

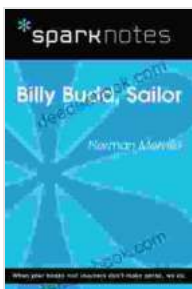
Billy Budd Sparknotes Literature Guide I

Sparknotes Literature Guide Series

Billy Budd, Sailor is a novella by Herman Melville that was published posthumously in 1924. The story is set in 1797 during the Napoleonic Wars and follows the titular character, a young sailor who is falsely accused of mutiny and murder. Billy Budd is a complex and tragic figure who represents the best and worst of humanity. He is a kind and gentle soul, but he is also capable of great violence. His story is a reminder of the fragility of innocence and the power of evil.

The story of Billy Budd begins on the British warship HMS Indomitable. Billy is a young sailor who is new to the ship. He is quickly befriended by the ship's chaplain, Father Claggart. However, Claggart is a sinister figure who secretly despises Billy.

One day, Claggart falsely accuses Billy of mutiny. Billy is shocked and horrified by the accusation. He tries to defend himself, but Claggart is a skilled manipulator and he is able to convince the ship's captain, Edward Fairfax Vere, that Billy is guilty.



Billy Budd (SparkNotes Literature Guide) (SparkNotes Literature Guide Series) by Piper Rayne

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 206 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 80 pages
Screen Reader : Supported



Billy is found guilty of mutiny and murder and is sentenced to death. Vere is torn between his duty to uphold the law and his sympathy for Billy. He knows that Billy is innocent, but he feels that he must carry out the sentence.

Billy is hanged from the ship's yardarm. As he dies, he forgives Claggart and Vere.

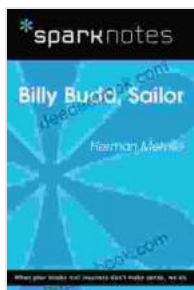
- **Billy Budd:** The titular character of the novella. Billy is a young sailor who is falsely accused of mutiny and murder. He is a kind and gentle soul, but he is also capable of great violence.
- **Father Claggart:** The ship's chaplain. Claggart is a sinister figure who secretly despises Billy. He is a skilled manipulator and he is able to convince the ship's captain, Edward Fairfax Vere, that Billy is guilty of mutiny.
- **Edward Fairfax Vere:** The ship's captain. Vere is a just and fair man, but he is also a strict disciplinarian. He knows that Billy is innocent, but he feels that he must carry out the sentence.
- **The fragility of innocence:** Billy Budd is a reminder of the fragility of innocence. Billy is a kind and gentle soul, but he is falsely accused of mutiny and murder. His story shows how easily innocence can be lost.
- **The power of evil:** Father Claggart is a symbol of the power of evil. He is a sinister figure who is able to manipulate others to do his bidding. His story shows how evil can corrupt even the best of people.

- **The conflict between duty and conscience:** Captain Vere is torn between his duty to uphold the law and his sympathy for Billy. He knows that Billy is innocent, but he feels that he must carry out the sentence. His story shows the conflict between duty and conscience that can arise in difficult situations.

Billy Budd has been praised by critics for its complex characters, its tragic plot, and its exploration of important themes. The novel has been compared to Shakespeare's King Lear and has been called one of Melville's greatest works.

Billy Budd is a powerful and moving novel that explores the fragility of innocence, the power of evil, and the conflict between duty and conscience. The novel is a classic of American literature and is a must-read for anyone interested in literature, history, or the human condition.

- [Sparknotes Literature Guide to Billy Budd](#)
- [Billy Budd on Wikipedia](#)
- [Herman Melville on Wikipedia](#)



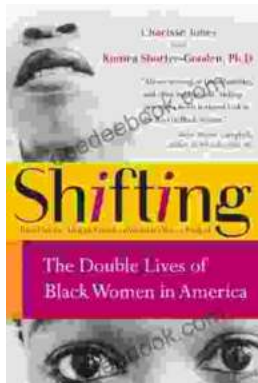
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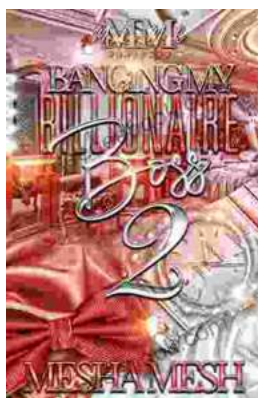
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