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# The Kings Buccaneer



*Par Raymond E. Feist*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThe whole of the magnificent Riftwar Cycle by bestselling author Raymond E. Feist, master of magic and adventure, now available in ebookIn Amos Trask's ship, Prince Nicholas and Squire Harry set sail for a friendly visit to Uncle Martin in Crydee. But while the two are guests in Crydee, disaster strikes.Nicholas, third son of Prince Arutha, is a gifted youngster, but sheltered by life at his fathers court in Krondor. To learn more of the world outside the palace walls, Nicholas and his squire, Harry, set sail for pastoral Crydee, where Arutha grew up.Shortly after their arrival, Crydee is brutally attacked. The castle is reduced to ruins, the townspeople slaughtered and two young noblewomen friends of Nicholas are

abducted. As Nicholas ventures further from the familiar landmarks of his home in pursuit of the invaders, he learns that there is more at stake than the fate of his friends, more even than fate of the Kingdom of the Isles, for behind the murderous pirates stands a force that threatens the entire world of Midkemia, and only he is destined to confront this terrifying threat. Set ten years after the events in *Prince of Blood*, *The King's Buccaneer* returns to Feists best-loved world in this stand-alone novel.

**Extrait 1 Decision**

The lookout pointed. "Boat dead ahead!" Amos Trask, Admiral of the Prince's fleet of the Kingdom Navy, shouted, "What?" The harbor pilot who stood beside the Admiral, guiding the Prince of Krondor's flagship, the Royal Dragon, toward the palace docks, shouted to his assistant at the bow, "Wave them off!" The assistant pilot, a sour-looking young man, shouted back, "They fly the royal ensign!" Amos Trask unceremoniously pushed past the pilot. Still a barrel-chested, bull-necked man at past sixty years of age, he hurried toward the bow with the sure step of a man who'd spent most of his life at sea. After sailing Prince Arutha's flagship in and out of Krondor for nearly twenty years, he could dock her blindfolded, but custom required the presence of the harbor pilot. Amos disliked turning over command of his ship to anyone, least of all an officious and not very personable member of the Royal Harbormaster's staff. Amos suspected that the second requirement for a position in that office was an objectionable personality. The first seemed to be marriage to one of the Harbormaster's numerous sisters or daughters. Amos reached the bow and looked ahead. His dark eyes narrowed as he observed the scene unfolding below. As the ship glided toward the quay, a small sailing boat, no more than fifteen feet in length, attempted to dart into the opening ahead of it. Clumsily tied to the top of the mast was a pennant, a small version of the Prince of Krondor's naval ensign. Two young men frantically worked the sails and tiller, one attempting to hold as strong a line to the dock as possible while the other furled a jib. Both laughed at the impromptu race. "Nicholas!" shouted Amos, as the boy lowering the jib waved at him. "You idiot! We're cutting your wind! Turn about!" The boy at the helm turned to look at Amos and threw him an impudent grin. "I should have known," said Amos to the assistant pilot. To the grinning boy, Amos shouted, "Harry! You lunatic!" Glancing back, seeing the last of the sails reefed, Amos observed, "We're coasting to the docks, we don't have room to turn if we wanted to, and we certainly can't stop." All ships coming into Krondor dropped anchor in the middle of the harbor, waiting for longboats to tow them to the docks. Amos was the only man with rank enough to intimidate the harbor pilot into allowing him to drop sail at the proper moment and coast into the docks. He took pride in always reaching the proper place for the land lines to be thrown out and in having never crashed the docks or required a tow. He had coasted into his slip a hundred times in twenty years, but never before with a pair of insane boys playing games in front of the ship. Looking forward at the small boat, which was now slowing even more rapidly, Amos said, "Tell me, Lawrence, how does it feel to be the man on the bow when you drown the Prince of Krondor's youngest son?" Color drained from the assistant pilot's face as he turned toward the small boat. In a high-pitched voice he began shrieking at the boys to get out of the way. Turning his back on the scene below, Amos shook his head as he leaned back against the railing. He ran his hand over his nearly bald pate, the grey hair around it--once dark and curly--now tied back behind his head in a sailor's knot. After a moment attempting to ignore what they were doing, Amos gave in. He turned around, leaning forward and to the right so he could see past the bowsprit. Below, Nicholas was leaning into the oar, one leg braced firmly against the base of the mast, the oar firmly planted against the bow of the ship. He looked terrified. Amos could hear Nicholas shout, "Harry! You'd better turn to port!" Amos nodded in silent agreement, for if Harry pulled hard to port, the small sailboat would swing wide of the lumbering ship, getting banged around, perhaps swamped, but at least the boys would be alive. If they drifted suddenly to starboard, the boat would quickly be ground between the ship's hull and the approaching pilings of the dock. Lawrence, the assistant pilot, said, "The Prince is fending us off." "Ha!" Amos shook his head. "Letting us push them into the dock, you mean." Cupping his hands around his mouth, Amos shouted, "Harry! Hard aport!" The young squire only yelled a maniacal war whoop in answer as he struggled with the tiller, to keep the boat centered upon the ship's bow. "Like balancing a ball on a sword point." Amos sighed. He could tell by the speed of the ship and its location that it was time to ready the lines. He turned his back on the boys once more. From below came the sounds of Harry whooping and yelling in exultation as the fast-moving ship pushed the small boat along. Lawrence said, "The Prince is holding the boat in front. He's struggling, but he's doing it." Amos called, "Ready bowlines! Ready stern lines!" Sailors near the bow and stern readied lines to throw to dockmen waiting below. "Admiral!" said Lawrence in excited tones. Amos closed his eyes. "I don't want to hear it." "Admiral! They've lost control! They're veering to starboard!" Amos said, "I said I didn't want to hear it." He turned toward the assistant pilot, who stood with a panic-stricken expression on his face as the sounds of

