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BENITO CERENO (Spanish Edition)



Synopsis

An incredible odyssey of displaced people in the sea. During a maritime cruise, a group of black slaves revolted to force the return to their African home. This is the plot basis of Melville's beautiful novel, which is a part of an anthology called The Piazza Tales. All the stories have in common the description of people that live outlaw lives, that are displaced and in search of their roots. It is a book that brings both the pitiful condition of the slaves and moments of great suspense, as well as the right psychological portrait of ship captains that have to choose between what is legally correct and morally right.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Benito Cereno" is one of the few really interesting short stories written by inconsistent American author Herman Melville. Set in the southern coasts of Chile in the year 1799, it tells us about the finding by an American sealer of the "San Dominick", a forlorn and decrepit Spanish ship, partly dismasted, which holds a cargo of Negro slaves and that seems to go adrift. American captain Amasa Delano, fearing that the crew in the foreign ship might have suffered difficulties, decides to go aboard and see what happens. Once Delano is on deck, he'll be the witness of a very peculiar spectacle. On board the "San Dominick", white sailors and black slaves intermingle together without any restriction. The disorder and lack of discipline are obvious for anyone to see. When he finally meets Spanish captain Benito Cereno, the American is quite shocked by his apathetic and melancholy character. The Spaniard's despondency curiously reflects in no small degree the pitiful state of affairs around him. Delano is also baffled about the mystifying relationship between the

Spanish captain and his black servant, the ubiquitous Babo. At first sight, both individuals seem to play their respective roles appropriately, but appearances can be deceptive, and, who's really the master and who the slave? Nothing in "Benito Cereno" is what appears to be in the eyes of the casual observer. This tale is one of the best ever written about human perception. From the moment Delano sets foot on the ship, he undergoes a very slow process of awareness about the situation and the people he's dealing with. His personal view about matters on deck is always limited and inaccurate.

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