



The Siege of Isfahan

Jean-Christophe Rufin , Willard Wood

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It is twenty years since Jean-Baptiste Poncet, through his apothecary skills and daring diplomacy, cured the ailing Negus of Abyssinia and saved that country from the political ambitions of the Sun King, Louis XIV of France.

Poncet now finds himself in Isfahan, capital of Persia, practicing medicine in the court of the Shah. In order to rescue his old friend Juremi, imprisoned in the Urals, Poncet travels in disguise to Russia, where he engages in a diplomatic duel of wits with Peter the Great. The friends, reunited, are captured by nomads and sold as slaves in Afghanistan. This the beginning of Poncet's circuitous return to Isfahan, where his wife and daughter are trapped inside the walls by a besieging army of the Afghan king, Mahmud.

Subtle, erudite, exciting, and beautifully crafted, this is historical fiction that belongs on the shelf beside the work of Patrick O'Brian.

The Siege of Isfahan Details

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Author : Jean-Christophe Rufin , Willard Wood

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Barry Flanders says

Really good historical fiction in a part of the world not often featured, from the halls of French royalty to the ancient city of Isfahan. Rufin makes his characters interesting and colorful. I will look for more by him.

Grace Tenkay says

Fascinating time trip back to Persia when Isfahan was a big deal. Rufin's book are really effective at conveying historical time, place and culture. I will read more by him. Not as good as the first one, 'The Abyssinian' but still overall a really enjoyable read.

Bill says

Excellent historical fiction. Not as good as the first in the series but still very nicely written and absorbing.

Jazz Fan says

Not quite as strong as the The Abyssinian but still excellent historical fiction. Rufin transports you to a time and place you might not otherwise ever encounter. Persia of old.

Nannie Pomme says

Que dire ? Au mois de juin j'avais lu "l'Abyssin", une merveille, un bijou. Je me suis dis pourquoi ne pas tenter la suite avec "Sauver Ispahan" ? Au vu du coup de cœur de la première fois j'attendais énormément de ce livre, et je pensais en retrouvant Alix & Jean Baptiste me régaler à nouveau. Quelle ne fut pas ma légère déception au bout de quelques pages.

Le style est toujours aussi agréable bien que légèrement plus ampoulé que dans le précédent opus. Mais l'histoire laisse à désirer. On n'est pas transporter dans les premières pages, on sent que l'auteur essaie de noyer son récit dans des description interminables. On part sur des aventures rocambolesques, un voyage qui mène finalement à rien, et même un mensonge servant d'alibi qui retombe comme un soufflet à la fin ! Bon que dire ? J'ai terminé le livre par respect pour l'auteur. Parce que je déteste abandonner un livre. Mais après ma lecture de "Avicenne ou la route d'Ispahan" de Gilbert Sinoué je ressors quand même mitigé de ce voyage.

J'attends un prochain coup de cœur avec cet auteur.

Astraea says

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Harry Heitman says

Very entertaining historical fiction. Not quite the level of *The Abyssinian*, but very good.

Susan Gardner says

Follows the story line and characters from *The Abyssinian*. Engaging escapist adventures set in a time and locale of historical upheaval. the author writes with beautiful language and authority about the factual material that is woven into the plot.

Alejandro Teruel says

Novela histórica y escapista situada fundamentalmente en la Persia y el suroeste de Rusia de 1721, aceptable para pasar el rato. Lo mejor de la novela es el hecho que ilustra una región y una historia relativamente poco conocida en Occidente, a saber, el desmoronamiento de la Persia de la dinastía sefevida. Vislumbramos el surgimiento, algo torpe inicialmente, de Rusia como potencia militar y política de primer orden bajo la dirección de Pedro el Grande, mientras que el autor relega a una nota a pie el eclipse de Suecia como potencia militar de primer orden y soslaya la situación del imperio otomán. En estos años, Persia es el blanco de muchas miradas codiciosas: los rusos quieren avanzar hasta el Mar Caspio, los turcos sueñan con volver a extender sus fronteras, los armenios conspiran, y los afganos aprovechan la debilidad estatal persa para sitiar Ispahán, la capital del imperio fundado por Abbas el Grande pero caída en manos de Husein, un emperador indolente y de acuerdo con la novela, absolutamente incompetente y alcohólico. Los personajes son esquemáticos y las aventuras y peripecias recuerdan algunas de las novelas de Julio Verne como *Miguel Strogoff*, *correo del zar* o hasta *Las tribulaciones de un chino en China*, que adereza con anécdotas tomadas de crónicas de viajeros de la época.

David Smith says

Oui, j'aimerais visiter l'Iran.

Neal Wilson says

As a sequel to *The Abyssinian*, it gets the job done. Intriguing historical fiction set in a time and place you don't hear much about, now.
