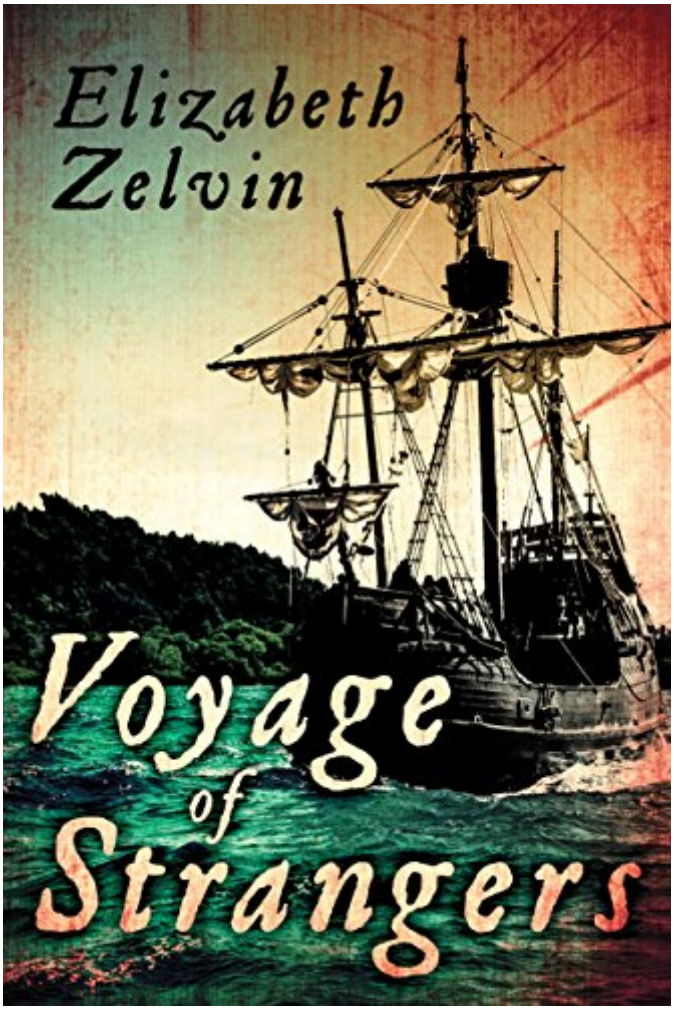
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Voyage Of Strangers (Mendoza Family Saga Book 1)



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Synopsis

The year is 1493, and young Jewish sailor Diego Mendoza has returned from ColumbusÃ¢â ¬â„¢s triumphant first voyage with tales of lush landscapes, rivers running with gold, and welcoming locals. But back home in Spain, Diego finds the Inquisition at its terrifying peak, and he must protect his spirited sister, Rachel, from betrayal and death. Disguising herself as a boy, Rachel sneaks onto ColumbusÃ¢â ¬â„¢s second expedition, bound for the new lands they call the Indies. As the Spaniards build their first settlements and search for gold, Diego and Rachel fall in love with the place, people, and customs. Still forced to hide their religious faith and RachelÃ¢â ¬â„¢s true identity, the brother and sister witness the SpaniardsÃ¢â ¬â„¢ devastation of the island in their haste to harvest riches.This unflinching look at ColumbusÃ¢â ¬â„¢s exploration and its terrible cost to the native Taino people introduces two valiant young people who struggle against the inevitable destruction of paradise.Revised edition: This edition of Voyage of Strangers includes editorial revisions.

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Customer Reviews

The only thing VOYAGE OF STRANGERS has in common with Zelvin's highly regarded Bruce Kohler mystery series, is Zelvin's fine writing, observant eye, and gripping story telling.Voyage is the story of the adventures of young Diego Mendoza and his sister Rachel, Jews living in Spain during the Inquisition. Because of Diego's father's friendship with Christopher Columbus, Diego secures a place as a sailor with Columbus on his voyage to find the new world. Columbus discovers a land he named Hispaniola, built a fort using wood from the wrecked Santa Maria, and befriend the natives, the Taino, who shower the explorers with gifts, including gold.Columbus leaves forty men at the fort and returns to Spain to tell of his discovery and bring gifts of gold to encourage more support from the king and queen. Once he is back in Spain, Diego realizes his twelve-year-old sister is in danger and arranges for her to sail, unescorted, to Italy where she will be safe with their parents. However, Rachel recognizes she is in danger from the captain hired to transport her on his ship and escapes. As she wanted all along, Rachel dons boys clothes and boards the ship Diego and Columbus are on, as it sets sail for Hispaniola. Columbus agrees, on a ship with no women Rachel needs to be protected, so she is to continue to pretend to be a boy called Rafael, to act as Columbus' scribe and to sleep in his quarters. So begins the exciting and tension-filled adventures of these two young people.A major theme of Voyage of Strangers is the terrible things done in the name of religion, relevant in today's world as well as in the time of Columbus.Voyage was gripping and I found it hard to put down. I would recommend Voyage to any one who enjoys historical novels, both adults and young adults.

Two things I know when I find them are good writing and well told historyI read historicals with a map in one hand and a non-fiction account of the events in the other. A Voyage ofStrangers is well researched and well written. The characters are strong and believable; the landscape isalluring.I don't know a lot about the period of discovery. Most of my own work is set from 1600 on. I learned somethingnew from reading it. But more important, I found myself entranced by the feel of the period.This is a story about people with power being at their best and worst among people with none.I wanted to cheer for everyone, well, almost everyone.The author is telling the story of her characters, and while she is grounded in the events, it is the characters who tell the story, not the author's need to get the history on the page.I loved every minute I spent with Diego and Rachel, and their friends and fellow travelers.

I started reading this book because it was one of the free Samsung Book Deals of the month. I am glad to have found and read it, I consider it a good, yet sad fictional story set within the late years of

the 1400.Spoiler alert: Generally it followed a Jewish sailor named Diego, and his little sister named Rachel, who traveled with her brother from Spain to the Caribbean Islands dressed as a boy. They had to hide not only Rachel's gender, but also the fact that they were Jews from the other sailors and priest who were Christians during the time of the inquisition. As well as see and face the brutal treatment the Christian sailors had on the helpful and kind Taino (the island native indians), who Diego and Rachel had befriended.

I have not yet finished this book - it was simplistic, possibly it was meant for the juvenile/teen-age market. If so, it is a tale of two young observant Jews in Spain just after 1492 when they and the Moors were expelled from Spain. The expulsion order allowed those who converted to Catholicism to stay, but thereby they also came under the jurisdiction of the Inquisition (Torquemada and all that), with all that that implied. There is also Columbus whose crew may or may not have included Jews in his voyages of discovery. In this book, they did and thereby starts the tale. The author conveys a great deal of information about the period, but her style is just too simple and matter of fact. Life at the end of the XV Century was dramatic and full of tension at least for city dwellers and mariners on long journeys, to say nothing of the many wars in Europe at the time. I imagine I will finish this book one day, but I do not feel any urgency about it and hence the three stars.

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