

GILES KRISTIAN

# RAVEN

## BLOOD EYE

Unleashed by Bantam Press on 26th February 2009, price £12.99

An outstanding new talent in historical fiction writing, Giles Kristian is putting the cool back into the Norse saga with his gung ho, kick-ass adventure story. With a conflicted hero at its heart, **Raven** is the first of a Viking trilogy and is an unashamedly gritty, action-packed tale about a time when men were men and male grooming went about as far as a reindeer antler comb!

*“Being half Norwegian and spending so much time in the fjords, I have always known I would write a Viking novel”, says Giles. “As a child, I would look out across the water, letting my imagination summon the image of a dragon-prowed longboat rowed by grizzled, bearded men. I could, if I really concentrated, hear the sound of oars dipping in unison into the sea. I still do it even now! I imagine families standing on the smooth rocks of the shore, waving their menfolk off. I feel the fear knotting in the men's stomachs as they set off in open boats across the North Sea. I feel the prickle of excitement beneath my skin.”*

Bringing the ancient Norse world to life, **Raven** is a rich and violent coming-of-age story that addresses the nature of belonging and acceptance as it delves into the mind of a young man thrust into a strange new world. It also shows us that the unquenchable desire for fame is nothing new, as the brave warriors lust after the glory that is their shining path to immortality.

For two years Osric has lived a simple life, apprenticed to the mute old carpenter who took him in when others would have him cast out. But when Norsemen from across the sea burn his village, Osric finds himself a prisoner of these marauders. Their chief, Sigurd the Lucky, believes the Norns have woven this strange boy's fate together with his own, and Osric begins to sense glorious purpose among this Fellowship of warriors.

Immersed in the Norsemen's world and driven by their lust for adventure, Osric proves a natural warrior and forges a blood bond with Sigurd, who renames him Raven. But the Norsemen's world is a savage one, where loyalty is often repaid in blood and where a young man must become a killer to survive.

When the Fellowship faces annihilation from Ealdred of Wessex, Raven chooses a bloody and dangerous path, accepting the mission of raiding deep into hostile lands to steal a holy book from the King of Mercia. There he will find much more than the Holy Gospels of St Jerome. He will find Cynethryth, an English girl with a soul to match his own. And he will find betrayal at the hands of cruel men, some of whom he regarded as friends...

## Praise for *RAVEN: BLOOD EYE*

*“A powerful, lightning-paced tale of the Norsemen in England; an astonishing and riveting debut.”*

**BERNARD CORNWELL**

*“A gripping tale of action and treachery which splendidly conjures up the sounds, sights and smells of Dark Age Britain. It creates a believable world of men fighting, feasting and braving the sea, a time when the Christian and Norse gods were very real and very close in the thoughts of mankind. It leaves the reader keen for the sequel.”*

**HARRY SIDEBOTTOM, author of *Warrior of Rome***

*“An excellent book. If I ever thought of writing a prequel concerning *The Oathsworn*, I could not better this.”*

**ROBERT LOW, author of *The Whale Road***

*“Kristian’s first novel is a rip-roaring viking saga in the glorious, blood-soaked tradition of Low’s *The Whale Road* and the Severin ‘Viking’ trilogy. Raven is a complex, engaging hero, trying to carve a path through a world that is satisfyingly confusing while still retaining the bedrock of all good sagas: a woman to fight for, a church treasure and a duplicitous priest.*

*Fine, powerful, thrilling stuff!”*

**MANDA SCOTT**

### About the author

Born in Leicester in 1975 to an English father and Norwegian mother, Giles has led a varied and somewhat unconventional life. His rock 'n' roll singer father had nurtured a dream that would lead Giles to the bright lights of fame. His degree in English Literature and Language at UCE was cut short when he was offered a place in 90s boy band Upside Down as their lead singer. Giles has sung for H.R.H The Prince of Wales and has performed at such venues as The Royal Albert Hall and Wembley Arena, alongside artists such as Eric Clapton, Dame Shirley Bassey, The Back Street Boys and Meat Loaf, to name a few.

But boy bands grow up and after a brief solo career, Giles took on some modeling work appearing in national TV ads and poster campaigns for brands such as Canon, Panasonic, and Walls where he was the face of Magnum ice cream. He has also freelanced for several advertising agencies, writing sales copy and ad concepts.

Embarking on his writing career, Giles returned to further education to study Medieval History at the University of London. *Raven* is his debut novel and he is currently hard at work writing the follow up whilst dividing his time between London and New York.



Visit Giles' website at [www.gileskristian.com](http://www.gileskristian.com)

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