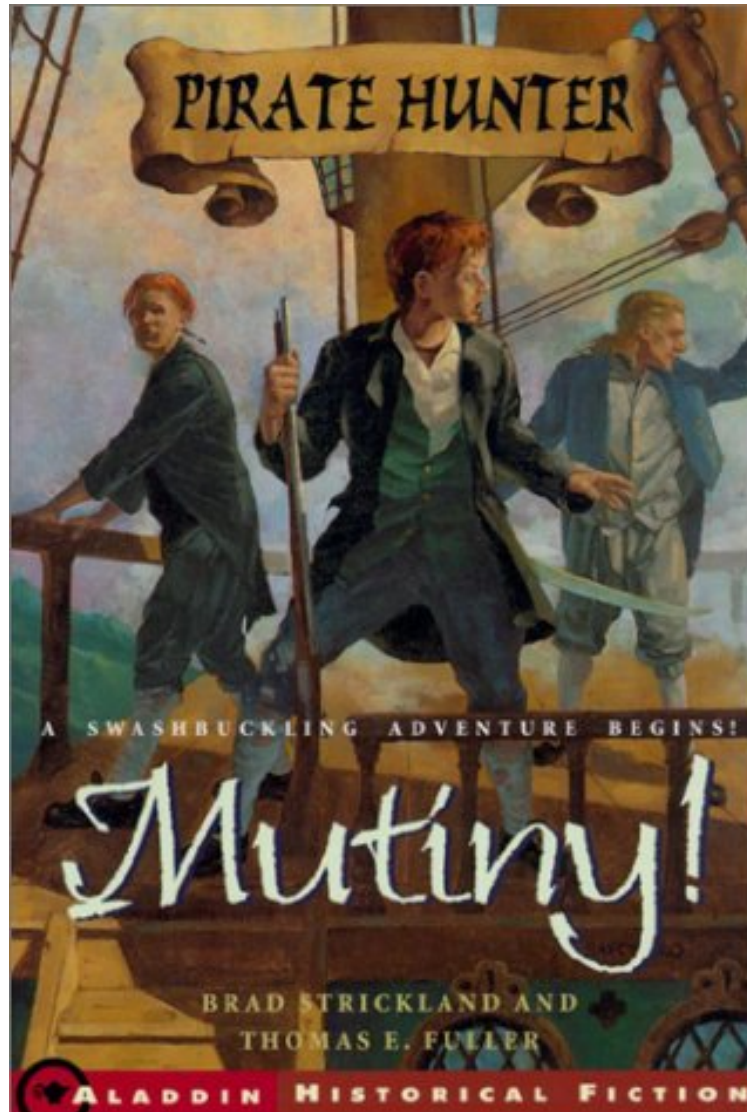


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## Mutiny!

*Brad Strickland*

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#1595858 in Books 2002-11-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.69 x .57 x 5.16l, #File Name: 0689852967208 pages | File size: 27.Mb

**Brad Strickland : Mutiny!** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mutiny!:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Share with your kids By Mary Duncan I read this book to my class every day after lunch. Everyone relaxed and enjoyed hearing about pirates and sailing. I highly recommend this book to parents and teachers.

Pirates and Patriots The lawless Caribbean of the 1680s is a hotbed of sailors, spies, and pirate gold, where the line

between patriot and privateer is a thin one. New to this exciting and dangerous world, fourteen-year-old orphan Davy Shea arrives at the home of his disreputable uncle Patch, a naval surgeon and complete stranger. Patch, after some reluctance, allows Davy to become his apprentice in helping the sick and wounded. When Patch joins his friend Philip Hunter on the HMS Retribution, a British war frigate, Davey comes along as his assistant. One day the captain's brutality goes too far, and Hunter leads a failed mutiny that ends with death sentences to all involved -- including Patch! Hoping to save his uncle from hanging, Davy is swept along when the group escapes and forms a band of pirates. But he wonders whether Patch and Hunter have really turned their back on the king...or if there is a larger plot at work.

