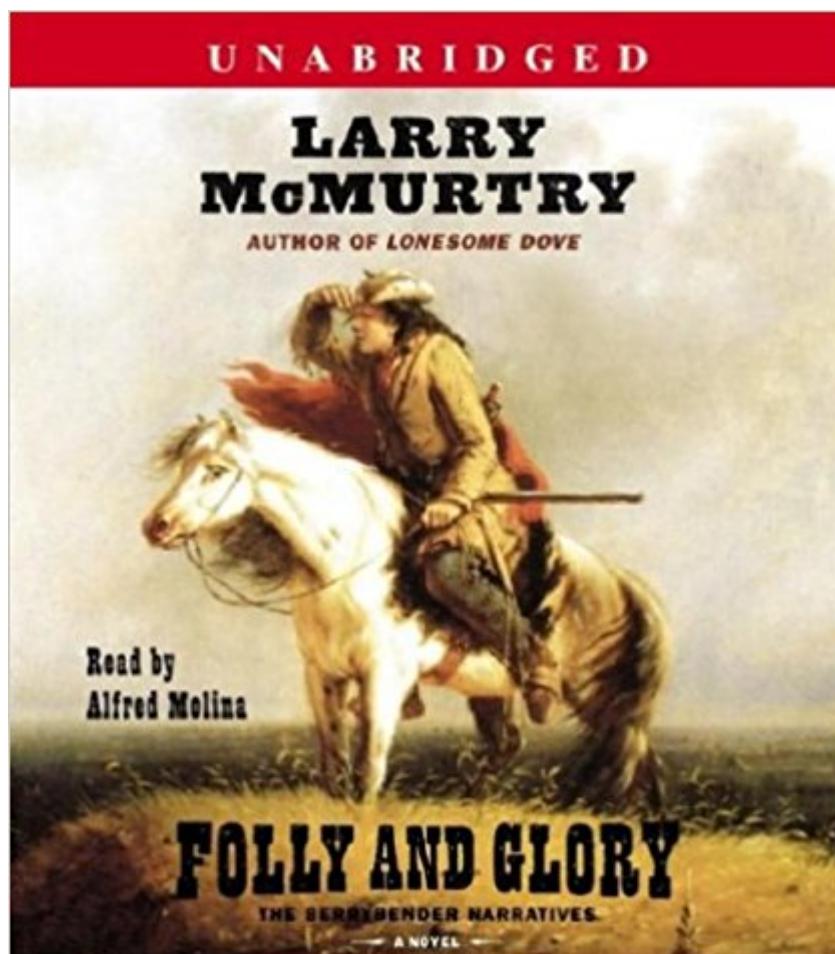


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Folly And Glory: A Novel (Berrybender Narratives)



Synopsis

In the final volume of The Berrybender Narratives, Tasmin and her family are under arrest in Mexican Santa Fe. Tasmin, who would once have followed her husband anywhere, is no longer even sure she likes him, or knows where to go to next. Captain Clark, of Lewis and Clark fame, is puzzled by the great changes sweeping over the West, replacing red men and buffalo with towns and farms. Jim Snow, Kit Carson and one of Lord Berrybender's many illegitimate offspring make their way back to Santa Fe. But even they are unable to prevent the Mexicans from carrying the Berrybender family on a long and terrible journey across the desert to Vera Cruz. Beset by Indians and hounded by their Mexican guards, the Berrybenders endure all the horror of the Jornado del Muerto -- the legendary Dead Man's Walk. The Mexican commander of the party falls in love with Tasmin, with unhappy consequences. Starving, dying of thirst, they finally make their way to New Orleans, where Jim Snow has to choose between Tasmin and the great American plains. And after all her adventures, Tasmin must finally decide where her future lies.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the fourth and final volume in McMurtry's Berrybender Narratives (following *By Sorrow's River*), a frontier epic of lusty and bloody proportions, in which, fortunately, nearly everyone is killed off. Lord Berrybender, an arrogant and lecherous Englishman and his whining brood of daughters, their brats and servants have been arrested by Mexican authorities and are under house arrest in Santa Fe in the mid-1830s. Tensions between Mexicans and Americans run high as the dispute

