

ForeWord Reviews

ForeWord Clarion Review

FICTION

Uprising on the Rio Jari

C. D. Shelton

Choice Publishing House

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Five Stars (out of Five)

Uprising on the Rio Jari by C. D. Shelton is the most rousing entry yet in the author's chronicles of prehistoric Amazonian tribes, a series which includes *The Age of Eternal Fire* and *Journeys in the Primal Forest*. Ten years after *Journeys*, twenty-year-old Etik, son of Chief Etok of the Deer People, faces new challenges, new friends, and new love.

The novel begins with a bang as Etik describes a prescient dream foretelling the destruction of tribes along the southern part of the river on which his tribe lives—a river called the Rio Jari. In the wake of this vision, Etik and his friends travel on the river to warn neighboring groups of the oncoming army. While some villages allied with the Deer People ready an offensive against the attack, Etik journeys north for a reconnaissance mission to seek information about the foes. Behind enemy lines, he finds a mate, and he must rescue her from her deranged warlord father. The inclusion of a map at the beginning of the book helpfully orients readers to the South American setting.

Shelton's ability to structure plots improves with each novel. *Uprising* juggles several story threads at once. The author deftly switches points of view between Etik and his companions from the tribes preparing to repel the invasion and the warlike raiders. This book jumps into the action by starting chapters with dialogue. Readers learn the thoughts of several characters, and these glimpses inside their heads make them seem like real, multi-faceted individuals. To add to the thrills, Shelton ramps up the tension with spying, double-crossing, and in-fighting to keep readers on the edge of their seats.

Moreover, the novel bursts with sophisticated vocabulary to expand the minds of young readers and accurately depict the nuances of the story's action.

Like the author's previous books, Shelton's novel will appeal to young men, but also to girls and adults. For the feminine readers, the novel introduces women warriors who become a lethal fighting force with the blessing of their village men. *Uprising's* sensitive treatment of slavery, rape, and abuse rivals the discussion of the same subjects in some books for grownups. Because of the violence toward women, parents may want to preview the novel before giving it to tween readers, but the book is suitable for ages thirteen and beyond.

Jill Allen