

Reviews: The Iranian Scorpion

Posted by BookReview.com:

Anyone familiar with the novels of William Peace will not be surprised that "The Iranian Scorpion" involves international intrigue while exploring deep personal questions and beliefs. In this case, we are once again in what we Americans lump together as the Middle East. Our protagonist, Robert Dawson, is an agent of the Drug Enforcement Agency who, having spent too much of his young life on the Texas/Mexico border, opts to use his expertise to explore and expose the trafficking of heroin from Afghanistan through Iran to the US.

Robert Dawson is a capable, likable, thoughtful person. He not only has the remarkable capacity to pick up languages and dialects easily (alas, for the rest of us who cannot even carry a tune), he seems to have an innate empathy for different cultures and creeds. There are of course the usual bad guys, those people in power who merely wish to exploit others and enrich themselves, and there is all the tension and terror of dealing with such people and their torturous methods. But Peace has never been one dimensional in his treatment of his characters, Western or Eastern. Robert's true foil is a man named David Dawson, his father, as cold and closed a human being as Robert is warm and open. But here again, the author allows the man to develop on his own terms

Although an American living in England, Peace seems perfectly comfortable writing about both the land and the people of Afghanistan and Iran. He obviously likes these people and you will, too. And he is always interesting and often fascinating, whether he is blithely taking us through the steps in refining heroin from opium, following the trail of drug smugglers, or enriching U-235 on the way to a bomb.

Peace has "balanced" some rather perfunctory sex in the book with a few somewhat pedantic scenes revolving around discussions of faith and religion. These latter themes, however, blend so effortlessly with our hero's thoughtful nature and the everyday life of this Muslim world that we see in practice what we might object to in preach. And there is an intriguing lack of resolution in "The Iranian Scorpion," just as there is in life. It sets one to thinking. But you'll have to buy and read the book first, and bookreview.com highly recommends that you do just that.

Review by Mary DeKok Blowers for Readers' Favorite:

I very much enjoyed reading "The Iranian Scorpion" by William Peace. The story line was suspenseful and fast moving, with seamless plot lines that kept me guessing. Robert, a US government DEA agent, was stationed in Afghanistan to get a handle on and find a way to stop poppy growth and thereby limit the production of opium and heroin, to the dismay of the Scorpion, a heroin kingpin. His father, David, is also a government official. Their relationship goes through a transformation in the story and you will be on the edge of your seat as both their lives are jeopardized. Will they make it out alive? Which love interest will win each of their attention? You'll have to read it to find out and you'll gain a new appreciation for illegal border crossings in the bargain.

Just a few shocking bits but I still loved reading this story, and it was educational as well. It provides more than a little violence, a little raciness, neither unnecessarily graphic, but mostly intrigue and heart pounding excitement. Historical, governmental, and cultural details are featured in "The Iranian Scorpion", giving me a new understanding of the countries of Afghanistan and Iran. Characters are likeable, complex, and believable in relation to one another. The interplay of Islam and Christianity in this novel provides a colorful tapestry for a backdrop as several characters' stories are woven together. To top it off, lamb kebabs and flatbread are on the menu. I look forward to reading other books by William Peace.

Review by 'Kitty Book Lover':

Mr. Peace has done it again. The Iranian Scorpion is a taut, exciting novel, set once again in the Middle East, but this time not about terrorists but about the drug trade. As usual in addition to the main plot, Mr. Peace weaves in parent- child relationships, romance, and a fascinating exploration of the ideas of Christianity and Islam. Those explorations are stimulating and Mr. Peace's knowledge and respect for other cultures add so much to the plot itself.

We follow the very likable main character, Robert Dawson, a DEA agent in Afghanistan who goes undercover and follows the trail of heroin production, (interesting details on how that is done) from a farm in Afghanistan through the buyer in Iran to the shipping to the States and its distribution there. Robert is eventually captured, put on trial, and "executed." His escape from prison with Baluchistan rebels makes for make turning reading.

In the meantime his father who is working with the IAEA learns of Robert's death and begins a painful examination of how he could have been a better father. He vows to avenge Robert's death by killing the "Iranian Scorpion" the buyer in Iran. Another page turning story.

The women in the novel, the father's fiancé in the States, his love interest in Tehran and David's romance with a free lance journalist who helps his undercover work are clearly drawn. It is nice to see intelligent, interesting women with a lot of understanding, compassion and sex appeal.

All in all, a book I highly recommend.

Review by Ashley LaMar:

Complex, intense and deeply riveting it is impossible not to obsess over the intrigue of The Iranian Scorpion. Robert Dawson, a US DEA agent is sent to Afghanistan to halt the flow of heroin coming out of the country. Disguised as a field hand working in the opium crops and assisted by the delightful Kate Conway and the cunning Taliban leader Vizier Ashraf, Dawson finds himself captured and facing execution at the hands of a man known as "The Scorpion" after it is discovered that Dawson was behind his arrest. When Dawson's father, General David Dawson, hears of Robert's pending execution he vows to find and assassinate "The Scorpion" who just so happens to be a provincial governor of Iran. A powerful political thriller, The Iranian Scorpion is flawlessly gripping.

The characters in *The Iranian Scorpion* are very well-developed and feel truly authentic. They are perfectly flawed and appear genuinely human. Immediately a conversation between Robert and Kate hints at a subtle level of tension between Robert and his father, David. Robert is seeking fulfillment by chasing career goals that seem just out of reach. Kate has a poor history of damaged love relationships. They are world travelers and involved in deep political intrigue and undercover DEA work yet they seem entirely relatable which develops a strong bond between reader and story. It took less than ten pages for me to feel invested in their personal development and the story that was about to unfold.

The various storylines in *The Iranian Scorpion* are intricately woven but blend together well and avoid feeling disjointed or disconnected. This is a complex story yet it never feels overwhelming or confusing. There are multiple romantic relationships, undercover work, political intrigue and wrathful vengeance. In the hands of less-capable author this book could have easily become an unbearable mess but Peace is highly talented and his skill is clearly evident. Peace keeps the pace of the story intense and the plot is thrilling. There is violence (as should be expected considering the storyline) and there is some sexual content but nothing that is overly graphic or revolting.

The Iranian Scorpion has easily earned its place as one of my favorite books of 2013. The blended plotlines, the political games, the strong female characters and family tension and the religious conflict between Christianity and Islam (which Peace delicately handled) all combine to write what should be a bestseller and a must-read. Rarely do I recommend a book as highly as I recommend *The Iranian Scorpion*. William Peace is an amazingly talented writer and *The Iranian Scorpion* is an incredible novel.