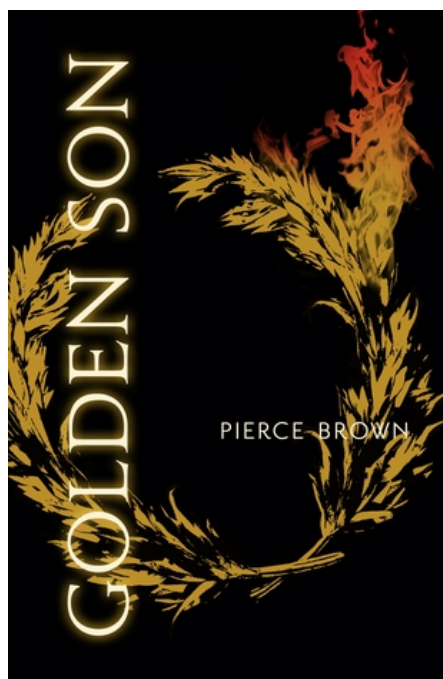




Golden Son

Pierce Brown

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Golden Son

Pierce Brown

Golden Son Pierce Brown

Ender's Game meets The Hunger Games in this, the second in an extraordinary trilogy from an incredible new voice.

'I'm still playing games. This is just the deadliest yet.'

Darrow is a rebel forged by tragedy. For years he and his fellow Reds worked the mines, toiling to make the surface of Mars inhabitable. They were, they believed, mankind's last hope. Until Darrow discovered that it was all a lie, and that the Red were nothing more than unwitting slaves to an elitist ruling class, the Golds, who had been living on Mars in luxury for generations.

In RED RISING, Darrow infiltrated Gold society, to fight in secret for a better future for his people. Now fully embedded amongst the Gold ruling class, Darrow continues his dangerous work to bring them down from within. It's a journey that will take him further than he's ever been before - but is Darrow truly willing to pay the price that rebellion demands?

Hic sunt leones.

A life-or-death tale of vengeance with an unforgettable hero at its heart, Golden Son guarantees Pierce Brown's continuing status as one of fiction's most exciting new voices.

Golden Son Details

Date : Published January 8th 2015 by Hodder & Stoughton (first published 2015)

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Author : Pierce Brown

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Genre : Science Fiction, Fantasy, Dystopia, Young Adult, Fiction

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Download and Read Free Online Golden Son Pierce Brown

From Reader Review Golden Son for online ebook

Patrick says

Did I mention that I listened to these almost exclusively as audiobooks?

I did. And the narration was, to put it plainly, purely brilliant. Dude knocked it out of the park.

In fact, the narrative voice was so strong that when I picked up a paper copy of the book so I could read it faster. (I read about 5 or 6 times faster off the page.) The narrator's voice stuck with me in my head, like when you read some text next to a picture of Morgan Freeman.

So yeah. Not just some excellent books. But excellent audio production as well.

Jessica ❀ ➤➤ Silverbow ➤➤ ❀ Rabid Reads-no-more says

Updated Review:

I have this quirk . . . I call it my "false sense of urgency."

It sometimes makes me impatient and unforgiving when I'm reading a book for the first time, and if the new book happens to be the latest installment of one of my favorite series, the possibility of that first read suffering the effects of my FSoU goes up exponentially.

glances sheepishly at GOLDEN SON

1. I don't care about the bloody Ash Lord.
2. There was TONS of info about Obsidians and Stained, it just wasn't the info I wanted, so I threw a temper tantrum.
3. The sequence that I felt heavily resembled a sequence from STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS . . . I don't know if it was b/c I had watched the movie just prior to reading it, or if it was another byproduct of FSoU, but this time . . . Yeah, it didn't bother me at all. *shrugs awkwardly*
4. I downplayed it in my original review, but I was also extremely aggravated by Darrow continuing to keep his friends at arms-length, even as he recognized the damage his withholding was causing to those relationships.

On this second pass, not only did it no longer feel redundant and obstinately foolish, but the friend I most resented being kept at a distance came across as petulant and self-righteous (more about that in the spoiler-tagged section).

Funnily enough, before my reread, I thought I might have to lower the rating (to 4.0 from 4.5) now that the post-first-read-high had worn off.

Instead I'm raising it to 5.0.

SPOILERY FINAL THOUGHTS:

(view spoiler)

HOLY SHIT.

4.

"Narol ... is he ...?"

"Dead? Aye. He's dead."

The breath goes out of me. "How long?"

"Two years ago," she chuckles. "Fell down a mineshaft with Loran. Never found the bodies."

I'm with Darrow's mamma--I'll believe it when I see their dead bodies.

5.

"Then farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear. Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost."

He whispers to some distant, fading part of himself as he lazily lifts the scorcher to his father's forehead. *"Evil, be thou my good."*

"Stop!" Aja steps forward. "Adrius! In the name of the Sovereign ..."

The Jackal shoots his father in the head.

There is something so *sinister* about Jackal quoting Lucifer's lines from PARADISE LOST, like he's at *that moment* becoming a fallen angel.

Dude, you've been an evil bastard your whole life. Or at least since you were TEN and arranged the death of YOUR BROTHER.

GTFO.

PS: I swear to god, if Antonia, Cassius, and Jackal don't die, and by "die" I mean die *horribly*, there's gonna be 'percussions. Roque, too. Maybe . . . Probably . . .

DEATH COUNT:

Quinn
Tactus
Bellonas, excepting Cassius and his evil mother
Pliny
Victra
Lorn
Augustus
Fitchner/ARES (hide spoiler)]

Reviewed by: Rabid Reads

Right. SO . . . after finishing GOLDEN SON did I:

- A. Shriek incomprehensibly. Over and over (and over) again.
- B. Sit in a semi-comatose state staring at nothing for an indefinite period of time.
- C. Explain (in detail) to my poor mother (whom I was visiting) EXACTLY what my problem was, despite her having never read either book from this series, and thus being unable to understand what I was ranting about.

That was a rhetorical question. Obviously, I did them all.

