

The Journeyer

Gary Jennings

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Marco Polo was nicknamed "Marco of the millions" because his Venetian countrymen took the grandiose stories of his travels to be exaggerated, if not outright lies. As he lay dying, his priest, family, and friends offered him a last chance to confess his mendacity, and Marco, it is said, replied "I have not told the half of what I saw and did."

Now Gary Jennings has imagined the half that Marco left unsaid as even more elaborate and adventurous than the tall tales thought to be lies. From the palazzi and back streets of medieval Venice to the sumptuous court of Kublai Khan, from the perfumed sexuality of the Levant to the dangers and rigors of travel along the Silk Road, Marco meets all manner of people, survives all manner of danger, and, insatiably curious, becomes an almost compulsive collector of customs, languages and women.

In more than two decades of travel, Marco was variously a merchant, a warrior, a lover, a spy, even a tax collector - but always a journeyer, unflagging in his appetite for new experiences, regretting only what he missed. Here - recreated and reimagined with all the splendor, the love of adventure, the zest for the rare and curious that are Jennings's hallmarks - is the epic account, at once magnificent and delightful, of the greatest real-life adventurer in human history.



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