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As World War I breaks upon the deserts of Arabia in 1914, Allison Wescott, a young nurse, arrives in British Cairo, torn between her love for a handsome officer and her feelings for a minister working in Oswald Chambers's Zeitoun camp.

Arabian Winds Details

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From Reader Review Arabian Winds for online ebook

Jennie Geiman says

I loved this book. While there were some discrepancies, it was highly enjoyable Christian adventure novel. It reminded me a lot of the Amelia Peabody series, which was my favorite series when I was in middle school. I think I would have loved this book even more then. I loved the character of Bret Holden. I particularly love that his character description was basically that of Harrison Ford. I think that alone was enough to win me.

Warning: if you download the kindle version to your iPad be prepared for some formatting problems. I had an annoying green box around the text and some random or missing punctuation. At one point even a couple of repeated paragraphs. I don't know if any one else was having this problem on their iPads

Jessica says

Love love love this book...read the series so many times :)

Maria says

I believe the description is inaccurate - the year was 1914

This is part 1 of the Egypt series and it is just fantastic! The intrigue around finding King Tuts tomb was superbly surrounded by a dashing British officer and a noble nurse

Bridget says

3.5 stars.

This was nonstop suspense and action from the first page to the last. A missionary nurse in Egypt finds herself caught up in an investigation and espionage in the months leading up to World War 1. And it was intense. I was definitely caught up in the plot, the mystery, the whole time. And the plot twist at the end? Yep, never saw that coming.

I also loved the setting. Not only the interesting time period, but the locations. Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem. The characters spent a little time in each of these places, and it was fascinating. I could feel the heart the main character, Allison, had for the Jewish and Muslim people she interacted with. My favorite quote from the book- "The gospel is not cultural, nor does truth destroy what is good in any culture."

It was a good book, but not a great one. There were enough editing errors to be a distraction for me. And I didn't get as invested in the characters as much as I wanted. I hope that changes as I read book 2, Lions of the Desert.

Michelle Dee says

4.5 Stars

I have a long, fond history with this book. About 10 years ago I was but an innocent Christian teenager in search for Christian fiction - preferably the romantic kind - that could match up to all the non-Christian YA I so adored. I had tried many Christian fiction romances and they just...ugh. No. I think anyone who has waded through the murky waters of Christian fiction will know what I'm on about here. I am not trying to disparage Christian romance or fiction at all, even though I am no longer quite so innocent or quite so Christian. It's pretty much a fact that good Christian romances are few and far between. They're often either too ridiculously unbelievable or too unbearably preachy. It reminds me of my days of Fanfiction addiction. Everyone who has trawled through that cesspit will know that the majority of what's on there is rubbish, but occasionally you'll find gold. *Arabian Winds* is pure gold.

I imagine there are two types of potential readers for this book - Christians and non-Christians - and I will attempt to address both audiences in this review because having been on both sides of the coin and having read the book in both stages of life, I believe I am in a somewhat unique position to do so.

Plot

The plot really is one of the best things about *Arabian Winds*. It is a murder mystery with generous helpings of espionage and romance in the mix. Those looking for a good mystery will find it here. The romance does not detract from the plot whatsoever - it merely enhances it. Those looking for a good romance will find that here. It is exciting and full of tension between two really excellent characters (especially Bret...oh, Bret *swoon*). When I first read this book I was in it for the romance and was entirely satisfied with it. Okay, satisfied is not strong enough a term. I swooned my darn socks off! It was just a bonus that the plot was captivating as well. Now I am older and (sort of) wiser, I appreciate the perfect balance between both, and how they (the mystery and the romance) help each other along.

As for that mystery, even reading the book again knowing who did what, I still found myself thinking "There is really no way I could have known who did this the first time round." Not to give too much away, but Chaikin did a great job with her murder mystery here! There are multiple players on both sides and Allison often doesn't know who to trust - and neither do you, as the reader! I am not a lover of mystery but I think lovers of mystery will be happy with this one.

