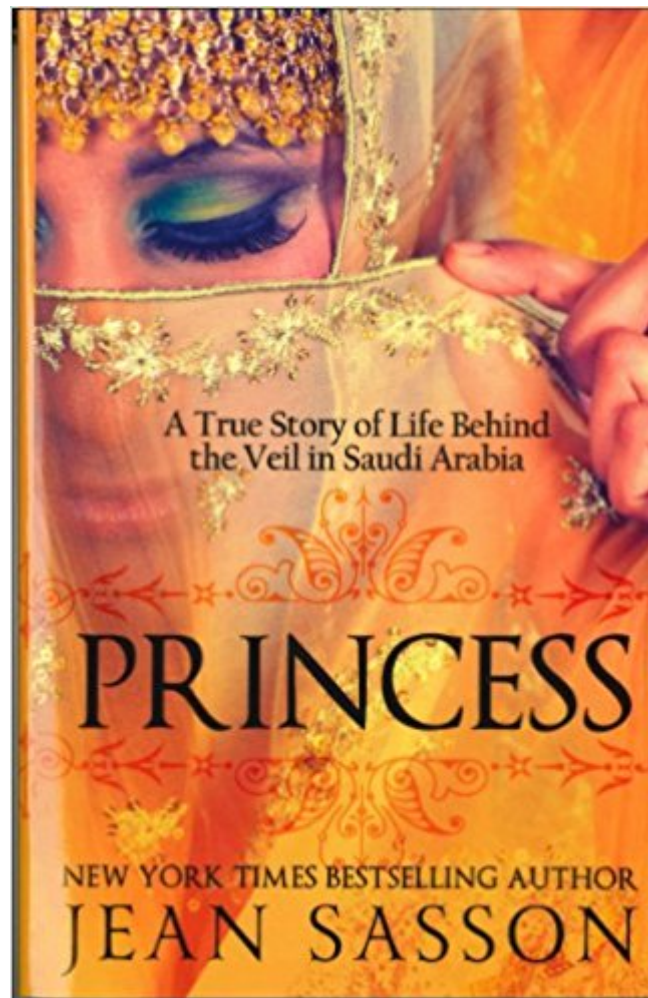




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Princess: A True Story Of Life Behind The Veil In Saudi Arab



Synopsis

Sultana is a Saudi Arabian princess, a woman born to fabulous, uncountable wealth. She has four mansions on three continents, her own private jet, glittering jewels, designer dresses galore. But in reality she lives in a gilded cage. She has no freedom, no control over her own life, no value but as a bearer of sons. Hidden behind her black floor-length veil, she is a prisoner, jailed by her father, her husband, her sons, and her country. Sultana is a member of the Saudi royal family, closely related to the king. For the sake of her daughters, she has decided to take the risk of speaking out about the life of women in her country, regardless of their rank. She must hide her identity for fear that the religious leaders in her country would call for her death to punish her honesty. Only a woman in her position could possibly hope to escape from being revealed and punished, despite her cloak and anonymity. Sultana tells of her own life, from her turbulent childhood to her arranged marriage--a happy one until her husband decided to displace her by taking a second wife--and of the lives of her sisters, her friends and her servants. Although they share affection, confidences and an easy camaraderie within the confines of the women's quarters, they also share a history of appalling oppressions, everyday occurrences that in any other culture would be seen as shocking human rights violations; thirteen-year-old girls forced to marry men five times their age, young women killed by drowning, stoning, or isolation in the women's room, a padded, windowless cell where women are confined with neither light nor conversation until death claims them. By speaking out, Sultana risks bringing the wrath of the Saudi establishment upon her head and the heads of her children. But by telling her story to Jean Sasson, Sultana has allowed us to see beyond the veils of this secret society, to the heart of a nation where sex, money, and power reign supreme.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this consistently gripping work, a Literary Guild alternate selection in cloth, the American-born Sasson recounts the life story of a Saudi princess she met while living in Saudi Arabia, offering a glimpse of the appalling conditions endured by even privileged women in the Middle East. Photos. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

One must keep in mind the context of time and place when reading this emotional and exciting book to alleviate some of the horror of the injustices endured by the women described here. Equality of men and women has not worked out in any society, but the status of women in Islam is more problematic in that canon law is applied according to the social climate. Consequently, countries influenced by the West, such as Egypt, are more relaxed than countries like Saudi Arabia that are ruled by strict Hanbali law, which subjects women to unwelcome marriages, execution at whim, and the boredom of purdah . In this book, Sasson (*The Rape of Kuwait* , Knightsbridge Pub. Co., 1991) tells the fascinating story of "Sultana," an unidentified Saudi princess who yearns for recognition in her own right, not as an adjunct of men. For those who wish to know more, Soraya Altorki's *Women in Saudi Arabia* (LJ 1/86) and Paryeen Shaukat Ali's *Status of Women in the Muslim World* (Aziz Pub., 1975. o.p.) are good. Recommended for popular collections. (Illustrations not seen.)
Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 5/1/92.- Louise Leonard, Univ. of Florida Libs., Gainesville
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I know something of the world, but I had no idea....zero idea....of the extent of subjugation of women in Saudi Arabia as described in this book. I kept putting it down, not because I didn't like it, but because the misogynistic society described within its pages was so overwhelming. Why do the men of the middle east have to dominate women to this extent? There is great evil in this kind of cruelty towards the female gender. They are afraid of women. Why? I don't know whether to recommend this book or not. It was interesting, but shocking and upsetting. I came away from it angry, very angry.

