



2010

### Rampant

Debbie Barr

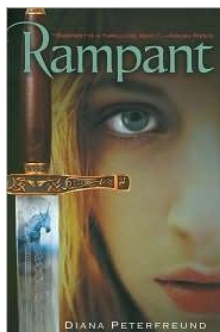
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Peterfreund, Diana. *Rampant*. HarperCollins, 2009. ISBN 9780061490002. \$17.99. 402 p.

Reviewer: Debbie Barr

Reading Level: Young Adult

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fiction; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Unicorns--Juvenile fiction; Hunting--Juvenile fiction; Rome (Italy)--Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Astrid's mother has always been obsessed with unicorns—the real unicorns, which were killers for centuries before virgin hunters drove them to extinction in the Dark Ages. Astrid never believed the tales until her boyfriend is attacked by a unicorn. She is whisked away to Rome with other potential hunters and given training by a strange investor looking for an ancient unicorn-related cure call the Remedy. At first Astrid longs to escape being a hunter, and considers sleeping with her new boyfriend, Giovanni, so she will no longer be eligible. That backfires, though, and she comes to enjoy the newfound powers that come with being a hunter. When their investor disappears, the unicorns begin attacking in earnest. Astrid and her fellow hunters learn how to truly tap into their strength and eventually defeat one of the biggest factions of unicorns.

*Rampant* has a great hook—killer unicorns! Peterfreund has done her homework, and the book is rich with traditional unicorn lore, focusing on the deadly aspect of the mythological creatures. While the book is a bit slow at the beginning as Astrid—and the reader—adjust to the idea of killer unicorns, the story picks up about halfway through as mysteries are unveiled and the stakes are raised. Since the teenage hunters must also be virgins, the girls in this book spend a lot of time discussing sex. There are also several intense make-out scenes, so this book would be a better fit for older or more mature readers.

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