Setting

I don't usually mention the setting of books in my reviews of them, but this one deserves a special mention, because *Arabian Winds* is single-handedly responsible for my love of Egyptian and Arabian ancient history. I *adored* the setting of this book. As the title suggests, it is set in Arabia...but that's not all. It's focused around archaeological dig sites and, even better, at the cusp of The Great War, which is only rumor and speculation at that point. What our heroine Allison finds herself caught up in is directly connected to international intrigue between international enemies and the stakes are high indeed. That the intrigue was rooted in history made the premise even more enjoyable. Chaikin includes historical notes at the back of the book indicating what facts are historically sound. Some of the figures mentioned existed, all of the places, and the information everyone is searching for - which is the basis of the intrigue - could very well have

existed. This gives the book a sense of reality about it, as though all this could have really happened. It made me care more, about what happened and to whom, which brings me to...

Characters

I can't go any further without getting something off my chest. It may not be pleasant for some to read, and it is quite humiliating indeed, but my 14-year-old self (okay, and 24-year-old self) demands it of me. I LOVE YOU BRET HOLDEN! FOREVER AND EVER! YOU WILL ALWAYS BE ONE OF MY FAVORITE BOOK BOYFRIENDS! I WILL NEVER FORGET YOU! And it's true. I haven't forgotten him for 10 years. He's practically the reason I picked this book up again after so long. So, who is Bret Holden, love of my life? Think James Bond but without the noxious womanizing. Sure, he has women after him as any handsome, charming, debonair, self-respecting British agent would, but he doesn't *use* them up like dear Mr Bond does so callously. He never uses Allison, merely tries to warn her away from him because he doubts his own ability to keep her at arm's length, where he thinks her safest. And that, dear reader, is what makes him utterly irresistible.

Allison, our heroine, accuses Bret of being all sorts of things - arrogant, callous, cynical, conceited, horrid, heartless, mysterious, etc. - and he is all of those things at different points. However, he is also - as Allison comes to realize throughout the course of the book - brave, noble, kind, caring, tender, heroic, virtuous and good. If he is callous and arrogant, he has reasons to be so, and they are proper reasons - mostly due to the dangerous nature of his work - and not the vapid ones you see in a lot of romances these days, like he is an orphan and had a rough childhood and thus he is entitled to act like a jerk. (view spoiler) Sometimes Bret *seems* like a jerk, because we see him through Allison's eyes and he may have just done or said something that has hurt or angered her, but we as the reader are situated just outside Allison's head and we are able to see the motive behind his actions and words and the purpose they achieve. Usually Allison is being naive or stubborn or both and what he says and does gets her to focus, to accomplish what needs to be accomplished. He doesn't say or do anything with the intention of hurting her, it's with the intention of getting the job done and getting her to safety. God, he is perfect. He is the charming, handsome, intelligent James-Bond-like spy but he is also brave, noble and kind. Literally perfect. Is it really any wonder I have loved him for 10 years? I think not.

But now I must write of Allison Wescott, our heroine. If anyone would have a problem with this book, I think it would only be because of her. It's not that she's not likable. She is. *I* like her and I'm *super* fussy when it comes to liking heroines. But then, as previously mentioned, I have experienced two sides of the coin. Yep, the Christian/non-Christian coin. You may have noticed that I have not yet mentioned the Christian element to *Arabian Winds*, even though I have labelled it Christian fiction. Well, *Arabian Winds* isn't *really* what I personally consider Christian because the only thing Christian about this book are the characters. Some are, some aren't, but whatever the characters believe is not the main focus of the book. It comes into it occasionally - for example, Allison's Jewish Zionist friend David - but this is not a book about being Christian or becoming one. However, Allison is a Christian and her belief is very much an integral part of her being. And that is why I think some readers will find her trying.