Pierce Brown, (handsome) devil that he is, lured us into a false sense of security in RED RISING. He taught us that, yes, Bad Things would happen--LOTS of Bad Things--but by the end, we'd have found our footing. We'd know that there was more coming--and HOORAY for that--but the individual installment would be resolved<-----LIES.

But there is far more to GOLDEN SON than it's epic cliffhanger of DOOM.

In fact, if it weren't for a few minor issues, I'd say it was even better than RED RISING, which tied for first place on my Best Books of 2014 list.

GOLDEN SON continues to reveal the complexity of Darrow's situation: a Red who is a Gold/a Gold who is a Red.

What Darrow originally imagined as a simple infiltration and sabotage mission has become infinitely more complicated, and where his hard-learned lessons from RED RISING were painful, his mistakes in this newest installment are downright agonizing.

He makes those mistakes in both his personal and professional life, while you are forced to watch helplessly.

You watch helplessly as Darrow enters into an alliance with Jackal, and visions of

dance through your head.

You watch helplessly as Darrow continually keeps his friends at a distance, even as he acknowledges the potentially irreparable damage to the relationships.

You watch helplessly as the chaos of battle ensues, knowing something . . . something *terrible* . . . is about to happen.

And yet, once again, Brown was able to offset the trepidation and dread he made you carry along like travel companions with both well-placed hilarity, like Kavax au Telemachus, who feeds his pet fox jellybeans, and also with fascinating new details about the caste system Darrow is trying to overthrow, like a branch of Obsidians referred to as Stained.

So it was fantastic. GOLDEN SON will probably be my favorite book in 2015.

BUT.

While Brown's ability to paint truly vivid pictures, and to elicit real emotions remains uncompromised, several details were still unclear to me by the end of book.

The Ash Lord. I did a word search in both books and found that, yes, he had been mentioned briefly in RED Rising as having nuked the world of Rhea into oblivion, and as being the minion of Octavia au Lune, the Sovereign Consul. Various mentions are made to his burning and pillaging in GOLDEN SON as well, but always in a seemingly offhand way so that I never really grasped what was supposed to be so terrifying about the man.

Yes, cerebrally I can comprehend that destroying an entire planet is a terrible thing, but I need meaningful details for something to matter, and in reference to the Ash Lord, there were none.

Then again, watching Alderaan get blown to bits never made much of dent either, so maybe I'm a sociopath.
shrugs

BUT.

Yes, I was fascinated by them, but I was never satisfied with the introduction of **the Stained**.

As far as we've been told, there are two kinds of Reds: underground slaves like Darrow, and those who live above ground and work as menial laborers. The distinction may or may not be arbitrary (I have suspicions, but that's for another time). There are also several types of Golds, but the separations are self-imposed and based on achievement, or lack thereof, and are explained as such. If there are deviations within the other colors, we have yet to learn of them.

And yet, the Stained, a subdivision of Obsidians, are tossed at us as elite bodyguards without explanation. Elite bodyguards, who like the Ash Lord, inspire fear with only the mention of their name. In the first half of the book, they are an almost constant background presence . . . in the retinue of some Gold or another . . . making everyone inexplicably nervous . . . and then we find out why:

Ragnar Volarus.

Ragnar Volarus, "*a dread creature stitched from shadow and muscle and armor*," and who is, incidentally, one of my new favorite characters. If there are any WHEEL OF TIME fans out there, Ragnar reminded me a lot of that honkin' myrddraal, Shaidar Haran. For the rest of you, that means he's a Stained to make even other Stained quake with fear, who seems capable of intelligent and independent thought, unlike other Obsidians and Stained who simply follow orders.

But regardless, we never learn the reason for the divide between Obsidian and Stained, and while that may seem a small thing, for an OCD reader (like myself), every, single time I read the word "Stained" on a page,

and every, single time Ragnar was present, in the not-so-back of my mind, I was screaming, "Why? Why, why, whyyyyyy?"

It was a consistent distraction.

And I'm not going to harp on it, b/c nobody else (that I talked to) even picked up on it, but the scenario where we first met Ragnar . . . It (to me) bore a striking similarity to a certain memorable scene in STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS. (view spoiler)

But all of those are piddly complaints. The only reason they warrant mentioning at all (except the STAR TREK thing, b/c that really bugged me), is b/c they are the reason I'm giving GOLDEN SON 4.5 stars instead of 5.0, when I thought the story and writing were even more compelling than in RED RISING, which I did give 5.0 stars. That's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

Bottom line: Read it, read it NOW.

My other reviews for this series:

Red Rising (Red Rising Trilogy, #1)

Morning Star (Red Rising Trilogy, #3)

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

Two years after Red Rising left off we meet the Reaper/Darrow again. He has moved on to the Academy-He is the Golden child right? Then right as he tastes that brass ring; it gets yanked away. That's one thing about the Red Rising stories. They will twist you into a million different knots before they destroy you.

If your heart beats like a drum,
and your leg's a little wet,
it's 'cause the Reaper's come
to collect a little debt.

In this book I didn't love Darrow-sometimes I found him just plain whiny or inconsistent (yes, I know he was supposed to be that way-doesn't mean it didn't get on my nerves). The star of these book as was in the last book..Sevro and the Howlers. Sevro makes no apologies for who he is. He will either end up cutting your throat or cussing you out, or maybe just both.

I don't know why I'm rambling on. There is no explaining this book. I give up to it. Just read it and buckle your seatbelt..Because it's going to be a bumpy ride.

I received an arc copy of this book from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Now what am I going to read? Destroyed for all other books at this moment.

Virginia Ronan ♥ Herondale ♥ says

"I will die. You will die. We will all die and the universe will carry on without care. All that we have is that shout into the wind - how we live. How we go. And how we stand before we fall."

It's been three days I finished "**Golden Son**" and I still don't know how I **feel** about it, let alone what I **think** about it. >_<

I'm just so confused and devastated and my heart is nothing but an empty void.

There seem to be three bloodydamn good reasons why I feel that way though:

- 1.) Pierce Brown ripped out my heart and gave it to the pitvipers.
- 2.) He broke my mind and didn't leave any glue.
- 3.) His book shattered my soul and fractured it into tiny little pieces.

