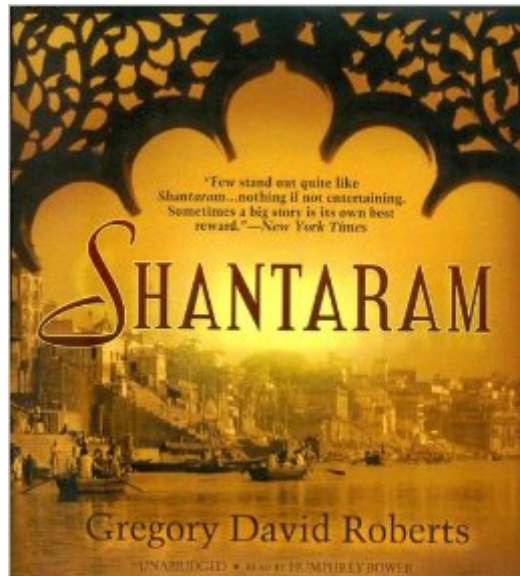


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Shantaram



Synopsis

*One of AudioFile's Best Audiobooks of 2007 * [Read by Humphrey Bower] This mesmerizing first novel tells the epic journey of Lin, an escaped convict who flees maximum security prison in Australia to disappear into the underworld of contemporary Bombay, a hidden society of beggars and gangsters, prostitutes and holy men, actors and exiles. Accompanied by his guide and faithful friend, Prabaker, Lin searches for love and meaning while running a clinic in one of the city's poorest slums and serving his apprenticeship in the dark arts of the Bombay mafia. The keys to unlock the mysteries that bind Lin are held by two people: his mentor Khader Khan, mafia godfather and criminal-philosopher, and the beautiful, elusive Karla, whose passions are driven by dangerous secrets. Based on the life of the author, this extraordinary debut has the world of human experience in its reach.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (2,646 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I have, in the last three years, read literally hundreds of books of fiction. I can quite easily list the three bodies of work which were the most enjoyable, instructive, and otherwise influential to me. In order they are: 1) the entire 21 book series of Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey/Maturin historic naval literature (probably the best series of books I have ever read), 2) the three books of Neal Stephenson's Baroque Cycle (Quicksilver, The Confusion, and the System of the World), each book being better than the previous one, and 3) Shantaram. Shantaram is a love story from start to finish: love of mankind, love of friends, love of a woman, love of a country, love of a city, love of an adversary, love of a way of life, love of a people, love of adventure, love of a father, and, most

apparent, love for the reader. The protagonist (based on the writer himself) is a complex adventurer with a deep soul and a past which, though you and I can never fully appreciate it unless we have done similar things (highly unlikely...few of us have ever been tortured, for example, or kicked a heroin habit twice) is made accessible to us, complete with its feelings and lessons. The writing is superb, the characters have depth, the setting descriptions place you right there, the plots are intriguing, and the emotions, including humor, I cannot adequately describe, since I have nowhere near the skills of the writer, Gregory Roberts. I cannot recommend the book more highly. Please do yourself a favor and read it.

Shantaram is one of those books that you wait to find for five years, even a decade. You know how it is. You read a really great book and, on coming to the end page, immediately want to find another book just as good to fill its place. So you go out looking for such a book, but cannot find it. You look for a week, then a month, then months turn to years, and finally, 5 to 10 years later, you finally find a book that is a really great read. Shantaram is such a book. It is an A+ story that captivates you on page one and sustains the pace through every one of its 920 pages. It overflows with a wide range of characters of every moral persuasion, good and bad. And it is rich with the big themes on the nature of humanity and the human struggle to survive and thrive, for better or worse. In addition, the actual writing is superb, descriptive and often beautiful, without ever descending into sentimental or maudlin. Roberts always manages to find the right phrase or word to bring into clear focus the incredible wide range of experiences he paints. I might add, this is one book that I do not want to see as a movie, because there is no way that a mere movie could be a fraction as good as this glorious, three dimensional work. I'll be lucky if I have to wait only another 5 - 10 years to find another book this good.

It's just not fair. Gregory David Roberts is one of the best writers of our time, and I do not make that statement lightly. I am usually a 350-400 page novel-reader -- I like to get in and get out. But after reading the first paragraph (I dare you to read it and NOT be interested in seeing where he goes), I couldn't stop thinking about it. Actually, I read the first paragraph in *Borders*, put it down and went home. I simply didn't want to start a 900 page novel. But I couldn't get the passage out of my head the whole night, and returned the next day to purchase it. This book is magical. It reads like the best non-fiction adventure novel (!) ever written. I gave the book to my dad for his birthday and about a month later asked him how it was going. He told me that he had 100 pages left but hadn't read in two weeks because he "didn't want it to end." Instead of a synopsis of the book, which is available in

so many places, I thought I'd tell you my thoughts about the book and how it impacted me and those around me. I hope it helps. I tell everyone about this book and always say the same two things:1) Don't let the 900 pages scare you.2) Read the first paragraph. If you aren't interested in that, don't go on. But if that paragraph doesn't inspire you, I have no idea why you read in the first place. You can read the first page here on .

FINALLY, a gut-wrenching, harrowing, well-penned novel, whose author suffers not from the literary constipation of most current "highbrow" authors (He's faced down far more deadly things, chronicled herein, to be affrighted by sharp penned editors.) - A book, in short, that will make your heart bleed with the depths to which the human soul can sink and the glories to which it can rise. ----I read so many books, but this is the first true work of art and genius published in this new century that I've managed to discover. It is a book from which I'm still recovering from having read. Like all great art, it leaves one with a new perspective on the world and causes one to reconnoitre the heart's bearings. The book strips away the lies we tell ourselves and leaves the heartstrings bare for the reader to see, where he/ she will recognise his/her own.Let's get something straight here: This is not a book of "purple prose" or any form of sentimentality. Each tear shed is wrung from harrowing experience. As Roberts writes, "One of the reasons we crave love, and seek it so desperately, is that love is the only cure for loneliness, and shame, and sorrow. But some feelings sink so deep into the heart that only loneliness can help you find them again. Some truths about yourself are so painful that only shame can help you live with them. And some things are just so sad that only your soul can do the crying for you."--Your soul will have cried with Roberts's many times before the end of the book.This is truly a book for lovers of great literature. Roberts writes, "I never found a club or a clan or idea that was more important to me than the men and women who believed in it."--This book is one that values the mystery of people and the mystery of human existence above all else. ----Including yours, reader.

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