From Publishers Weekly Strickland and Fuller (the Wishbone Mysteries) join forces for *Pirate Hunter*, a historical series set at sea. In this debut adventure, the recently orphaned Davy Shea arrives in Jamaica in the summer of 1687 in search of his uncle. Within a few hours, he's swindled, beaten and robbed, and his uncle Dr. Patrick "Patch" Shea is less than delighted to see him. However, Patch soon takes Davy on as surgeon's apprentice, and the two eventually ship aboard the HMS Retribution. When his uncle is caught up in an attempted mutiny and sentenced to hang, however, Davy's world is rocked again. Worse, his uncle escapes and appears to turn pirate. But is he? After a series of deadly escapades, Davy learns it was all an elaborate ruse to trap the pirate Jack Steele, and the tale ends with the surety that Davy and his uncle will cross swords with the villain in the future. Larded with colorful characters and historical and nautical detail (including a look at life in the British navy), the story includes enough scrapes to keep the pot boiling. An abundance of clichés (e.g., Davy and his uncle, Irishmen both, sport red hair, tempers and dialogue that runs heavily to such expostulations as, "Faith, is there not a schoolmaster about?") slightly mar the fun, but if this rip-roaring adventure is any indication, it looks like smooth sailing ahead for an enjoyable new series. The next episode, *The Guns of Tortuga*, is scheduled to release next March. Ages 8-12. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Gr. 5-8. Fourteen-year-old Irish orphan Davy Shea is shipped off to Jamaica to live with his uncle Patch, a surgeon with a somewhat mysterious past. Patch takes Davy as an apprentice, and when Patch is hired as the surgeon on the Royal Navy frigate HMS Retribution, Davy goes along. When Lieutenant William Hunter, Patch's best friend on the ship, leads a failed mutiny, Uncle Patch is found guilty by association, and he is condemned to death along with the other mutineers. The rebels escape, however, and they steal a sloop, hoisting the Jolly Roger once they are out to sea. But things aren't quite what they seem: Patch and Hunter (think adult writer Patrick O'Brian's characters Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin) turn out to be secret agents, and the uprising is part of an elaborate scheme to rid the Caribbean of pirates. Readers set for swashbuckling historical adventure will be a little disappointed by this first volume in a planned series, as there's a great deal of rather ponderous background. But things pick up in the final pages (Davy joins his uncle on a pirate-hunting voyage), leaving the possibility for more action in the books to come. Todd Morning Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Chapter One The King's Mercy Someone was shaking me out of a fitful sleep. I opened my eyes and saw very little more than darkness with only a faint flicker of crimson. The man who had one hand on my shoulder was, with the other hand, holding up a lantern with a stubby inadequate candle in it. In the dark, stinking orlop of the merchant ship *Louisa*, the candle burned so ill that it was more a glow, feeble and red, than a light. "David Shea!" the figure slurred, his gin-soaked breath as much as his voice revealing him to be the Reverend Mr. Bonney. "David Shea! Wake up! We're anchored in Port Royal! Stir your lazy shanks, boy!" Groaning, I swung out of my hammock. My bare feet hit the splintery wood of the deck, and I heard a skitter in the darkness. "What's that?" I asked. "Just rats, David, just some of God's humbler creatures!" Rats. Some of the sailors hunted them, killed them, and ate them. Six weeks at sea had not yet given me a taste for rat. "Here!" The Reverend Mr. Bonney shoved a bundle into my hands. Even half-asleep, I recognized it. It was my canvas seabag, and it held my few worldly possessions: two shirts, two pair of breeches, small clothes, stockings, and the suit and pair of shoes the good Mr. Horne had bought for me to wear to my mother's funeral. Those, and the clothes I stood in, were all I owned. Mr. Bonney shook me again. "Are you awake?" "Yes, sir," I said. The minister gave me a rough shove. "Lazy, like all boys. That won't do now, lad. You'll need your wits about you." Mr. Bonney reached into his pocket and then shook a small gray cloth purse in my face. It jangled. "And you'll need this. 'Tis the money Mr. Horne gave me to keep for you." Before I could take it, he'd thrust it deep into my seabag, pulled the drawstring tight, and tied it. "There, that'll keep it safe for you. On deck, now. Look lively, look lively! It's just touch and go here." He led the way aft, then up a narrow companionway. I followed, hoping for fresher air -- for I was heartily sick of the sweaty, smelly atmosphere of the closed-in lower deck the sailors called the orlop. But we were fairly in the Caribbees, on the southern coast of Jamaica, and the night was tropical, heavy, and moist. I looked up at the dark sky. Thin clouds half-hid a waxing moon, making it a smudged white thumbprint on the face of the night. No stars at all. Mr. Bonney hauled at my arm. "Here he is!" "Sir -- Mr. Bonney," I said desperately, "where am I to find my uncle Patrick?" He snorted in annoyance, and the sharp odor of gin poured over me again. "Doing some wild, papish, heathenish business, no doubt." The minister was on his way to preach the Gospel on some island or other. Mr. Horne had assured me that Mr. Bonney would take care of me during our voyage. So far as I could tell, his "taking care" of me consisted merely of constantly losing small sums of money playing at dice or cards with

