



A Man of Colours

Geoff Logan

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Historical and religious intrigues combine in A Man of Colours, a thriller in which the Knights Templar confront prophecies about world events.

Religious groups struggle to gain possession of an ancient scroll whose contents could plunge the world into a catastrophic war in Geoff Logan's imaginative thriller, *A Man of Colours*.

Iva, an operative with the Knights Templar, once hid a copper scroll on the Greek island of Kastellorizo. That scroll contains information about the last Imam of Islam, whose return is prophesied to bring about the end times. Zarfidi, an Australian architect, is Iva's successor with the Knights Templar; he is tasked with retrieving the scroll. The society has plans to use the artifact as a bargaining tool to ensure peace. But as Zarfidi's dangerous mission progresses, it leads to unsettling revelations.

The story is tense from the start. Gripping scenes, as of Zarfidi being almost run off of the road, and of an assassin's shots aimed at Zarfidi and Iva, set the novel's suspenseful pace. Zarfidi meets Iranian agents interested in the contents of the scroll; they maintain a watch on him. He is later framed for murder and struggles to find a kidnapped friend. But as these scenes add up, the story drifts further from its main focus. Some subplots, including Zarfidi's encounter with a mysterious girl who seeks retribution for her father's death, undermine the book, as do its psychological diversions.

Zarfidi is a bumbling lead whose mistakes have dire consequences. While he's restoring the copper scroll, he dismisses an onlooker; her suspicions reveal him to his pursuers. Next to him are numerous supporting characters, including a priest who is interested in Zarfidi's whereabouts and a stalker who has been hired to follow him; they are less developed than Zarfidi, and their contributions are not compelling.

The book draws inspiration from numerous sources, including Egyptian mythology, Christian prophecy, Muslim eschatological teachings, a Jamaican legend, and the work of Carl Jung, but its extensive references to these legends and beliefs crowd the narrative too much. The incorporation of historical characters—like Jane Horney, who spied for the Nazis during World War II, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the former Iranian president—and events like the killing of Osama bin Laden better lead to authenticity. But characters' names are inconsistently spelled; combined with punctuation and homophone errors, such mistakes detract from the final package.

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EDITH WAIRIMU (December 22, 2020)

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