the small boat being crushed between the ship and the dock grated on their ears. The cracking of wood and tearing of planks were accompanied by shouts from the men on the dock. The assistant pilot said, "It wasn't my fault." An unfriendly smile split Amos's silver and grey beard as he said, "I'll testify to that at your trial. Now order the lines, or you'll smash us against the wharf." Seeing the remark didn't register on the shocked man, Amos shouted, "Secure the bowlines!" A second later the pilot called for the stern lines to be secured, and these were tossed to those waiting below. The ship had lost almost all its forward movement and, when the lines went taut, stopped altogether. Amos shouted, "Secure all lines! Run out the gangplank!" Turning toward the dock, he peered down into the churning water between the ship and the dock. Seeing bubbles amid the floating wood, line, and sail, he yelled to the dock gang, "Lower a rope there to those two idiots swimming beneath the dock before they drown!" By the time Amos was off the ship, the two wet youngsters had climbed up to the dock. Amos came to where they stood and regarded the soaked pair. Nicholas, the youngest son of the Prince of Krondor, stood with his weight shifted slightly to the right. His left boot had a raised heel to compensate for the deformed foot he'd possessed since birth. Otherwise Nicholas was a well-made, slender boy of seventeen. He resembled his father, having angular features and dark hair, but he lacked Prince Arutha's intensity, though he rivaled him in quickness. He had his mother's quiet nature and gentle manner, which somehow made his eyes look different from his father's, though they were the same dark brown. At the moment he looked thoroughly embarrassed. His companion was another matter. Henry, known to the court as Harry because his father, the Earl of Ludland, was also named Henry, grinned as if he hadn't been the butt of the joke. The same age as Nicholas, he was a half-head taller, had curly red hair and a ruddy face, and was considered handsome by most of the younger court ladies. He was a playful youngster who often let his adventuresome nature get the better of him, and from time to time his sense of fun took him beyond the limits of good judgment. Most of the time, Nicholas traveled beyond that border with him. Harry ran a hand through his wet hair and laughed. "What's so funny?" asked Amos. "Sorry about the boat, Admiral," answered the Squire, "but if you could have seen the assistant pilot's face . . ." Amos frowned at the two youngsters, then couldn't hold in his own laughter. "I did. It was a sight to behold." He threw wide his arms and Nicholas gave him a rough hug. "Glad you're back, Amos. Sorry you missed the Midsummer's Feast." Pushing the Prince away with exaggerated distaste, Amos said, "Bah! You're all wet. Now I'm going to have to go change before I meet with your father." The three began walking toward the wharf next to the palace. "What news?" asked Nicholas. "Things are quiet. Trading ships from the Far Coast, Kesh, and Queg, and the usual traffic from the Free Cities. It's been a peaceful year." Harry said, "We were hoping for some rousing tales of adventure." His tone was slightly mocking. Amos playfully smacked him in the back of the head with the flat of his hand. "I'll give you adventure, you maniac. What did you think you were doing?" Harry rubbed at the back of his head and attempted an aggrieved expression. "We had right-of-way." "Right-of-way!" said Amos, halting in disbelief. "In the open harbor, perhaps, with ample room to turn, but 'right-of-way' doesn't halt a three-masted warship bearing down on you with no place to turn and no way to stop." He shook his head as he resumed walking toward the palace. "Right-of-way indeed." Looking at Nicholas, he said, "What were you doing out on the bay this time of day? I thought you had studies." "Prelate Graham is in conference with Father," answered Nicholas. "So we went fishing." "Catch anything?" Harry grinned. "The biggest fish you've ever seen, Admiral." "Now that it's back in the bay, it's the biggest, you mean," answered Amos with a laugh. Nicholas said, "We didn't catch anything worth talking about." Amos said, "Well, run along and change into something less damp. I'm going to refresh myself, then call upon your father." "Will you be at dinner?" asked the young Prince. "I expect." "Good; Grandmother is in Krondor." Amos brightened at that news. "Then I will most certainly be there." Nicholas gave Amos a crooked half-smile that was the image of his father's and said, "I doubt anyone thinks it coincidence that she chose to visit Mother just in time to be here for your return." Amos only grinned. "It's my boundless charm." With a playful slap to the heads of both boys, he said, "Now go! I must report to Duke Geoffrey, then I'm off to my quarters to change into something more fitting for dinner with . . . your father." He winked at Nicholas and strode off, whistling a nameless tune. Nicholas and Harry hurried along, stockings squishing in their boots, toward the Prince's quarters. Harry had a small room near Nicholas's, as he was officially Prince Nicholas's Squire. The Prince's palace in Krondor rested hard against the bay, having in ancient times been the defensive bastion of the Kingdom on the Bitter Sea. The royal docks were separated from the rest of the harbor by an area of open shoreline that was contained within the walls of the palace. Nicholas and Harry cut across the open expanse of beach and approached the palace from the water. The palace rose majestically atop a hill, outlined against the afternoon sky, a sprawling series of apartments and halls grafted around the