the sailors, drinking too much, and looking sour each time he saw me. He pulled me toward a group of men at the rail and growled, "He's said to stay at the inn called The King's Mercy. That is in Thames Street, and that is all I know. You men, there! Here he is at last, the nasty little slug!" Four sailors were loading a boat drawn up tight against the Louisa's larboard side. In the boat, two others manhandled the kegs and boxes into place. "Here you go, Davy lad," cried one of the sailors on deck, and from his voice I recognized him as Dennis O'Leary, who had a kindness for me because we both were Irish. "It's not so far a step down." Even so, I was glad enough that O'Leary swung me down from above and someone in the boat guided my legs from below. I dropped into the boat and took my place between a keg of nails and a pouch of mail, just visible in the light of the lanterns up on deck. As the last articles were stowed, I looked across the dark bay. Two or three ships lay at anchor closer in, their stern lanterns yellow flickers in the darkness. Beyond them loomed the town of Port Royal, dark blocks of buildings with here and there a dim window lit by a candle or a lantern within. "That's all," O'Leary shouted down. "Row dry." Without a word, the men in the boat pushed off from the ship, and I looked back. "Mr. Bonney! Where shall I find The King's Mercy, then?" One of the men at the oars chuckled. "At the end of a rope!" The others roared at this witticism. I sat there in the little boat, feeling abandoned. My temporary guardian had vanished, but Dennis O'Leary took pity on me. "From the dock take the left hand turning," He called across the water. "Follow the street until you see the sign. 'Twill be on your starboard side, Davy Shea." "And can you read the sign when you see it?" the other oarsman in the boat asked me, his tone amused. "Sure, and I can read well enough. Mr. Horne taught me, and he a professor from Oxford and all." "You can read?" the first boatman asked me in surprise. "How old are you?" "Twelve. Almost twelve," I corrected, for I always told the truth, when convenient. Both of my boat mates gave grunts of surprise at that. Not another word did they say to me until we bumped up to a pier. Then one leaped out and made the boat fast, bow and stern, and the other said, "Off you go, now, Davy Shea. Your course is larboard and bear straight until you see the sign. And the luck of the sea go with you!" The land felt strange under my feet after so many weeks at sea. I must have staggered like a sailor who had taken more rum than his head could carry, but bearing my bundle, I walked down the pier and made my turn. All was as still and dark as it could well be. I had it in mind to ask what o'clock it was, but the boatmen were busy unloading. It had the feel of three or four in the dead of morning, though. The street about me seemed full asleep. I walked on, the hard-packed sand of the street feeling rough beneath my bare feet. Few lights showed, and the few that did whirled about with white or pale green moths the size of my hand. The night smelled different from nights in Bristol, where my mother had reared me after my father died. I could smell the familiar fishy, salty ocean, but also something sweet and spicy. The warehouses I passed, looming out of the darkness, gave out other smells, too: dry cotton, tobacco, and molasses. Once away from the docks and the loading and unloading, everything was still and warm, and the whole place seemed less like a town and more like a great sea beast slumbering. At last I saw ahead a sign hanging over a door, and over the sign a lantern. I had just passed an alley when I heard a growl behind me. My heart thudded into my throat, and I spun around like a leaf in a gale, nearly crouching to the earth in my alarm. From the dark alley, a dog had crept. I could not well see him, for the hanging lantern was still fifty steps away. The beast was just a shadowy dark shape, snarling and growling at me. I could tell he was a big