YES! "Golden Son" quite literally destroyed me and I have no idea how I'm supposed to survive the third book. I got so attached to all those characters and whenever something happened to them, I almost got a heart attack. The pacing was so fast, I barely managed to keep up with all those many plot twists and every time I thought I knew in which direction it was heading, the entire story line changed once again. To read this book was like playing chess without any rules. *lol* You have all the familiar chess pieces you need in order to play a decent game of chess, but your nice little figures never do what they are actually meant to do. It's like they constantly give you the finger instead! XD

That's so rude Pierce!!

So mean

and cruel

and painful!!!

You hear me?!

SO FREAKING SAVAGE AND EXCRUCIATING!!!

mental breakdown

Okay, okay I'm fine again. *clears throat*

Where was I again? Oh, yes the plot!

"How could so frail a girl have such a spirit, such a dream as freedom, when so many strong souls toiled and kept their heads down for fear of looking up?"

The plot:

"They say a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. They made no mention of the heart."

After graduating from the Institute, Darrow Au Andromedus spent his last three years as a Lancer of House Augustus serving no other than Nero himself. Left to his own devices and without any guidance from Ares he didn't just try his very best to find his way amongst his fellow Golds but also worked more than just hard to become an integral and important part of Nero's forces. This however isn't as easy as it seems and all it

needs is a small mistake that's able to destroy the good reputation he has built. After all there are plenty of enemies that want to get a piece of him, first and foremost Cassius au Bellona and his entire House which still holds a deadly grudge against him. With his loyal Howlers scattered all over the galaxy and only Roque at his side, the growing pressure on Darrow's shoulders might soon become too strong to stand it any longer. Will he rise like a comet or will he tumble into red dirt?

"Your people. My people. We have languished in darkness. But there will come a day when we walk in the light. It will not come from their mercy. It will not come by fate. It will come when brave hearts rise and choose to break the chains, to live for more."

The characters:

"We're all just wounded souls, stumbling about in the dark, desperately trying to stitch ourselves together, hoping to fill the holes they ripped in us."

This is the moment you enter my spoiler section. There will be lots of quotes and information about the individual characters and most definitely also way too many subjective emotions for your own good! Don't say I didn't warn you! ;-P

Darrow:

"I've seen her hanged a thousand times now as her martyrdom spreads across the worlds, city by city. Yet each time, it strikes me like a physical blow, nerve endings shivering in my chest, heart beating fast, neck tight just under the jaw. How cruel a life, that the sight of my dead wife means hope."

Oh Darrow, my torn and insecure child! This boy is hurting so much, not just because of the things people are doing to him, but also because of his past, his current present and the things that might eventually happen in the future. He wears a burden that is too heavy for him but he still tries his best to stay strong, to keep on moving and to fight for the things he values. *sigh* He's such a torn man, it's exceptionally painful to watch. For instance Darrow still loves Eo and his family, but he also grew fond of some of his fellow Golds and to say he is walking a thin line between acceptance, betrayal and loyalty is actually putting it more than just mildly. In fact it doesn't even get close to the truth! >_< That moment when he realised that Sevro knows about his true identity and accepts him the way he is, oh boy did it kill me!!! I was right there crying with him! <333 Darrow has a too gentle soul for what he's about to do, but his determination and will are incredible! XD I loved how he treated Mickey and I'm really sorry for what happened to the poor Carver. I mean just like Darrow he's a product of his environment and he certainly didn't deserve to be abused by Harmony. Still, as much as I admire Darrow he definitely made some huge mistakes as well and I think the ending of "Golden Son" made that more than just clear!!! Urgh that **ENDING!!** I can't even... T_T

"In so many ways, I'm still a boy, lost and afraid, seeking warmth and love. When I feel dirt, I honor Eo. And when I see fire, I remember the warmth and flicker of the flames across Mustang's skin as we lay in our chamber of ice and snow."

"He can't say any more because I'm hugging him and crying. I sob and hold on to him, shaking, scaring him. He doesn't move except to pat me on the head. All the weight falls from my shoulders. Someone knows. He knows and he's here. He knows and he came to help me. To help me. I can't stop shaking and saying thank you. Eo was right. I was right. "You are my friend," I tremble out like a child. It almost makes him cry seeing me this way."

"Because you're my friend." I bring his hands to my lips, kissing them gently as he looks up at me with hopeful eyes. "Weird as you are, wicked as you were. I know you want to be better. You want to live for more. We all do. And there's not a place they could take one of my friends that I would ever abandon them."

Mustang:

"Shame you don't respect me enough to suppose that I have my own plan. You think I'm here because my aching loins thrust me into Bellona arms. Please. I'm no bitch in heat. I protect my family by any means necessary. Who do you protect but yourself?"

I don't even dare to say it but I was kind of disappointed by Mustang in this book. I mean yes she's still cheeky and she was one of the good guys, but after "Red Rising" I really would have expected her to play a more important role and to fight for her opinions and rights. First she decided to work for Octavia au Lune and then she became Cassius girlfriend?! Like seriously?! We all know what a - excuse my crude language - bitch Octavia is and to date Cassius because she thinks she might protect her family by doing so?! WTF!?! Where is her fire?! Where is the snarky spark I loved so much?! She doesn't have to resort to the typical tricks of a woman, she's way better than that and the fact she chose to use her femininity instead of her strength, intelligence and will power was just frustrating. Truth be told I think Victra was a way better role model in this book! She didn't care what others thought of her, she did what she wanted to and she took what she needed! Yup, I think I liked Victra more. *lol* Oh and don't even get me started about Mustang's reaction when she found out that Darrow is a Red!!! It's like she wanted to support all the classes and change the system and then **BAM!** Darrow tells her he's actually a Red and she hates him!? I mean yes she's entitled to feel betrayed, everyone would do, but to react like that?! Preach water and drink wine, right?!

"If she gives me her heart, I'll break it. My lie is too great to build a love upon. When she discovers what I am, she will reject me. Even if she could survive that, I would not."

"The human spirit tries to break free, again and again, not in hate like the Dark Revolt. But for love. They don't mimic each other. They aren't inspired by others who come before them. Each is willing to take the leap, thinking they are the first. That's bravery. And that means it's part of who we are as people."