original keep, which still served as the heart of the complex. Dwarfed by several other towers and spires added over the last few centuries, the old keep still commanded the eye, a brooding reminder of days gone by, when the world was a far more dangerous place. Nicholas and Harry pushed open an old metal gate, which provided access to the harbor for those who worked in the kitchen. The pungency of the harbor, with its smells of fish, brine, and tar, gave way to more appetizing aromas as they neared the kitchen. The boys hurried down past the washhouse and the bakehouse, through a small vegetable garden, and down a low flight of stone stairs, moving among servants' huts. They approached the servants' entrance to the royal family's private apartments, not wishing a chance encounter with any of Prince Arutha's staff or, more to the point, with the Prince himself. Reaching the doors used by the serving staff closest to their own rooms, Nicholas opened it just as a pair of the palace serving girls approached from within carrying bundles of linens bound for the washhouse behind the palace. He stood aside, though his rank gave him precedence, out of respect for their heavy loads. Harry gave both the girls, only a few years older than himself, his version of a rakish grin. One giggled and the other fixed him with a look appropriate to finding a rodent in the larder. As the young women hurried off, conscious of their impact on the two adolescent boys, Harry grinned and said, "She wants me." Nicholas gave him a hard push that sent him stumbling through the door, saying, "Just about as much as I want the belly flux. Keep dreaming." Hurrying up the stairs to the family's quarters, Harry said, "No, she does. She hides it, but I can tell." Nicholas said, "Harry the lady's man. Lock up your daughters, Krondor." After the bright afternoon sunlight, the hallway was positively gloomy. At the end of the hall, they turned up stairs that took them out of the servants' area to the apartments of the royal family. At the top of the stairs, they opened the door and peeked through. Seeing no one of rank, the two boys hurried to their respective doors, located halfway down the hall from the servants' door. Between this door and his own a mirror hung, and, catching his own reflection, Nicholas said, "It's a good thing Father didn't see us." Nicholas entered his own quarters, a large pair of rooms, with enormous closets and a private garderobe, so he didn't have to leave the room to relieve himself. He quickly stripped off his wet clothing and dried himself. He turned and caught sight of himself in a large mirror, a luxury of immense value, as it was fashioned from silvered glass imported from Kesh. His body--that of a boy on the way to becoming a man--showed a broadening chest and shoulders; he had a man's growth of body hair, as well as a need to shave daily. But his face was still a boy's, lacking the set of features that only time can give. As he finished drying, he looked at his left foot as he had every day of his life. A ball of flesh, with tiny protuberances that should have been toes, extended from the base of an otherwise well-formed left leg. The foot had been the object of medicine and magic since his birth, but had resisted all attempts at healing. No less sensitive to touch and sensation as the right foot, it nevertheless was difficult for Nicholas to command; the muscles were connected incorrectly to bones the wrong size to perform the tasks nature intended. Like most people with a lifetime affliction, Nicholas had compensated to the point of rarely being aware of it. He walked with only a slight limp. He was an excellent swordsman, perhaps the equal of his father, who was counted the best in the Western Realm. The Palace Swordmaster judged him as already a better swordsman than his two elder brothers were at his age. He could dance, as required by his office--son of the ruler of the Western Realm--but the one thing that he could not compensate for was a terrible feeling that he was somehow less than he should be. Nicholas was a soft-spoken, reflective youngster who preferred the quiet solitude of his father's library to the more boisterous activities of most boys his age. He was an excellent swimmer, a fine horseman, and a fair archer in addition to being skilled at swordplay, but all his life he had felt deficient. A vague sense of failure, and a haunting guilt, seemed to fill him unexpectedly, and often he would find his mind seized by dark brooding. With company, he was often merry and enjoyed a joke as well as the next boy, but if left alone, Nicholas found his mind seized by worry. That had been one reason Harry had come to Krondor. As he dressed, Nicholas shook his head in amusement. His companion for the last year, Squire Harry had provided an abrupt change to Nicholas's solitary ways, forever dragging the Prince off on some foolish enterprise or another. Life for Nicholas had become far more exciting since the arrival of the middle son of the Earl of Ludland. Given his rank and two competitive brothers, Harry was combative and expected to be obeyed, barely observing the difference in rank between himself and Nicholas. Only a pointed order would remind Harry that Nicholas wasn't a younger brother to command. Given Harry's domineering ways, the Prince's court was probably the only place his father could have sent him to have his nature tempered before he became a regular tyrant. Nicholas brushed out his wet, neck-length hair, cut in imitation of his father's. Alternately drying it with a towel, then brushing it, he got it to some semblance of respectability. He envied Harry his red curls, hugging his head. A quick toweling and a brush, then off he went. Nicholas judged

