

Guy Novel

Michael Ryan

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The adventure in this passionate love story, set off with wry humor, is certain to appeal to the James Bond spy thriller audience.

Michael Ryan's *Guy Novel* is a love story that a guy's guy can buy into, in which the girl at the center shanghai's the boy who's after her into undertaking a covert Turkmenistan op with duffel bags of dollars in hand, all for an Afghani guy willing to kill bin Laden.

It is the summer of 1996, and Robert Wilder is working as a stand-up comedy journeyman. He is engaged to Doris, a Hollywood mover and shaker who has the juice to keep him in Tinseltown's top talent agent's stable. But then happily-ever-after goes awry. Robert makes a pre-wedding stop at a bank to get honeymoon cash and encounters Sabine, with—*Colpo di fulmine!*— a “lower lip like the threshold of heaven.” Instead of headed down the aisle, Robert finds himself in Sabine's bed, and abandoned in Baja by morning.

With that, Robert is down deception's rabbit hole and into a passionate, world-upside-down love affair, all played out in a whirlwind narrative filled with witty repartee—part screwball comedy, and part takedowns of left-coast pretentiousness and hubris-powered international intrigue.

There is an intriguing and appealing role reversal here, with the man in the budding romance painted as a stew of angst and insecurities, while the girl in the picture is the gunslinger, and is constructed of harder, darker material. She does dangerous undercover work for an attorney with big-time influence, a character pulled from the headlines, which adds plausibility to keep the pages turning.

The boy-meets-girl, boy-chases-reluctant-girl love story flies from Santa Monica to Washington, DC, where good ol' boy Bill Clinton is encountered in an underground bunker. Then it's private jets and gourmet meals to Turkmenistan and Paris. The glamorous background and fast romance risks clichés, but it's all brought down toward real-life experience with much solidly written “will she, won't she” back-and-forth about doubts, neuroses, and the meaning of loyalty.

Michael Ryan's *Guy Novel* offers adventure and a passionate love story, set off with wry humor that is certain to appeal to the James Bond spy thriller audience.

GARY PRESLEY (Fall 2016)

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