Sevro:

"He stands quietly in his armor watching us, watching Roque hold the girl Sevro loves but has never told, the girl he could never have. The pain is raw and etched deep into the lines of his hawkish face. Impervious Sevro, immune to hurt, to sadness, to having his eye gouged out by Lilath, the Jackal's lieutenant; it all falls on him now."

I still **L.O.V.E** that boy to bits and pieces!!! He's truly the best thing about this series!!! <333 Sevro is the best friend anyone can have and he's so damn loyal and gentle it's a pleasure to watch! Yes, I said gentle!! Because behind all his rabid-wolf-attitude and the tough façade he shows to others, he's actually the sweetest and kindest soul ever! Plus I love his humour!!! XD And just like Darrow I seem to have a weakness for men with only one eye and a really sassy demeanour. (Yes Lucien I'm talking about YOU here!! ;-P) I wasn't really surprised to find out that he's half Red, I have to admit that Fitchner's true identity threw me though. *lol* Who would have thought Fitchner had it in him? Well, I certainly didn't! XD

"Audentes fortuna juvat," Sevro chuckles.

"Fortune favors the bold? You deserve to die if that's really going to be the last thing you say in this life."

"Sevro?" I look around for him. He's loitering around Pliny's eyeball some twenty metres back. We turn to look at him and he shuffles his feet awkwardly.

"Can I ..." He gestures to it.

"What?" Mustang asks.

"Can I have it?"

Mustang squints at him. "All yours."

He scoops up the eyeball and jams it into his pocket, grinning merrily. He runs to catch up. "Collecting the

set, hopefully.”

“I can’t do this without you.” After a desperate moment, “Are you with me? Sevro?”
He pulls back and wipes snot from his nose, muddying his face. Tears make lines in the mud as he looks up at me, voice cracking like a child’s. “Always, Darrow. Always.”

Roque:

“We are not our station in life. We are us – the sum of what we’ve done, what we want to do, and the people who we keep close. You’re my dearest friend, Darrow. Mind that. No matter what transpires, I will protect you as surely as you would protect me if ever I needed it.”

Roque... my precious poet with principles. My kind spirit in a cruel world. **OH GOD, I CAN’T EVEN!!!** I knew this would come, I saw all the signs, Darrow’s betrayal, Quinn’s death, the fact Darrow shut him out of his inner circle over and over again. It was so damn hard to read!! Every little moment, every small action, every single word that left Darrow’s lips... it was poison for their friendship, poison for my poor Roque. Darrow should have tried to mend things between them, he should have given him time and an honest and long conversation but he did absolutely nothing and just left him out in the rain. Grief is a powerful emotion and it can change people in ways no one would have ever thought possible. Darrow of all people should have known this!!!! **DAMN IT!!!** Roque was so lonely and isolated, so broken... broken beyond repair and no one noticed. It’s really no surprise he did what he did.... I saw it coming, yet I still wasn’t prepared to face it. My heart is bleeding! I AM HEARTBROKEN! I feel so torn about Roque right now, but I can’t hate him. I can’t dislike him for what he did. He’s still my Roque. My gentle poet. *sobs* ARGH!! I hate Pierce Brown for making me feel this way. And how it happened in the end... I guess I finally have my answer how Roque made it through the passage.... I wish I would have never found out... It just hurts... T_T

“I didn’t mind that it was always about you, Darrow. That was what burned Tactus, but not me. I’m not in love with you like Mustang. I don’t worship you like Sevro or the Howlers. I was a true friend. I was someone who saw your light and your dark and accepted both without judgement, without agenda. And what did you do to me? You used me like a man uses a horse. I’m better than that. Quinn was better than that.”

“Friendships take minutes to make, moments to break, years to repair,” he says, turning to glance over his shoulder. “We’ll talk again soon.”

A needle from his ring pricks my wrist. Gentle, like the kiss he now plants on my cheek.
“And thus go liars, with a bloodydamn kiss.”
One word shatters a thousand lies.

The Jackal:

“Come now, Father ...”
“You are not my son.”

Adrius flinches. With those few words, Augustus releases something. And the small part of Adrius that held out hope to be loved disappears. He shakes off his humanity, leaving only the Jackal.

Cunning, cruel, conniving, relentless, heartless and creepy. In short: The perfect villain! Adrius is certainly a force to be reckoned with and this time around I actually truly and completely blame Darrow! He knew what he was getting himself into, he knew “The Jackal” wasn’t to be trusted, yet he still hoped his wrath wouldn’t reach him?! I mean what did he expect?! That the Jackal would stand aside while he became his father’s successor?! Didn’t the death of Leto teach him anything?! Adrius acted exactly the way I expected him to and I can’t believe Darrow actually fell for his trap! I don’t even want to know what he’s going to do with him... Knowing the Jackal it’s going to be cruel and savage though! >_<

Conclusion:

“Golden Son” was brilliant and ingenious! It caused me to laugh, it caused me to cry and it thoroughly broke my fragile heart! *sobs* I think I’ll never get over that ending... never ever as long as I live. It’s just too gorydamn painful! T_T

This said, I actually must be a masochist because I really can’t wait to read the last book. *lol* Thank you Pierce Brown, you successfully turned me into a sappy and weeping mess! ;-P

Petrik says

Buddy reading this book with my favorite Howlers:
Sarah, Celeste, Mary, Tweebie, Jennymort

Take all these 5 stars from me, Pierce Brown, take it, you completely deserve it.

Unbelievable... It wasn’t an exaggeration when literally everyone told me the sequels to Red Rising are much better, Golden Son is truly an incredible installment in the trilogy. I praised Red Rising, I enjoyed reading it so much and yet it pales in comparison to its sequel. I started reading Golden Son on 8th January, the day I turned 28, finished it in 3 days and **I’m so lucky to have chosen this book to be my first read in my new age.**

There’s a new contender for the biggest lie I ever heard and that’s seeing this book shelved under “YA”. I was reluctant to start this series because of it (yes, I’m not a fan of YA) but I’m really glad that didn’t stop me. Forget all the similarity with other YA books you think you’ve seen or heard in Red Rising, you won’t find any of them here at all. It completely goes into **adult military sci-fi territory** and written like one. No sugar coating, there’s a lot of harsh words, bloodbaths, brutality and some gore here. Unless your 13 old kids have their balls or tits tempered with Thor’s hammer, I recommend you to make them stay away from this book. It’s up to you in the end though, who knows? Maybe your kids will learn how to defy their bullies with Lego after reading this book since there are a lot of strategy and badasses involved here.

