in blake's story...things like when good men do bad things...or vice versa....whatever.

nice, too, the scenery detail...desert areas, volcanic areas...the whole shebang...the lack of water...no wasted detail, no gratuitous detail...

i'm also reminded of erb's stories...the burroughs...the dame in distress...same as other l'amour stories...there is always a dame...although in this one, she isn't pushed around. she is, rather, on par with the others in the story.

nice, too...the deuce coupe of diablo...the deuce coupe of the gods...both of which show at the end in various forms. hoo-rah!

Andrew says

Well done and interesting. Not the most captivating western every written, but a solid bit of adventure with

more than its fair share of little twists and turns. L'Amour leads off with simple questions and provides a readable, if treacherous, journey to their answers.

Jayaprakash Satyamurthy says

Louis L'Amour is one of my father's favourites, and there were a lot of his novels around the house when I was growing up. I read a couple of them as a boy; they were fun but didn't make as much of an impact on me as other authors I discovered in my parents' collection: Tolkien, Asimov, Lovecraft, Wodehouse, even Agatha Christie. This year I finally got around to reading a L'Amour and it's pretty effective for what it aims at. There's no undying prose here, nor the literary apotheosis via pulp someone like Jim Thompson could have made of this basic scenario - an ill-assorted group of drifters and outlaws scurrying across an inhospitable desert to get away with ill-gotten gold.

L'Amour paints his characters with broad strokes; we get the picture, and that's about it. He puts a lot more detail into describing their desert surroundings, and even if his phrasing sometimes seems cribbed straight from a geography textbook, with a sprinkling of heavy-handed pulp stylistics added, he conjures up some pretty effective images.

At 150 pages, this boon never gets a chance to outstay its welcome. It won't change your life but it will do very well as something to while away a dull evening.

Jesse Thompson says

Good book. No frills, just a good story.

Franburdsall says

Like Robert B. Parker, Louis L'Amour consistently delivers the goods. Strong righteous hero and a woman worth fighting for - Ah, those were the days!

Joyce says

Edoardo Ballerini is a great narrator for this classic L'Amour western. He gets the voice right for the character--more likely to use his brains than his fists, soft-spoken, laconic, honorable. After he's released from jail, having served a year for a crime he didn't commit, he picks up the gold and heads for the coast. And if he's so honorable, why did he take the stolen gold? Unfortunately, the murderer and his pals who actually stole the gold escape prison and track him down. So he's leading them and a woman with a secret past across 50 miles of desert, followed by the Indians who want the bounty on the escapees. Quintessential L'Amour western, with the landscape almost more dangerous than the outlaws and the Indians.

Kit★ says

Grandpa gave me another bag of L'Amours but said I can't keep these ones, so just making a note. This one is set as one of my books for the name challenge in the Bookworm Buddies group (I think).

3.5 Stars Misplaced it for a week or two, but found it again and finished. I liked it quite well, the desert setting was harsh and I could picture it all too well. I liked the short timeframe of the story, the way the characters were isolated and in danger. The action never got overly exciting, but the shootouts and stuff were still enough to keep me happy. I found their trek fascinating, the fight through the terrain, finding the natural water tanks and all that. I guess I never really thought about what it would be like to go through that country. I felt like I really didn't get to know Rodelo or Nora as well as I wanted to, so that detracts a little. However, I still liked both of them, and I liked the way it all played out. A good entertaining story to pass the time, and I'll be continuing with reading more of L'Amour's books in the future.

James says

I enjoyed this read. It is short, somewhat formulaic and not keen on straying far from convenient character types and situations. But Louis L'Amour knew how to write, he understood his subject and he had a great knack for describing things with both brevity and clarity, leaving just enough room for the imagination. The result is work quite a bit better than what you'd expect.

Kid Rodelo has all of that on display, wrapped in a surprisingly lean and fast timeline. I can see why some argue this is one of L'Amour's best books (though I've not read enough of his work to confirm that). L'Amour deftly mixes clear Western stereotypes (a skilled yet mysterious underdog righting a wrong, a strong and powerful woman he inevitably is drawn to, a clear villain with only themselves on their mind, and a smattering of other characters divided along the lines of honour and courage) with a knack for vivid yet brief prose.