one, though, and I caught the white flash of his bared teeth. "Get away!" I yelled, hoping my voice did not show as much fear as I felt. The dog barked at me savagely, remarkably unimpressed. I had it in mind that so unpleasant a creature probably had known rocks to be thrown at him. Quickly I stooped, grabbed a handful of air, and raised my arm back. "Go!" Sure enough, the mongrel flinched away. I raised my arm higher, and he turned and trotted off a piece. Then he stopped and growled back over his shoulder at me. I stamped the earth and pretended to throw a stone, and the coward of a cur ran back into his alley. I turned on my heel and made good time down Thames Street, toward the next lantern. In its light, the sign creaked back and forth in the humid breeze. I could read the words "The King's Mercy," painted in bold red letters. And dangling from the sign, as it would from a gallows, swung a hangman's noose. King James's mercy at the end of a rope. The boatman had not been just making a joke, after all. But the lantern aside, the whole house was dark, and I hesitated to pound upon the door. It could not be long until daybreak, I told myself. So I stuffed my seabag behind me for comfort's sake, settled in the doorway, and leaned back to wait. Saints in heaven, but I was weary. I told myself not to sleep, though. The big mongrel dog might come back. But it was probably safe just to sit quietly and rest. Closing my eyes, I thought with a pang of my poor mother. My father I could hardly remember, for he had served in the king's army and was rarely home. Up until the previous March, my whole world was the little house in Bristol, where my mother worked as a housekeeper for old Mr. Horne. I thought of him as the learned man of the world. Mr. Horne had retired from teaching years and years before and had come to live in a small little house that his father had left him. He was spindly as a cricket, and to me he seemed a hundred years old, though I am sure he could not really have been past eighty. But he was not testy toward young people, as the old often are. He took a real interest in me, and we always spent an hour or more every day, him teaching me my letters and my numbers, and then listening to me read, or correcting what I wrote. Mr. Horne was an old bachelor with no family to speak of, but he treated me like a favorite grandson for all that. I do believe that he would have taken me into his family by adoption after my mother died in March, if he had not been so very ancient. Still and all, it was Mr. Horne who had found out where my doctor uncle, Patrick Shea, had gone to live, and it was he who had bought me passage and had given me a present of money on the

day that we sailed for Jamaica. Despite all the heat and all my fever at being ashore again, I shivered there, leaning against the door of the King's Mercy. My Uncle Patrick. Even the very words sounded strange. My mother had rarely spoken of her brother-in-law, and I knew nothing about him, other than he had studied medicine at Trinity College in Dublin and had qualified as a surgeon. My understanding was that he had gone off to sea at about the time my father and mother married -- some disagreement had risen between the brothers Shea, I gathered, but Lord knows what its nature might have been. And now I was to live with him here, on this strange island. A dog howled somewhere, far off. I relaxed a bit. If it was my mongrel, he was going away from me. Above me the night insects spun in a storm around the lantern. The island air seemed too warm, and the creaking sign almost like a clock ticking. My eyelids felt as if they were made of lead. To keep myself occupied, I began to whisper a prayer for my mother's soul. After one or two repetitions, I began to jumble the words. I closed my eyes to help me better concentrate, and before I knew it, the prayer trailed off and sleep crept in, and I dropped into a dream of my mother singing an old Irish song to me. Text copyright 2002 by Brad Strickland and Thomas E. Fuller