Whether you’re one of those who loved (like me) or hated the previous book because of the plot, I’ll assure you that this time the plot took off in a completely different direction than before and it’s so much better. **It relies on the foundation laid by the first book to hurl the plot itself to become a massive sci-fi and space opera (literally from page 1). Packed with non-stop actions, politics, bloody space or ground warfare and twists and turns, it will truly grip you right from the beginning until the end.** Seriously, there are only a few chapters where you’re allowed to take a break before the story pulls you into all the madness and blood feud again.

Have I mentioned the ending is so mind-blowing it’s designed to give you an anxiety attack? **I strongly recommend you to have MORNING STAR (Last book of the trilogy) beside you before you finished the book.** It’s probably one of the most fucked up cliffhangers I ever experienced in my whole life. *(I’m actually typing this review after I read the first 2 chapter of Morning Star straight after finishing Golden Son, otherwise this review will consist only of me typing my foamy mouth into words “argh urgh fruha euehoqo dsuhckijk quhaorj uhjqpkco”).*

Frankly, I didn’t expect myself to get attached to the characters in this book so much when I started the series but I do, I really do. I’m a huge sucker for great character developments. I love when there is an improvement in the characters personality, strength and weaknesses and changes in all their relationships.

Whether it's in the form of love blossomed or betrayal casted, as long as they're executed perfectly and make sense, I'll never get tired of them and this book has them all.

There are some new great characters here, Ragnar (*not Lothbrok*), Victra and Lorn specifically but my favorite part will have to be seeing the relationship development between Darrow and his best friends, old and new, especially Sevro. These two friendships are what I'd definitely called #friendshipgoals, they understand each other, bantered carelessly and most of all loyal to each other. Sadly I can't tell you much more on this part this time as there are a lot of factors that I think would be much better for you to experience it yourself rather than hearing it from me but I'll let you know that Darrow and Sevro are definitely my favorite and the best characters in the book for me.

Darrow

Sevro's re-introduction

The world-building scale is bigger than before as this time we deal with space travel and worlds hopping. It's much easier to read and imagine compare to before as almost all the info dump was established already in the first book. This time, none of the world-building felt like Earth anymore and that's a huge plus for me, I don't want my head to imagine Earth when the settings are clearly not.

I mentioned before in my Red Rising review that I absolutely loved Pierce Brown's writing, it still holds true here, in fact, I love it even more now as I really think he really improved his writing style. It's much more engrossing, immersive, poetic and yet still retained all the previous elements that captivated me.

There are also a lot of great one-liners and fantastic quotes which will give you hope, laughter or something to think upon when you go through the book, here are some of my favorites:

"I will die. You will die. We will all die and the universe will carry on without care. All that we have is that shout into the wind - how we live. How we go. And how we stand before we fall."

"Home isn't where you're from, it's where you find light when all grows dark."

"Friendships take minutes to make, moments to break, years to repair."

"I'm Gold, bitch. What'd you expect? Warm milk and cookies just because I'm pocket sized?"

Adrenaline inducement is imminent, words you read will shoot straight to your heart and fill your feelings with love towards the main and side characters, rage and hatred towards the villains. Betrayal, bloodydamn epic action and military warfare (*ground and space*) sequences are written so vivid it felt like I'm experiencing a much more epic and dark version of Star Wars/Trek (*yes I said that, deal with it*).

I'm putting this entry into my favorite shelves. Golden Son is everything I ever wanted in a Sci-Fi book, Pierce Brown himself said this is his favorite book out of the trilogy and I really don't think the 3rd book could top this one but it still remains to be seen. I can say with confidence though that if Morning Star didn't

disappoint, this series will definitely become one of my favorite series of all time.

I urge you strongly to start this series if you love any of these: Sci-fi, space opera, great actions, fantastic climax, great characterization with strong plot, perfect pacing or if you're eager get your adrenaline fix, hey you don't need to ride an extreme roller coaster, look no further, read this book and you'll get all these experience for hours. I may sound calm in my review but inside my burning heart I'm typing this review with fingers full of adrenaline rush from the endless "*one more chapter*" syndrome this book gave me. This book is the kind of drug I need in this world where sometimes, we simply need a portal to escape from our boring reality and I *bloodydamn* hope you will experience this as well.

Steph Sinclair says

This 5 star rating might come as a surprised to some of you who know how conflicted *Red Rising* left me. In fact, it's one of the only books I've read, but NOT rated. How often does that happen? Hmm... never. So how did I go from "unable to rate book one" to "loving book 2 something fierce"? The short and lazy answer is, I don't know. The long and complicated version is this review. Huzzah!

Golden Son is a remarkable improvement over some of the issues I had with *Red Rising*. The writing and plot are noticeably stronger. The characters are fleshed out more. The action and suspense are cranked up several more notches. Really, I couldn't ask for more in a sequel.

Fixed Issue #1: Super Slow Beginning

First off, unlike *Red Rising* where I struggled with the first 100 pages, *Golden Son* starts off strong with plenty of action to keep the reader interested. Since the pesky job of world building has been taken care of long, it gave Brown the opportunity to focus on what really mattered: making heads roll. What surprised me with *Golden Son* was just how many heads actually did roll, but more on that later.

The majority of this novel focuses on Darrow outside the academy and the war he purposefully started. We find out a lot more about the Sons of Ares and the inner workings of the politics of the Golds. I was a little wary about that because a ton of political intrigue can lead to boredom. But in this case, that was not something that ever happened.

Fixed Issue #2: Treatment of Female Characters

My biggest issue with *Red Rising* was the treatment of female characters, specifically Mustang. I felt she was put into deliberate situations that forced Darrow to swoop in and save her lest her virtue be ruined. I'm so over that trope in books, so I was disappointed to see it in *Red Rising*.

