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Bliss: A Novel

O. Z. Livaneli

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Meryem, a fifteen-year-old girl, lives in a rural village on the shores of Lake Van in Eastern Turkey. Her simple life changes dramatically after her uncle, a sheikh in a dervish order, rapes her. She is considered an outcast for shaming her family. When she is locked in a shed and left alone for days, she comes to the painful realization that her family expects her to hang herself with a length of rope left on the dirt floor. But she is defiant.

As tradition still has it, a judgment must be made in the name of honor. She is told she is to be taken to Istanbul, a shining city she envisions being just over the nearest mountain. Many girls from her village have "gone to Istanbul," and she assumes it must be a wonderful place since not one has returned. In fact, those girls have been the victims of "honor-killings."

Cemal, Meryem's cousin, a commando in the army, has been fighting in the mountains against the rebels. On his return home, he is welcomed as a hero though he has been severely traumatized by his war experiences. His father, who had violated Meryem, charges Cemal with the task of executing his cousin's punishment. As he and Mereym begin their journey, they proceed through the marketplace where the townspeople have gathered, some weeping and others mocking her.

In Istanbul, a Harvard-educated professor named Irfan lives an elite existence. He has published many books, hosts a radio show, and seems to enjoy success and jet-set freedom. He revolts against the routine of his soulless life, deciding to leave his wealthy wife and Istanbul. He charters a boat to sail the Aegean . By coincidence, his path crosses with that of Meryem and Cemal. They embark on a journey together that fills their hearts with hope and sets them free.

Already an international bestseller, this lyrical and moving tale juxtaposes the traditional and modern and draws attention to human rights violations against women in the Middle East.

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From reader reviews:

Wayne Hause:

Spent a free the perfect time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their very own friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, gonna beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Do you wish to something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book might be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you will ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the guide untitled Bliss: A Novel can be great book to read. May be it is usually best activity to you.

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