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## **Brotherband: Scorpion Mountain by John Flanagan**

**Publisher: Random House**

**RRP \$22.99**

Another rollicking good read in the Brotherband series. The author is a master at hooking in readers with loads of action, strong-minded characters, pithy dialogue, humour, and a gripping plot.

The intriguing story is set in medieval times in fictional countries similar to Northern Europe, Britain, and the Middle East. The teenage crew of the Skandian fighting ship, the *Heron*, is on a tour of duty to protect the coast of Araluen from enemies. Hal is the battle-hardened young skirl (captain) of the *Heron*. A warrior woman, Lydia, is also on-board as an equal member of the Brotherband, along with an older sea-wolf, Thorn.

Each member of the crew is a fascinating individual with particular talents, yet they work well together as a skilful combat team. They are a formidable force against evil raiders intent on acquiring slaves, fortune, and land.

On this journey, the Brotherband are joined by an expert Araluen archer, Ranger Gilan, as they seek a group of assassins intent on killing the King's daughter. Their quest leads them away from the sea and into the desert in search of the ruthless Scorpion cult. The barren landscape is unknown territory for the seafarers and it requires all their ingenuity to survive in such a hostile environment. When the team encounter their quarry, the battle scenes are intense and bloody.

The *Brotherband* series is a companion to the author's earlier *Ranger's Apprentice* novels, also set in medieval times. Both series are highly recommended for readers who enjoy well-written adventure stories.

**Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett**

**Brotherband Chronicles website:**  
[www.brotherbandchronicles.com](http://www.brotherbandchronicles.com)