The good news is that Brown clearly took more care with showing us Mustang's strength. (slight spoilers, but not really) There's one scene in *Golden Son* where Darrow finally has a chance to talk to Mustang after certain events have pulled them apart and she ends up close with Cassius. He claims that he understands how she must feel, but she quickly corrects him. This is my favorite scene in the entire book:

"Now, I'm sure you understand that I felt lost. One, because I thought I'd found someone special in you. Two, because I felt you were abandoning the idea that gave us the ability to conquer Olympus. Consider that I was vulnerable. Lonely. And that perhaps I fell into Cassius's bed because I was hurt and needed a salve to my pain. Can you imagine that? You may answer."

I squirm on my cushion. "I suppose."

"Good. Now shove that idea up your ass." Her lips make a hard line. "I am not some frill-wearing tramp. I am a genius. I say this because it is a fact. I am smarter than any person you've met, except perhaps my twin. My heart does not make my brain a fool."

I really love how confident Mustang is in that scene and how unashamed she is about it. In that same scene, she goes on to tell him that he is not as invincible as he thinks and how he needs her if he has any hope of winning the war.

I just really wished Darrow listened more. (view spoiler)

Fixed Issue #3: Darrow's a Super Gary Stu

This can't be denied. No matter how much I admit to liking *Red Rising*, there was no doubt about it: Darrow was a Gary Stu in every possible way. He's The One. The Only One who can bring down the Golds and help the Reds rise. He can overcome any situation, no matter how horrible or impossible. I can completely see why this may bother some readers even if the novel contains intense fight scenes and dramatic rescues. It just gets to a point where you start to say, "COME ON ALREADY."

Golden Son completely crushes that. Right from the first scene in the book, we see Darrow failing at something important and non one wants anything to do with him besides Roque. It was a little jarring to see Darrow that low, considering how far he had fallen. But shortly after, Brown played an interesting hand that *somewhat* annoyed me and the Gary Stu-ness returned in Full Gundam Force. However, just like in *Red Rising*, this didn't bother me much because I was too focused on fact that Darrow was busy giving someone the ass beating of a lifetime. What can I say? Priorities, I've got them.

What's interesting is how the other characters continually call Darrow out on his apparent invincibility several times. My favorite one being this quote:

"You are but a mortal," Roque whispers in my ear, riding his horse alongside the chariot, as per tradition.

"And a whorefart," Servo calls from the other side.

"Yes," Roque agrees solemnly. "That too."

OMG THE ENDING THO.

When the ending finally came, I realized Brown had me right where he wanted me (get your minds out of the gutter). After thinking that Darrow could pull through out of anything that opposed him, I was not prepared for the ending. Truly, the last 25% of this novel is what bumped my rating from 4 starts to 5. There was so much death in that scene that it made *Red Rising* look like child's play. And that took balls. It made me angry, shocked, confused and immensely distraught. I absolutely have no idea how Darrow is supposed to pull through this mess. It's that bad.

My feelings are so conflicted about the ending, it can only be described by way of Kanye and Jay-Z lyrics.

Ball so hard.

Dat shit cray.

BITCH BEHAVE.

Then there's my ship. Mustang and The Reaper. I really need this to work out. This is my OTP. My ship that I might just go down with. Unfortunately, Brown hasn't said anything to calm my fears and I'm sitting on the edge of my seat in fear.

Bloodydamn.

More reviews and other fantastical things at Cuddlebuggery.

Catriona (LittleBookOwl) says

Rating: 4.5 stars

It's hard to believe that there can be even more action after Red Rising, but lo and behold! My heart breaks for these characters... they have loved and lost so much, but they just keep on fighting for what they believe is right.

It was great spending more time with this crew, and meeting some fantastic new characters, too! I love Darrow's brain - he comes up with the most clever, and often crazy, plans, and it was so much fun (yet stressful) seeing them unfold.

Emily May says

"I will die. You will die. We will all die and the universe will carry on without care. All that we have is that shout into the wind - how we live. How we go. And how we stand before we fall."

I *almost* didn't write a review for Golden Son. It doesn't matter how many reviews I write or how snarky I've been in the past, there is something extremely intimidating about writing a negative review for a book that all my friends loved, that critics praised, and that has an average Goodreads rating of 4.49. I spent some time actually trying to come up with what was wrong with me as a way of explanation.

It must be me, right? I must not have appreciated it right. It must be the wrong time. I must be hormonal. Because I just **DO NOT GET IT**. In the last week alone, I've had multiple requests from people telling me to continue with this series, calling it "one of the best series ever", and saying Golden Son is so much better than Red Rising.

Is it?

Because I struggle to see the leap between the two. So many reviewers have acknowledged that Darrow was

the very definition of a Gary Stu in Red Rising, and yet many are now citing his epic failure at the start of this book as evidence of him shedding the Gary Stu-ness. But I just don't buy it. Even when he fails, he fails like a damn hero with fireworks going off behind his head, rushing back to rescue a damsel in distress in true, self-sacrificing perfection.

Even when he fails, he doesn't fail.

Even when things are awful, he has to deliver a melodramatic, rousing speech.

Darrow is possibly the most self-obsessed character caricature I have ever come across. He loves to hear himself speak - or think, as it may be.

There's a word - *arch* - that's used in various contexts, but is often used in theatre and acting as an example of how not to act. It refers to delivering lines while mentally side-eying the audience with a visible self-awareness of the part you are playing and what comes next. For example, playing out a dramatic scene with visible knowledge of your next line. Darrow feels like that. I feel like he is reading off a script. Every dramatic speech and inner monologue does not feel like someone making a realistically important speech in the face of death, it feels like a bad actor dramatically wiping his brow, doing a Sally Field lip bite, and launching into his lines.

He's not really scared because duh, he's playing Darrow, he knows he can't fail in the end.

Not only is he an epic drama llama, but he is still the voice of insufferably good and just morality. On one side, he has the Sons of Ares willing to go to extreme terrorist lengths for their cause, and on the other side he has many cold, callous Golds who DNGAF about the lower classes. Many times it feels like Darrow is the only one allowed to care about anything and allowed to be upset about the deaths of innocents.