The characters are nothing new, nor all that interesting. But this appears intentional, because the main focus is the odyssey of their trek. The desert is the real star here. L'Amour really gets it right and takes you there, though at times I felt his pacing was a little too fast to take things in.

But that is a minor quibble. *Kid Rodelo* is a fun and fast read, from an author I'm beginning to think was far better than the literary snobs who looked down on him.

Melinda says

An excellent book. This is the story of Dan Rodelo who served a year sentence in a Yuma prison for something he didn't commit. Upon release he meets up with two escaped convicts and a young woman trying to make their way across the desert with some stolen gold. There is some mystery as to Rodelo's motive, but I suspected it was an honorable one, as to why he wants the gold so much. The reason isn't revealed until almost the end. To avoid ruining the ending I won't say what the motive is. L'Amour does a good job of describing the desert, the lack of water and terrain of the desert. I found myself wanting water myself.

Michael says

If you are a fan of Louis L'Amour, this is vintage L'Amour at his best: good guy gets into a bad situation, there is a struggle against a protagonist, the hero comes out in the end being underestimated and a heck of a shot, and the hero gets the girl. Along the way, L'Amour's description of the geography, scenery, etc. are second to none: when the main character is dying of thirst out in the hot desert, a part of you feels thirsty, too. While the story lines of most of L'Amour's books can be predicted, they are an enjoyable 1.5 to 2 hour diversion, and he makes you feel as if you are right in the middle of the action.

Andrew says

This is one of the best LL books I have read although I have not gotten to the Sackett series yet. I felt like I was there while reading it. Pass the canteen please cause it's hot.

Like some of his other standalone novels I would like to have the ending rewritten. It needs to be a bit more convoluted like real life. Everything ends just a tad too pat and tidy. Those darned convenient coincidences always get to me. This one was not as bad as a few of the others in that regard; just a couple details at the end. I guess I shouldn't criticize an author who is in the top ten sellers of all time. He may have slipped to top twenty now with some new popular authors bumping old ones down.

Elaine says

Another L'Amour book, this one dealing with connections with others and the search for redemption.

Randy Tramp says

Great cast of characters: Dan Rodelo released from prison for a crime he didn't do. Gopher, Tom Badger, and Joe Harbin break out of prison.

All after stolen gold, each with a different motive, they meet. Together with Nora Paxton, they travel across the desert, seeking a get-a-way boat.

Nothing like the elements to show what a man or woman is made of. Each is tested, and not all pass the test.

Great read. Looking forward to more L'Amour novels.

Ed says

Some of the water in the desert theme in this 1966 western is reminiscent of the author's Last Stand at Papago Wells (1957).

Western - Joe Harbin hadn't killed a man for a fortune in gold just to sit in prison and let Rodelo collect it. But when he and his men break out and head for the stash, they end up with a pair of unwelcome partners:

Rodelo and a beautiful woman with a hidden past. To get fifty thousand dollars in gold across fifty miles of desert, the desperate band quickly learns how much they need each other---and how deep their greed and suspicion can run. At the end of the journey lie the waters of Baja and a new life in Mexico, but first they have to survive the savage heat, bounty-hunting Yaqui Indians, and the shifting, treacherous nature of both the desert sands and their own conflicting loyalties.

M.J. Groves says

Well, dadgummit, I finally figured out why people read Louis L'Amour--the guy can tell a story! I've been casting aspersions (silently, silently) from my elitist reading perch at a man I knew only as a prolific author of westerns. Finding a leather- bound edition of Kid Rodelo in the cabin of the dude ranch we were at, and having nothing else to do by the firelight after the power went out (no snide remarks), I picked it up with a sigh...and couldn't put it down. Just today I bought 2 more. These are fun, fast reads, and I don't suppose I'll go through his whole 100 or more books, but call me an unabashed fan. Yee-hah!

Conny says

I was a First Read Winner of this book and I really enjoyed it. My Dad loved to read westerns that I used to pick out for him, and so this read had a real nostalgic feel for me. I am actually surprised I don't read more westerns since I do enjoy them, especially Louis L'Amour's, but I plan to rectify that in the future. I liked the storyline and characters it had plenty of suspense and action and a budding romance, plus for whatever reason it made me very thirsty. Very entertaining read.

Jason King says

Note to self: bring water to the desert.
