



Star of Africa

Scott Mariani

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TO POSSESS IT HE WILL PAY IN BLOOD

Where ex-SAS major Ben Hope goes, trouble always follows...

Ben Hope is trained to identify danger. So when he finds out that someone very important to him is working on a US container ship in the treacherous seas off the East African coast, he fears the worst.

Within days the ship is hijacked by pirates. Taking matters into his own hands, Ben embarks upon the most daring rescue mission of his career ... because this is no ordinary hostage situation.

There is something on board the ship that's more precious than life itself – and a bloodthirsty tyrant will kill to possess it.

As events spiral out of control, Ben Hope's skill and resourcefulness will be tested like never before. Ben would die to protect those close to him, but in a hostile environment, against ruthless warriors, even the ultimate sacrifice might not be enough...

The first part of a sensational new two-book sequence that will be the biggest and most epic Ben Hope adventure yet!

BEN HOPE is one of the most celebrated action adventure heroes in British fiction and Scott Mariani is the author of numerous bestsellers. Join the ever-growing legion of readers who get breathless with anticipation when the countdown to the new Ben Hope thriller begins ...

Star of Africa Details

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Shelley says

Desperately need part 2!!!

Melly Kallon says

Oh, my Goodness! I knew it from the very beginning that this two-book sequence thing won't end up good in the first part, at least. That's so cruel! I feel sorry for those who had to wait until the other book is published so they can read it. Meanwhile, you had to wonder and worry how the whole thing will end... Fortunately, I do not have this problem because I'll start the Devil's Kingdom as soon as possible.

I gave the book 3 stars only because I feel super annoyed at Jude and his stupid mercy! That was the stupidest thing ever! Stupider than stupid! Argh, I really feel angry at him. If he wasn't so stupidly democratic now they wouldn't have ended like this. How can he be so blind?! I don't get it! If he's considering joining the army, even if he passes the tests, there's no way he would classify as a soldier. Not when he spares the lives of ruthless killers who did not even blink or flinch when murdering people! No, no mercy for such pieces of sh*t. I can't express how pissed I am right now and how much I hate, *hate* the thing with "it's not worth it, we're not like them." Yeah, so let them kill you instead, that's so f*cking smart.

I've never been a great fan of Africa before and now I'm even less of. Most of the countries are very poor and the people live horrifyingly bad and at the same time, there are stupid f*cking dictators who rule those places with blood. Maybe I'm a bit ultimate but in order to get rid of all this massacre and corruption, we should use the extreme measures even if it means sacrificing innocent people. Hell, I think too many innocent have been victims it will continue without a doubt until someone says no and do what is needed to stop it.

The Star of Africa... I think *that* part would be solved in the next book since all sides haven't intercepted each other yet. Well, I hope both sides will make quite damages towards each other but anyway, Ben will do it. Oh, I'm certain there's more to come and we haven't seen what Ben Hope is capable of at all. Especially Khosa and I highly hope he'll suffer a lot, at least like his victims if not much, much worse. But that I'll leave to Ben Hope because he'll do and this time will be no mercy and no second thoughts.

Robert Bradberry says

Part 1

Best Ben Hope yet and it's only part one!! Don't miss this one!!
It seems like every previous story was just development for this one. The ultimate Ben Hope challenge. Enjoy.

Joe Geesin says

One of the best; dramatic, well paced, a family touch and the opening scene a good reminder of what Ben's all about. Not drawn out like the last 2, the mid section history bit a good change without filling gaps.

Looking forward to the next instalment.-

Karen Gibb says

Shocking!!

I don't think there's enough adjectives to describe how I felt reading this book.

Right where do I start, I worship my Ben Hope series of books, each one is a different adventure that Ben Is put through mostly with historic accuracy. But this book was by far the most thrilling, shocking and harrowing I have read so far.

I knew that things like this happened in Africa, but you never really put them into context when just watching on television. This story was written so well that you felt it was really happening to the characters , by far this is the best Scott Mariani book he has written.

I eagerly wait to see what the outcome is going to be in the next installment.

Agnes Melissen says

I don't like it when a book ends halfway and I have to wait till November 2016 for the next part.

Matt says

There is much luck for series fans in Scott Mariani's thirteenth novel in the Ben Hope series. In a novel that offers some tying-off of loose ends and a highly explosive plot, the reader has little chance to breathe as the action builds continually. As part of his vagabond nature, Hope finds himself back in Paris to sell off his home and free up some capital. Taking a temporary detour, Hope visits Le Val, the tactical training centre he created and gifted to his friend, Jeff Dekker. While trying to fill himself in on some news, Hope learns that Dekker helped Jude Arundel, recently discovered to be Hope's son, secure a spot on an American merchant marine vessel currently in the Indian Ocean. Jude, tired of playing it safe, has chosen an opportunity to spread his proverbial wings. While Hope and Dekker find themselves busy at Le Val, Jude is in the middle of the ocean with the crew, though he can sense something is wrong. Learning that there is cargo more precious than the contents of the shipping containers, concerns rise that Jude might know too much. When a ship of marauding pirates appears on the horizon, Jude realises that there is much trouble to come and takes desperate measures to reach Dekker back in France. Upon learning of the ship's issues, Dekker, Hope, and a crew of men rush to locate them, and covertly descend on the ship to handle the Somali pirates. When a storm hits and destroys the ship, Hope leads his crew and prisoners onto a life raft, where they seek assistance and final rescue. It is at this point that Hope learns about the calculated attack and that the Star of Africa, a precious diamond, is the central piece of cargo that many seek to take for themselves. When a rescue helicopter appears in the sky, Hope can only surmise that his troubles might be over, only to learn that General Jean-Pierre Khosa, a bloodthirsty Congolese warlord has his eyes set on not only the diamond, but to turn the tables and take a handful of hostages for himself. Pitting Hope's love for his son against a general will to survive, the story pushes the decision to the limit, with a cliffhanger that will leave the reader rushing for the next novel. Mariani has pulled together many of the dangling threads from earlier novels to create this electrifying thriller, which entertains series fans and proves that Mariani has much in store for Ben Hope.