Even the most interesting character (by far) feels so unnatural and out of place in the story. Everyone is saluting Mustang as this amazing, strong female who completely overwrites the issues the last book introduced (i.e. all female characters are useless and need saving) and yet she does indeed feel like a direct response to readers' concerns. Her most memorable scene is a feminist speech she makes about being super smart and unapologetic and I can't help thinking... Brown is going for the female vote. Because we all know how much he loves to milk that.

And, in a sea of books about civil unrest and divides between ruling/slave classes, I think the only way the Red Rising trilogy stands out is by its heavier use of scientific language and technical descriptions. I don't feel like it does anything different in terms of plot or characters.

I lack the ability to care what will happen going forward. I feel like there is literally nothing I'm reading for... I don't care how the war ends, I don't care if Darrow lives or dies, I don't care about any relationships. There are just no answers I'm seeking from this series. Which is why I won't be reading Morning Star, no matter how many people tell me I should.

Seriously, though, who talks like this (note: this isn't Darrow):

"... I was in a dark woods, blind and lost as Dante before Virgil. But Quinn helped me. Her voice calling me out of misery. She became my home. As she puts it, "Home isn't where you're from, it's where you find light when all grows dark."

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Katerina says

What do you live for?

Money? Fame? Glory? Love? Family? Ambition?

For the autumn leaves that rustle under your feet? For the smell of the soil after rain? For the juicy peaches that melt in your mouth? For the sound of the tumultuous waves when they reach the shore? For the laughter of a child that views the world as a wonder?

Darrow au Andromedus fights for the freedom, the opportunity to live for the above. For an oppressed people that hides in the shadows of the so-called superiors for centuries. But in order to escape the monster, you either hide or fight. And fighting is the path, the painful, bloody, sinister path Darrow chose. Betray your friends. Scheme with your enemies. Rise next to people who stole your everything. Alienate those who genuinely care about you. And in doing so, **become the monster yourself.**

“We are not our station in life. We are us - the sum of what we've done, what we want to do, and the people who we keep close.”

Darrow is a Peerless Scarred now, but he's not even close to his mission; **destroy the Society, and the Colours, before the Society destroys him.** After an unfortunate incident in the Academy his position is precarious, and Nero au Augustus is ready to renounce him and leave him unprotected against the Bellonas, the powerful family that wants his head on a silver platter. But then the Sons of Ares reemerge, giving him orders too cruel to follow, and Darrow realises that the way to make the Society fall apart is **civil war.** And so it begins.

“Let him think he owns me. Let him welcome me into his house, so I might burn it down.”

Red Rising was a superb debut that set the standards for the sequel very high. You all know the dreadful term 'middle book syndrome', right? Well, forget it, because instead of a lame, weak second book, **the genius called Pierce Brown gave us a masterpiece.**

As the story progressed, and Darrow had to make difficult decisions for the sake of his mission, **I mourned him;** I mourned every piece of his soul, of his conscience, of the past Darrow he had to sacrifice in order to make Eo's dream come true, and give a future to those who were denied it. Sometimes he was lost beyond redemption, a cocky, brutal Gold that stabbed his friends in the back and led armadas and thousands of people to their death with a simple order. But some other times, those rare moments he chose to trust, to protect the weak, to arm a terrifying giant and make love to the girl who stole his heart, he was a fiery Red. In the end, **Darrow is both. The amalgam of two cultures, the weapon to divide only to unite.**

“Rise so high, in mud you lie.”

Golden Son is focused on **war and politics, plots and treason** that put you on constant alert. Pierce Brown

imagined and brought to life **vivid, heartpounding space battles and massacres**, he crafted high-tech spaceships and luscious palaces brimming with poisonous snakes. He introduced radiant new characters -let's take a moment to appreciate Victra and the glorious House Telemanus - and explored old ones, giving them voices and backgrounds and motives and actions that shook you to the core. **The death toll was extremely high.** The nameless lives lost unimaginable. But this **battlesong of deviousness and blood** was injected with moments of jolly **laughter** and **camaraderie** that made your shields crack, and a ray of sunlight crawled into your petrified insides. There were also a couple of scenes so **powerful** and **raw**, in their simple gestures and scarce dialogues, that make you sob and *feel* and want to reach for Darrow and hold his hand. There was **grandeur** in those scenes. In the entirety of this **magnificent, soul-ripping** book.

“Hic sunt leones. Here be lions.”

But except from lions, there are also jackals. And in kindness, there is malice. Darrow kept friends at arm's length and miscalculated people, only to pay with blood in the astounding, devastating ending that shred my soul to pieces. Please, *please*, **please**, read this series. And trust Pierce Brown to lead you to a dangerous journey that will stay with you for a while.

[Source of this gorgeous Red Rising fan art]

You can find this review and more on BookNest!

Mikee Andrea (ReadWithMikee) says

“My son, my daughter, now that you bleed, you shall know no fear, no defeat, only victory. Your cowardice seeps from you. Your rage burns bright. Rise, warrior of Gold, and take with you your Color’s might.”

THAT ENDING. I AM SPEECHLESS. I don't even know what to say. This book was full of surprises. Literally. I did not see any of this coming. This series just keeps getting better and better. You'd think that Golden Son would suffer the "book before the finale" syndrome but NOPE. Not even close. Pierce Brown just set us up for one of the most epic finales ever. I just know it.

My poor Darrow. My heart breaks for him so much. He's lost so much and he's been betrayed so many times. I can't handle this. All my favorite characters, everyone, is NOT safe and it scares me so much. Please protect my babies!

And let me just say that I ship Darrow and Mustang 1000%. I ship them so much, it literally hurts. Mustang is a goddess and I hope she finally comes to her senses soon!

LASTLY, WE NEED TO PROTECT SEVRO AND RAGNAR AT ALL COST. Nobody is worthy of them.

I can't even write a proper review because that ending just destroyed me and now I have to go binge read the finale. BYE.

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

Re-read on audio while awaiting "Iron Gold" *I tweaked my old review.

Can I just take a moment to give credit to this wonderful ending ↓

I can't even right now!

