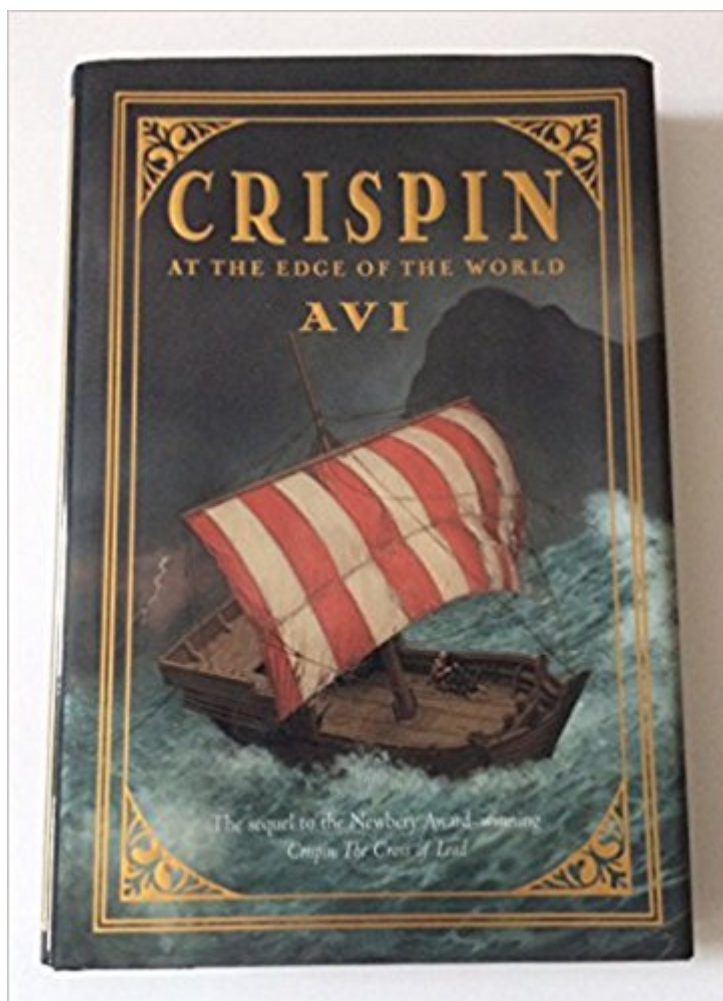


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Crispin: At The Edge Of The World



Synopsis

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Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 5-9
At the conclusion of *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* (Hyperion, 2002), Crispin and Bear have escaped and are enjoying their hard-won freedom, planning to resume their 14th-century lifestyle as traveling minstrels and jugglers. But that freedom doesn't last long because they soon find themselves hunted again by men who believe Bear to be a traitor to the Brotherhood (which is planning a revolt against the oppressive rulers of England). And, with Bear severely injured, Crispin has to make crucial decisions about their future, which for Bear means confronting the sins of the past. The thoughtful introduction of Troth, a disfigured girl, and the trio's fearful journey across the Channel add historical relevance and bring home a critical lesson in tolerance. This second book in a planned trilogy explores even more thoughtfully the themes of religion, war, the motives of men, and the meaning of family. This is an extraordinary work of lyrical simplicity, nearly flawless in its execution, and a haunting tale of love and loss. Readers will devour this story and eagerly anticipate the conclusion of Crispin's adventures.
Melissa Moore,
Union University Library, Jackson, TN Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Starred Review Avi's engrossing follow-up to his Newbery-winning *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* (2002) begins with Crispin and his father figure, Bear, tasting freedom briefly before Bear is

recognized and shot with an arrow. Fleeing into the forest, they meet Troth, a girl shunned because of her cleft lip. Her protector, old Aude, nurses Bear's wound, but when villagers brutally turn against Aude, Crispin and Bear must flee again, this time with Troth. The three, now a family, make a stormy voyage to Brittany, where English soldiers force them to help in a ruthless attack on a church. Unlike many stories set in the Middle Ages, this novel doesn't romanticize the era; instead, it portrays England and France as places where poverty, superstition, and violence were commonplace. Crispin, Bear, and Troth face each new situation with dread born of painful experience, well aware that the people they meet are as likely to harm them as to help them. The love connecting the three main characters is so vital that maintaining the bond and protecting each other become driving forces in their choices. Along with plenty of action and adventure, this displays a solid emotional base. The combination will make fans eager for the final installment. Carolyn Phelan