I have long been fascinated by "women if the veil" and the repressive societies in which they live.

This book is an interesting expose on life in Saudi Arabia; it's culture and rigid rules, applied only to women, of course. The author spares no detail and tells their creative ways of getting around some of the rules; also sharing some of the consequences of getting caught. The story of the black room still haunts me. It is a culture in which rape victims are punished, because, of course, they asked for it, wives are supplanted by newer, younger wives, and every six weeks, every hair on their bodies must be waxed off. Though this is certainly not literature, the author tells a compelling story. I read it through in just a couple of sessions and finished it, grateful to have all my lady parts intact. Recommend.

Princess is the true story of one of the many Saudi Arabian princesses growing up in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. It is a collection of stories, many of which illustrate the problems with being female in a male dominated society. It's an interesting glimpse into a few years in the life of mostly wealthy Saudis. I recommend reading it.

This book is about women from Arabian, written, were on an emotional roller coaster, one moment we hated all the foreign woman, both Kuwaiti and American, warmed our hearts with their show of defiance of centuries-old tradition of male supremacy. marriage of very young woman to old man, rapes to kids, barbaric circumcised to woman, be killed with the hands of your father or husbands, this book I didn't enjoy give me fatigue and nightmares, with all the money they have, they can keep it, freedom is better than gold, how lucky we are living in this wonderful country, I hope one day there is freedom for every woman in this world, and be equally with a man, I hope to be alive for the first woman president, ha, ha, this book gives you a lot information how woman endured hard life on those places, can be a princess still treated like common one. Thelma.

Jean Sasson's book *Princess: A True Story of Life Behind the Veil* is a great book. You get to understand the stereo hypercritical nonsense that still happens in this century. Unbelievable, which I feel pity on the women of Saudi Arabia. It's a shame how women are still treated in this day and age. Of course if you grew up in that type of upbringing, one wouldn't know any better until adulthood. This is where change can happen, but the men continue to suppress our women.

Princess by Jean Sasson is a wondrous book about life for women in the Middle East. *Princess* is told by a real Middle Eastern princess from Saudi Arabia. Despite the fact she could get in trouble with her country for telling facts about her life, she still allows Jean Sasson to tell her story. In

Princess, Sultana is the main character in the story. She is the youngest in her family and has one brother and nine sisters. Sultana is rebellious even from a young age. Sultana constantly voices her opinion when she isn't supposed to. She recounts numerous stories from how her sister was married to an older gentleman more than twice her age one of her rebellious acts of flushing her brother's headress down the toilet and causing him to break his toe. Among the laughs of some of her stories are a few darker ones. She catches her brother and his friend committing a terrible act against a child while on vacation. The worst part is the girl's mother knew about the act and allowed it because they were poor. Sultana feels bad that she has more than enough money, but events like the one she witness happen all the time because other families don't have enough money. Sultana also experiences a tragic death and loses some close friends along the way. By the time she is an adult she is still the same rebellious woman but with a husband and kids. Sultana experiences even more ups and downs in her adulthood. Sultana is forced to make many hard decisions in her marriage. This story really illustrates how life in Middle Eastern countries is. Princess really is the queen of all Middle Eastern tales. It shows the poverty that some people go through and the horrendous acts they have to do to earn enough money to get by. It also shows how women are treated more as a nuisance and a servant than an equal. Women are seen as pretty individuals who must have children and not speak unless spoken to. Their opinion does not matter. This book points out all the problems in the Middle Eastern society. It raises awareness on issues that many people do not pay attention to. The best thing about this book is that it is from a real person's point of view someone who has seen this first hand and wants to help improve it. I recommend this book be read by everyone. Even if you are not a feminist, these issues will touch your heart. This book should also be read by the Middle Eastern community so they can see what it's like to be a woman in that society and hopefully see the error in some of their ways. This book would be especially good in a social studies class that wants to learn about Middle Eastern life. It also has many historical details in it. It would teach a lot to a feminism class or club. I give this book five out of five stars because this book truly shows what women in the Middle East have to go through every day. Women do not get to speak out what they believe and come second to men in every situation. They are seen as people who give birth, clean and fix meals. They aren't treated as an equal and many women don't have the courage to fight back for rights. This book shows we should stand up for women in the Middle East. Be sure to read the next two books in the trilogy. They are titled: Princess Sultana's Daughters and Princess Sultana's Circle. If you want to help out with the women of the Middle East or find out more information about them visit this website: <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/women-helping-women-middle-east-north-africa/>

To read this is to learn the manner in which women in Muslim countries live. The book is interesting and very informative. The people in it become like women we would meet and befriend anywhere in the world. To me the author brought to the forefront the fact that regardless of our differences in customs and religious beliefs, all of us as women long for the same things in life.

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