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Baksheesh (A Kati Hirschel Istanbul Mystery)



Synopsis

Praise for the first Kati Hirschel Istanbul mystery: "The heroine is an offbeat amateur sleuth with a distinctive narrative voice. Fans of such female detectives as Amanda Cross's Kate Fansler and Kerry Greenwood's Phryne Fisher will find a lot to like."—Publishers Weekly
Kati Hirschel, the owner of Istanbul's only mystery book store, is fed up. It all started when her lover Selim insisted that she behave like the Turkish wife of a respectable lawyer. Looking demure and making witty small talk were the only requirements. Then her landlord announced an outrageous rent increase on her Istanbul apartment. She has no desire to move in with Selim. She'd rather learn the art of bribing government officials in order to find a new place. Kati is offered a large apartment with a view over the Bosphorus at a bargain price. Too good to be true until a man is found murdered there and she becomes the police's prime suspect. In her second novel Esmahan Aykol takes us to the alleys and boulevards of cosmopolitan Istanbul, to posh villas and seedy basement flats, to the property agents and lawyers, to Islamist leaders and city officials—in fact everywhere that baksheesh helps move things along. Esmahan Aykol was born in 1970 in Edirne, Turkey. She lives in Istanbul and Berlin. She has written three Kati Hirschel novels. Baksheesh is the second and has been published in Turkish, German, French, and Italian. The first, Hotel Bosphorus, was published by Bitter Lemon Press in 2011.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A fair detective story with descriptions of Istanbul society. I found it difficult to sort out the characters because of my lack of skill with Turkish language.

The protagonist sounds like a pre-middle aged neurotic - with orange hair. I bought it to get some insight into Turkishness. So maybe it didn't translate well. I skimmed the last third of the book to make sure I hadn't missed something. If this "story" is indicative of Turkish society, I don't ever want to go there.

I recently went on a trip to Turkey and reading this bok helped me to prepare for the trip. While in a Turkey I was able to understand a little of the culture.

Bribery can get you many things. Including an apartment where a dead body turns up and you become the main suspect. Such is the case with Esmahan Aykol's second book in her Kati Hirschel series, translated beautifully by Ruth Whitehouse. I love the charm of the main character. She's of German descent, though born in Turkey. She owns a small mystery bookstore, reminding me of one of our Killer Nashville sponsoring bookstores, Mysteries & More. I am drawn to the subtlety of the storytelling. It doesn't hurry as an American genre novel would. It's like a slow flowing brook. It eventually gets there in its own good and purposeful time, to be enjoyed along the way, not rushed, maybe like a fine Turkish tea in the afternoon. It's a mystery, but you have to get rather far into it (by American standards) before the body shows up. You know, sometimes we need something different, maybe a journey abroad. If you're not thinking of reading it now, go ahead and buy it while it is still available in the States. These foreign titles, my experience, don't stay around as long as we would like. And then on that day in the future when you are feeling a need to get away, it will be there, to the right, on the third shelf waiting, and in no time you'll be strolling the streets of Istanbul, finding yourself maybe in a quaint little mystery bookshop. No finer place could one be on a rainy afternoon.- Clay Stafford, author and founder of Killer Nashville

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