over Texas drifts toward war. When the Berrybender party is expelled from Santa Fe, the group is forced to march across the desert to Vera Cruz, escorted by inept Mexican soldiers. The grueling journey is filled with hardship and death as thirst, cholera and hostile Indians whittle the group by half. Meanwhile, Jim Snow, aka the Sin Killer, a famous mountain man, plans to rescue his white wife, Tasmin Berrybender, and her family somewhere along the desert route. Once the rescue is complete and the surviving Berrybenders are safely in Texas, Jim goes after the gang of slavers who murdered his son and his Indian wife (mountain men seem to have a lot of wives). Here McMurtry really shows why Jim is called the Sin Killer and why white men and Indians fear the mountain man who shrieks "the Word" and shows no mercy when he is riled up. Of the four books in the series, this is the bloodiest and most brutal, with rapes, torture, mutilation and death heaped upon the characters until grief and despair nearly consume them. Add the disaster at the Alamo and a passel of colorful Texas heroes to the enduring figures of mountain men Kit Carson and Tom Fitzpatrick, and this grisly frontier soap opera concludes with a bang. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Take them for what they are, critics say of Folly and Glory and the rest of the Berrybender Narratives, and you might enjoy it. Judge it against Lonesome Dove, and you will inevitably be disappointed. Criticisms of the book include its meandering and thin plot, stereotypical characters, and indiscriminate violence. Still, critics agree that this volume is much better than the previous three, particularly with the matured character of Tasmin. It at least offers a sense of closure and a meditation on the nature of the American frontier. Beware: most reviewers agreed that if you read Folly and Glory separately from the rest of the series, you won't fully understand the plot. It might be all or nothing of the Berrybender lot! Copyright © 2004 Phillips & Nelson Media, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

If you start the Berrybender books, you will have to hibernate, because they are truly addictive and you won't be able to stop. I just had to get each book in the series because the adventure was so well written and so compelling, and the characters are so well drawn. Between acquiring other books in the series, all I could think about was that family. As with everything by McMurtry, the research is excellent and it seems he was actually in the West during those days. The man is totally genius.

Not the best of the 4 in this series but it was good to get it over with. It seems that McMurtry rushed the story line but at his age that's not surprising. This series was not the same quality as his best works such as Lonesome Dove and Comanche Moon but more like a western version of All My Friends Are Going To Be Strangers. I still enjoyed reading it. There are still classic McMurtry elements and if you're a fan you should enjoy it.

If you cannot commit to all four books, don't bother. The point and the impact is lost if you don't read the series. I was skeptical while reading the first two. I wasn't sure if I was reading satire or not. By the third book, McMurtry had his hooks set and I was surprised at the depth of engagement I felt by the end. A great read about a changing time in our history, told with humor and sometimes just the authentic absurdity brought about by conditions in the wilderness without censoring or embellishing the brutality. What seemed insensitivity at the beginning, McMurtry proves once again that not only does he fully understand his characters, with all their flaws and weaknesses, but is able to make his reader see them as whole beings. I was again surprised at the depth of affection and attachments I felt for them at the end. Several reviewers said they thought this series was a sad end to a brilliant career. I disagree. I thought it was another brilliant portrayal of a special time and place in our history... and a hell of a fun read.

You know there are books you just can't put down? Well, here's one you don't want to pick up. Sure I've read all of McMurtry, so I know he can do better. I even read the first books in this series. But, by now there are so many characters and past history that I've forgotten, I just can't keep up with them and pretty soon don't even care. It was somewhere around 30% on my kindle that I realized I don't even know what I'm reading and started skimming along to get through to something beside all the characters and finally found a place where the author started killing them off - good idea. He could have done much better by giving a little prologue and reminding us who was whom.

Good to the end. Sin killer goes back to the prairies, life goes on. Great reading loved every page. Made me laugh and sometimes cry. What a adventure, written by a great author.

Could not get past the first 10% of the book.... horible read. Very-very difficult to keep up or follow. I purchase books to read and enjoy, not labor with names, notes, and confusion trying to figure out what the story is.

The other 3 books were the best and I really enjoyed them. The characters in this one were not so believable. The intellect of the children was far above what they would really have been capable of and not at all believable. Perhaps Mr. McMurtry just got burned out by the time he got to this last book. Seems like the Sin Killer truly had some serious problems of his own so it was best he stayed in the wilderness and Tasmin was relieved of having to forever deal with him.

Folly and Glory is part-four of a four-part series chronically the adventures of the aristocratic, English Berrybender family exploring the American West in the 1830's on a steamship on the Missouri River. Lord Berrybender is accompanied by his gluttonous wife and six of his 14 legitimate children. The series is historical fiction in that it incorporates actual people such as Kit Carson and Jim Bridges, yet the tales are so fanciful that history is left in the dust. Outrageous is the best general characterization of these stories. The adventures and their characters seem larger than life and more colorful than neon. Not for the faint of heart, unexpected, random, senseless and disturbing atrocities, injuries, and deaths litter these tales, with a side of lots of "rutting." The majority of the initial primary characters do not survive to see book four of the series. Yet, the stories grabbed me. I went through the series like popcorn, wanting to see what amazing events would occur to the crazy Berrybenders and their growing entourage. The series is intense, rollercoastering through every facet of human emotion and many aspects of abnormal psychology. Nothing dull in these books. The frequent connections to actual historical persons and events keep the tales interesting and grounded, despite the continuum of bizarre incidents. Not for everyone, but I liked it.

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