himself as presentable as he was likely to make himself under the circumstances, and left his room. He entered the hall to discover Harry already dressed and ready, attempting to delay another serving woman, this one several years his senior, as she was bound upon some errand or another. Harry was dressed in the green and brown garb of a palace squire, which in theory made him part of the Royal Steward's staff, but within weeks of his arrival he had been singled out to be Nicholas's companion. Nicholas's two older brothers, Borric and Erland, had been sent to the King's court at Rillanon five years before, to prepare for the day Borric would inherit the crown of the Isles from his uncle. King Lyam's only son had drowned fifteen years earlier, and Arutha and the King had decided that should Arutha survive his older brother, Borric would rule. Nicholas's sister, Elena, was recently married to the eldest son of the Duke of Ran, leaving the palace fairly empty of companions of suitable rank for the young Prince before Harry was sent into service by his father. Clearing his throat loudly, Nicholas commanded Harry's attention long enough for the serving woman to make her getaway. She gave the Prince a courteous bow coupled with a grateful smile as she hurried off. Nicholas watched her flee and said, "Harry, you've got to stop using your position to annoy the serving women." "She wasn't annoyed--" began Harry. "That wasn't an opinion," said Nicholas sternly. He rarely used his rank to command Harry about anything, but on those rare occasions he did, Harry knew better than to argue--especially when his tone sounded like Prince Arutha's, a sure sign that Nicholas wasn't joking. The Squire shrugged. "Well, we have an hour to supper. What shall we do?" "Spend the time working on our story, I should think." Harry said, "What story?" "To give to Papa to explain why my boat is now floating across half the harbor." Harry looked at Nicholas with a confident smile and said, "I'll think of something." "Revue de presse" An entertaining tale of high-seas adventure and exotic fantasy." -- Locus. "A superior rousing adventure." -- Publishers Weekly