This Ben Hope binge has been highly informative over the past while, allowing me to see much growth in many of the characters, both central and periphery. As I have mentioned before, Ben Hope has undergone much change in the series to date, both progressive and regressive. It would seem that Mariani has surveyed the horizon and is seeking to mend some of these strained connections, or at least bring some resolution to them after Hope's abrupt choice to kibosh his wedding two days before the ceremony. In this novel, there is much development of the Hope-Dekker relationship, which has always been a minor narrative mention, as well as a stronger and more emotional connection between Hope and Jude, paired together for a significant amount of time. This father-son connection was strained to begin, severed, and has since been resurrected as Hope seeks to play hero. However, Mariani adds another layer to the connection, forcing Hope to decide once and for all if he will choose Jude (thereby showing a parental side) or himself when the stakes are high. There are still a few character relationships that I hope Mariani mends, but the series is not over yet. Turning to the story in general, the excitement of this 'terror on the high seas' has me much pleased, as it adds levels of thrill that have been scaled back in some of the past novels. Looking not only to the seas, but the African continent and the search for an important diamond, Mariani pits his characters into a high-octane story that does not let up until the very end. There is truly a contrast in this novel, as the theme and location turns to the African continent, where social, political, and economic flavours differ greatly from the Euro- or Ameri-centric storylines that Mariani has used before. Depicted masterfully, the reader can feel the terror of Khosa's bloody decisions that seek to exacerbate the already strained relations of the hostages. This is the first of a two-novel mini story arc that seeks to really flesh things out for all involved and forces the reader to buckle down for a detailed adventure that will pull on the heartstrings of many. The delivery is strong and the story development shows Mariani at his best and proves that his well of ideas is far from dry. I can only hope that there is much to come in this series, which has not dipped into going stale or off-putting, as can occur when authors seek to churn out books without careful plotting and slow development.

Kudos, Mr. Mariani for keeping me hooked this far into the series. What a great choice for binge reading and there are still a few more to go.

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

Nasser says

One of the best of the Ben Hope series so far. So gripping and I love the detail and emotion this books takes you through. At one point, I even feared for the characters at the end of one of the chapters. Fair warning though, this book is only part 1 the following book in the series is part 2 and it is only getting better. I'm about more than half way through it.

Mrs A. J. Turbfield says

An entertaining and thrilling read, A bit more gruesome than earlier tales, but what could be imagined as a good representation of life in war torn Africa

Ben Hope and friends need a major miracle and incredible strength to survive this adventure. Looking forward to reading how they get on. If in fact they do survive this next tale.

Andra Nicoara says

Star of Africa is so far the most brutal book of the series, however I enjoyed it very much! It was nice to get a bit more Jeff Dekker in the action and to laugh at all of his silly sayings or snarky comments. Also, I particularly enjoyed seeing Ben at an impasse, because so far he's been getting into trouble and solving it like a total boss, but now he's got no way out of it and no matter how many plans he makes, he's still in crap by the end of it.

Mike Dishmon says

This one is the start of much longer portion of the Ben Hope saga that goes into a very dark realm. I have read that many fans of the series did not appreciate the brutality etc. For me, it was not much the brutality, as the length of the story itself. It felt long winded at times. Don't get me wrong, it is a great story, and I would recommend it, but it is not my favorite in the series.

Liz Boyd 2 says

Vivid violence, dark, brutal not what I expected

The wonderful character Ben Hope is not the lead, SAS character I've thoroughly enjoyed reading about. This book appears to be geared towards a psychopath who kills and tortures any and everybody in his presence. The trail of butchered lives is vast. Not my taste. Perhaps Ben Hope is washed up from a writers perspective and time to move on to something fresh and different?

Alan Marston says

Ben Hope at his best, but a little let down by this being the first of a two book story. This has all the hallmarks of the Scott Mariani that I like - taut, action packed, inventive. Ben continues to seek the lost, something at which he is very good, but in this case it is his own son, Jude who has decided to test himself by working on a container ship. Unfortunately it is one that becomes hijacked, although these do not turn out to be ordinary pirates by any means.

The book has a number of twists and turns that bring challenges and disappointments, a truly megalomaniac character in Jean-Pierre Khosa, and a wild ride at sea and into Africa where Khosa has dreams of greatness.

Ben is reunited with his great friend Jeff Dekker from the training grounds of Val, and a new recruit, Tuesday, becomes heavily involved. We get to see how Jude has grown up, but we also see some of his values causing problems for his father and friends.

It is such a great, fast-paced read, that I must now race on to the subsequent novel to find out exactly how the group are going to extricate themselves from a potentially lethal situation. Bring it on!

Kate says

A little different from the other Ben Hope thrillers (and more violent) but brilliantly done and utterly unputdownable! This is the first novel of two and it very much finishes on a cliffhanger, so now begins the wait until November....

dennis barron says

Star of Africa. Scott Mariani

A riveting ,extraordinary book, a masterful tale, the trademark of Scott Mariani. A deal is struck between a billionaire and a ruthless mercenary. Betrayal and deceit quickly follows. Ben Hope is drawn into the mix to help rescue his son. Enter next , an African warlord. A ruthless, homicidal maniac. And the story unfolds. Fast paced, action packed, a fantastic read!!!! Unfortunately, it's a two part series!!! Can't wait for book two!!! My highest recommendation!!