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Noted children's author Avi spins a fine yarn in this captivating sequel to his Newbery Medal-winning "Crispin: The Cross of Lead." From a nameless youth who had never left the boundaries of his tiny village, Crispin is forced to grow up fast when his mother dies and he is falsely accused of crimes. On the run and desperate, he links up with a kindly, rough-hewn juggler named Bear who becomes the father he never knew. As Hagrid is to Harry Potter, so Bear is to Crispin as he takes him under his wing. Bear rescues Crispin from many harrowing scrapes until Bear's critical wounding necessitates a role-reversal by his young charge. Avi's sequel has Crispin and Bear departing the intrigue and treachery of Great Wexly and heading north on rough paths to escape further trouble. Their respite is short-lived. After they rest a while with a midwife and her young apprentice, they flee once again when the midwife is murdered. Enter Troth, the young apprentice, whom they take with them. This marks the beginning of a transition, from Bear to Troth, as well as a rite of passage, from Crispin the dependent to Crispin the man. Bear continues with them, but his strength is waning and his days are numbered. They reach the coastal town of Rye for another breather, but are forced to escape by boat when Bear's pursuers catch up with them. For both Crispin and Troth, this marks their first time on the ocean and their first time away from England. They wind up in Brittany, France, where their unguided boat runs aground after a fierce storm claims the crew. For Crispin and Troth, this is like going to the edge of the world. The three continue their trek, but they are quickly taken prisoner by marauding soldiers. "Crispin: At the Edge of the World" is an excellent book that leaves the reader hungry for what is to be the third installment of a trilogy. It is best to read the two "Crispin" books in order, but one can manage by starting with the sequel. The only criticism I have is very

minor. At times Avi includes longer words (e.g., "emblazoned with embellishments" in the first book, "exuberance" and "incomprehensibly" in the second) that seem a little out of place for an illiterate peasant boy narrator and a youthful audience. Otherwise, both "Crispin" books are easy to digest, leaving one with a good aftertaste and an appetite for more. Fr. Dennis Mercieri

This series is perfect for middle grade boys!

Crispin 2 was overall pretty good. It was a bit more social than Crispin 1, and it just brought up that he is a wolf's head. It was also a bit more depressing, like the first, but was also a bit more light-hearted. The worst part was (* go to the * at the bottom of the page, for it is a MAJOR SPOILER!) Hope you read and enjoy!*You decided to look? OK, the worst part is that bear dies. Yup. He does.

Loved the book. Kept my son's interest throughout the entire book.

Much darker than the first book (Crispin: The Cross of Lead). We read it eagerly, having grown so close to the characters. But unlike the first book which had joy, humor and courage, this book was unrelentingly dark. We look forward to the 3rd book and hope to find some hope there!

What I liked most about this book was the characters Avi created: Crispin, Bear, and Toth. And the setting: I love the way Avi brought the 14th century to life, with customs, speech, clothing, food. In many ways reading this book was like living in that time period. Also, I liked the serious subjects (war, religion, community, justice) that Avi wove through the book. But I did feel that there was something manipulative about the plot: the brotherhood seemed so modern that I was jarred into the present world each time I read about it. This part of the book just seemed sensationalized to me. I do recommend this book, though: definitely worth reading.

I have read all the Crispin series, and somehow managed to read them in their order. I couldn't put it down, there was excitement and intrigue around every portion of every chapter. The end of this book was unexpected, yet educational. I will read this book again and again. I would recommend it to anybody interested in a mental journey, where the locations paint themselves in the mind.

A bit dark in its world view, this is a realistic, if vaguely unsatisfying, follow-up to Crispin: Cross of Lead.

We get a little less of the travelogue through the village life of English middle ages and more of the flight in fear and loathing from the harsh realities of the time. Still a good read and a great visit with some well- created characters from Cross of Lead.

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