Okay, lets move on to a little bit of a more sedate review. First off I love Darrow, Sevro, Ragnar, Quinn and Mustang and I swear Well, I love a lot of the side characters but I'm most in love right now with Sevro, Darrow and Ragnar in that order.

I can't even write this review! This book is all over the place with everything!

Blowing people up in space, bloody battles, stupidity, more people being blown up here and there and everywhere! People you like getting killed. People you don't like that you want to beat into the ground!

Oh and the part with Darrow and his mom made me cry!

Let me just add some random excerpts that have to do with Darrow and Sevro and stuff!

I explode through the bridge like a ball of lead shot into a store of china and glass. I crash into displays and strategy desks before blasting through the reinforced metal of the bridge walls, through the steel of the hallways till at last I slam bodily into a bulkhead a hundred meters through and past the bridge. Dazed. Can't find Sevro. I call him over the com. He groans something about his ass. Maybe he did shit himself.

Okay, so here is a moment that Darrow and Sevro had together after finding out a revelation. It brought a tear to my eye for reasons, there's always reasons people. Well, the tear to my eye came after the first part and some stuff and then the other stuff =D

Sevro spits in my face, right under the eye. "Guess wrong again and I leave you like this." He snaps his fingers. "I will not come back. I will not help you. I will not bleed for you. I will not sacrifice my friends for a man who doesn't give enough of a shit about me to put his neck out just once. Trust goes both ways, Darrow. This time you have to take a leap."

shfosehgsiohgsiodhfsidfhsifh some stuff and. . .

He can't say any more because I'm hugging him and crying. I sob and hold on to him, shaking, scaring him. He doesn't move except to pat me on the head. All the weight falls from my shoulders. Someone knows. He knows and he's here. He knows and he came to help me. To help me. I can't stop shaking and saying thank you. Eo was right. I was right. "You are my

friend," I tremble out like a child. It almost makes him cry seeing me this way.

Once again, that ending! I can't even! It was messed right up and sad but good. We can't have it all!

Happy Reading!

Mel ♥

MY BLOG: Melissa Martin's Reading List

C.G. Drews says

READ #2, Jan 2018:

I'm going to go ahead and say it: but this book is bloodydamn brilliant. I originally rated it 4 stars and then upped it to 5 because holy shit this book did not hold back. It was complex, smart, twisty, and powerful. And the actual rise in quality of the writing and characters was AMAZING!?? (For starters it was way way less sexist than Red Rising too.)

GAH. I'M IN LOVE.

And rereading was *so freaking stressful* because I knew what was going down in the end and I just??? I did not want???

Also Sevro is a nasty little shit and I love him to death.

Also 10/10 to the audiobooks, I love this series WAY better listening because my mind actually absorbs what I'm reading because apparently my eyeballs aren't connected to my brain but my ears are. Lovely.

*** READ #1, February 2015 ***

Woah...how do I even begin to talk about this book?! I'm so, so torn. I loved it, but I loved *having read it*, and not the actual *reading*. I know I'm weird, but give me a sec to explain. **I am two thousand percent in love with Red Rising.** I AM. That book made 2013 the best year of my LIFE. I devoured Red Rising. I cried. I shipped. I think I had a small heart attack several times... But Golden Son just didn't live up to my feels of Red Rising. I felt like Golden Son had a completely different tone and vibe. And I didn't like it.

I felt Red Rising was really focused on Darrow...but Golden Son was really focused on politics and war. I'm not saying it was badly written at all. In fact, I'm pretty extra sure it was genius. But I'm for books about CHARACTERS. And GS just...wasn't. I feel like my non-loves of this book is very much "it's me not you". As I read I gaped like a codfish at the pure skill it would've taken to write. (I bow to Pierce Brown for sure.) It was excellently written. It was stuffed with complex plots and detailed political climates. It had some skull bashing and blood letting. It had enemies and friends-of-enemies, and maybe-enemies and possible-enemies and EVERYTHING WORRYING YOU CAN THINK OF.

My favourite were the tender moments. Like when Darrow went home and spoke to his mum again. :) I was ridiculously feelsy in that scene. Or when Darrow confessed (view spoiler). Darrow is twenty now (so it's not

really a YA book) and he's lost all of the boyishness he ever clung to, but he also is very aware he's turning into a monster. And he doesn't want to! He wants to be kept in check. And there are some really vulnerable moments with Darrow. I feel all squishy. DARROW IS AMAZING. He has the weight of worlds (literally) on his Golden Red shoulders and...and...he's still walking.

Well, KINDA. **Did I mention there was a wicked awful cliffhanger?** THERE IS AND IT HURTS, PEOPLES, IT HURTS. I was on the last 20 pages when I realised it was going to end very, very badly. Betrayal. General nastiness. A bit of beheading. Oh gosh.

This book is simultaneously incredible and complex and basically out of my league. I felt like I was drowning read it. I'm not really into hardcore sci-fi....I just don't keep up! So this is all ME and not the book. It's a fantastic book, but I wanted more Darrow. Instead I got pages and pages of political TALK and I was bored. I'm very very keen for Morning Star though because...bloodydamn cliffhanger.

Kat O'Keeffe says

Fantastic installment to the Red Rising trilogy! I love the epic scope of this story and the pacing is perfect. I still had a few small issues with some aspects of the characters (I have trouble connecting emotionally to the protagonist) and the writing (there were some scenes I couldn't quite visualize). But on the other hand, I love a lot of the other characters (Sevro is my favorite!) and there are so many brilliant, beautiful lines I could quote this book for days.

This series so far is awesome, clever, and incredibly unexpected--I could never predict what crazy thing was going to happen next, I was just hanging on for dear life yet thoroughly enjoying the wild ride. AND THAT ENDING. I'm still reeling. BOOK THREE NOW PLEASE THANK YOU.

Check out my booktalk for spoilery discussion - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAyY0...>

Samantha says

I am never emotionally prepared for this series but I am even less emotionally prepared for that cliffhanger.

Navessa says

This comes out today. And you should read it because it's fucking awesome.

RTC when I'm done with my re-read and can find the words to do this beast justice.
