

Florence of Arabia: A Novel

By Christopher Buckley

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The bestselling author who made mincemeat of political correctness in *Thank You for Smoking*, conspiracy theories in *Little Green Men*, and Presidential indiscretions *No Way to Treat a First Lady* now takes on the hottest topic in the entire world—Arab-American relations—in a blistering comic novel sure to offend the few it doesn’t delight.

Appalled by the punishment of her rebellious friend Nazrah, youngest and most petulant wife of Prince Bawad of Wasabia, Florence Farfarletti decides to draw a line in the sand. As Deputy to the deputy assistant secretary for Near East Affairs, Florence invents a far-reaching, wide-ranging plan for female emancipation in that part of the world.


The U.S. government, of course, tells her to forget it. Publicly, that is. Privately, she’s enlisted in a top-secret mission to impose equal rights for the sexes on the small emirate of Matar (pronounced “Mutter”), the “Switzerland of the Persian Gulf.” Her crack team: a CIA killer, a snappy PR man, and a brilliant but frustrated gay bureaucrat. Her weapon: TV shows.


The lineup on TV Matar includes *A Thousand and One Mornings*, a daytime talk show that features self-defense tips to be used against boyfriends during Ramadan; an addictive soap opera featuring strangely familiar members of the Matar royal family; and a sitcom about an inept but ruthless squad of religious police, pitched as “*Friends from Hell*.”

The result: the first deadly car bombs in the country since 1936, a fatwa against the station’s entire staff, a struggle for control of the kingdom, and, of course, interference from the French. And that’s only the beginning.

A merciless dismantling of both American ineptitude and Arabic intolerance, *Florence of Arabia* is Christopher Buckley’s funniest and most serious novel yet, a biting satire of how U.S. good intentions can cause the Shiite to hit the fan.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

One has to admire the pluck of an author who dares satirize what may be the touchiest subject in the country today: Arab American relations. Buckley (*No Way to Treat a First Lady*, etc.) jumps into the sandstorm feet first with this tale of scrappy Florence Farfaletti, Deputy to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs. When a friend of Florence's who is married to Prince Bawad of Wasabia is executed, Florence proposes a plan to free the women of the Middle East. Covertly accepted by the U. S. Government, the plan involves creating a TV station in Wasabia's neighboring country, Matar, which instigates a revolution with broadcasts that, among other things, encourage women to throw off their burkas. Humor and action are in great supply, and reader Kalember (whom 40-somethings may remember as Susannah Hart from the series *Thirtysomething*) handles both with aplomb. The serene stability of her voice is a good foil for the story's calamitous happenings but, at the same time, her voice conveys a certain vulnerability and righteousness that makes her portrayal of Florence completely believable. As an added bonus, Kalember's delivery of the English-as-a-second-language Arab characters is both sympathetic and hilarious.

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From the Inside Flap

The bestselling author who made mincemeat of political correctness in "Thank You for Smoking, conspiracy theories in "Little Green Men, and Presidential indiscretions "No Way to Treat a First Lady now takes on the hottest topic in the entire world-Arab-American relations-in a blistering comic novel sure to offend the few it doesn't delight.

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"From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

Christopher Buckley is a novelist, essayist, humorist, critic, magazine editor, and memoirist. His books have been translated into sixteen foreign languages. He worked as a merchant seaman and White House speechwriter. He has written for many newspapers and magazines and has lectured in more than seventy

cities around the world. He was awarded the Thurber Prize for American Humor and the Washington Irving Medal for Literary Excellence.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Juan Reynolds:

The book Florence of Arabia: A Novel give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You should use to make your capable more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting strain or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make studying a book Florence of Arabia: A Novel for being your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your capable, increase your knowledge about several or all subjects. It is possible to know everything if you like start and read a e-book Florence of Arabia: A Novel. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science book or encyclopedia or others. So , how do you think about this publication?

June Weiss:

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