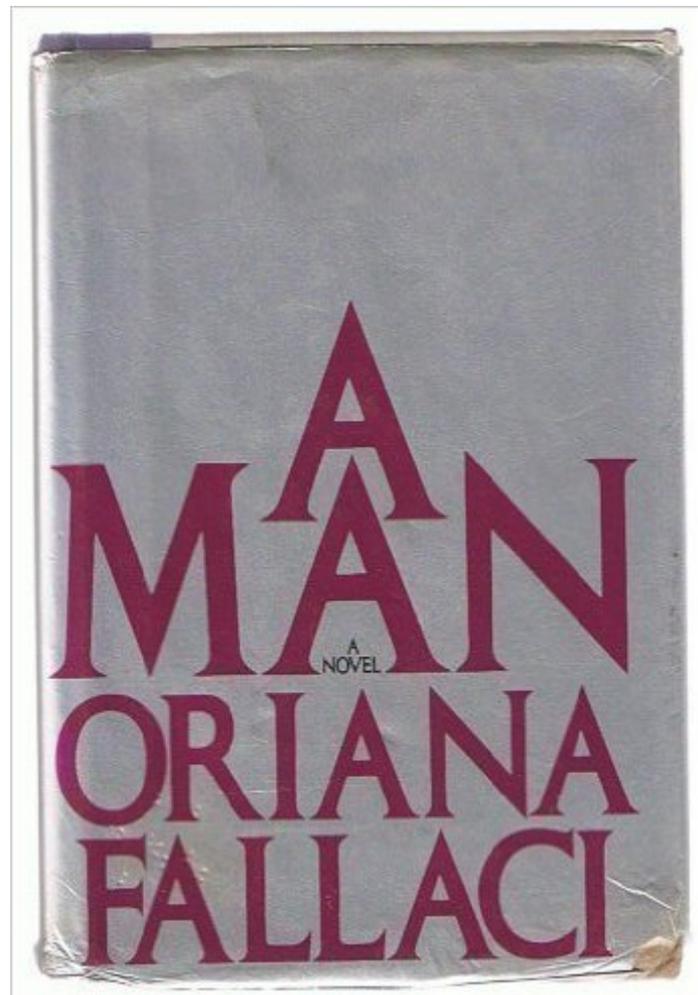


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A Man



Synopsis

Saved from execution through the intervention of world leaders, Allesandro Panagoulis, an implacable Greek freedom fighter, endures years of imprisonment and torture before regaining his freedom and resuming his war against corrupt ...

Book Information

Hardcover: 463 pages

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Customer Reviews

This book is much more than just a book. It is a true story that had to be told, and most importantly has to be read. The more it is read, the more it achieves its purpose. It is not there to entertain you, so don't bother if you are looking for a nice bed-time story. If you are one of those who think individually and alternatively, this piece of writing will shake you and probably make you very very angry. But don't forget: this is a story that happens all the time, in different parts of the world, with different settings, locations and names, but always with the same bottom-line meaning. This time the setting is Greece in 1968, just a year after the Colonels' coup d'etat and the establishment of military junta in the country for seven sorry years. The character is Alecos Panagoulis, the man who under no political label, no party protection and generally acting on his own, unsuccessfully attempted to kill the dictator. The message of the story is not so much the unfair punishment and the horrible years in prison of the hero, but his heroic aloneness after he is out trying to make sense of the meaning of the sacrifice. For somebody who suffered five years of solitary confinement in a tomb-like prison cell and intense physical and psychological torture, it is hell to realize that even after "democracy" resumes, it is the same people who put him to jail, who crippled the name of freedom for seven years, the people who rule now and for ever. The realization that the fight never

ends is what makes a hero. And don't be thinking of Che Guevara and the like. Alekos was no stereotypical hero. He had no party under him, he organized no guerrilla fights.

Perhaps one of the most powerful books ever in Western culture, this recasting of a profoundly human story cuts as deep to the core of the heart and soul as anything you will ever read. This isn't the pop trifle of mystery writers like Ludlum et al, but the dire consequences of becoming a true existential hero. Sartre and Camus should have had the huevos of Alekos. I first read this in the early 80's and have read it many times since. This is a story of bravery, of frustration, of human frailties, of the struggle of a people to wrest control of its destiny away from the merciless militaristic regime (anyone in America paying attention here?) in the very land where democracy was created, of a man dealing with his misogyny, and a woman loving this man as he works through the conflicts that he has willingly inherited and just as willingly seeks to resolve. All the characters are flawed and that is why this is such a remarkable triumph. You will break down in tears as you move toward the inevitable conclusion. Greece has not had a hero like this since Socrates. And what all of them go through is more gut wrenching than anything you will ever read anywhere else. This is the story Costa-Gavras' "Z" was based on. By all means, if you care about freedom, the human soul, the passions that grip a man and a woman as they attempt to deal with the highly charged issues of their own romance while facing down a government prepared to grind them under the wheel, you have a moral imperative you owe to yourself to read this story. Oriana Fallaci is a remarkable, liberating writer. Whatever I have read by her has moved me, whether or not I agree with her opinions and directions. This book stripped my soul bare and made me ask myself more questions than anything I have ever read.

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