Allison is almost a Mary Sue, but she stops just short of the mark. A Mary Sue is heroine who is too good to be true, a special snowflake to whom everything comes easy and with whom every man falls in love and who never does anything wrong, at least in her mind. Allison is a better person than most people I know, but she is very self aware and openly recognizes when she makes mistakes (the few times she does). She is honest and humble. She has three open admirers in this book, but she is aware of them and does not pretend to not know she's attractive and does not lead on the ones she is not interested in. She is also intelligent and brave. Sounds perfectly fine so far, yes? Well, add her Christianity to the mix and some might get put off.

God is very much part of her thoughts and she will often head off on a (thankfully brief) tangent about some facet of the Bible or her belief. Like I said, it is very much a part of her and so it pops up often. I found it pretty easy to skip the paragraphs that were either prayers or Scripture quotes. It's not that I hate Christianity or anything (I still consider myself somewhat a Christian), I just didn't want the distraction, however brief, from the action, whether that be the romance or suspense. I think, at times, those tangents were unnecessary and sometimes a little preachy. It's not that the author is outright on a mission to get all her readers to convert, but sometimes those tangents did not seem organic to the situation Allison was in. Sometimes it fit perfectly, like when she is scared and remembers a particularly uplifting Scripture. If the main character and third-person narrator is a particularly devout Christian then of course I expect her thoughts to often turn towards God and Scripture, but only if it feels right for the story.

On the other hand, I admired that Allison had her beliefs, convictions and boundaries and stood by them firmly. Nothing worse than a wishy-washy, hypocritical main character...or Christian. To some non-Christian readers Allison may not feel like a believable character and I understand that. Unfortunately most people have not come across a genuine Christian, who is sincere and true in their belief in every way. In my time both actively involved in church/Christian life and outside it I have come across far too many of the insincere, blind, hypocritical kind - you know, the kind that gives the rest of the Christians a bad name because they seem to be an unfortunate majority. However, I have also known - and still know - the sincere kind, the kind like Allison and so she was real to me in a way I think she may not be to non-Christian readers. However, that said, I don't think this should deter non-Christian readers from picking this one up because it really is a marvelous book. It is an adventure. It stays with you.

And it has Bret Holden, handsome British agent extraordinaire, love of my life for 10 years, second only to the incomparable Jericho Barrons of my beloved *Fever* series.

Really, *that* should be all you need to convince you to give this a go! *Trust me* on that.

Aubrielle says

Yet another great romance. But not all mushy romance. There is a lot of action and adventure in it. If you like romance but don't like it too mushy, this is a good series for you.

Mistyblue says

I really enjoy Linda Chaikin's books. She always introduces me to far-away lands and interesting times in history. I love the hero in this book, Bret Holden, although the heroine, Allison sometimes struck me as a bit preachy. Not uncommon in an Christian novel, but a little out of place with the rest of the book. That said, I look forward to reading the next book in the series. :)

Melissa says

Brave and God-fearing Allison Wescott never suspected she would be involved in mystery, murder, and romance as she traveled with the archeology club to Arabia.

After the death of a club member, in the dim moonlight Allison sees someone lurking next to the victim's

hut, and it looks like her cousin, Leah . . .

Allison meets a handsome young man . . . but is he a sinister German soldier or a friendly British agent?

Marije says

'Rise up like a lion for the service of the Lord'

Blijft één van mn favo boeken, dat verdient een sterverhoging.

Lindsey says

probably one of the most complex, brilliant reads. something to live into....haha! actually, it really should be something to live into--i mean, desert, love, danger...ridiculous

Emily says

It was a decent book with a decent plot line. I thought the idea of the book as well as the historical backdrop was great, and it definitely kept me guessing and even surprised me at the end. However, I had a hard time connecting with the characters, and for me, that is the most important part of the book.

Lynnda says

This book was my introduction to Linda Lee Chaikin and I loved it. The mystery and romance were woven together beautifully. Will have to read this series again very soon.

Lexy says

My favourite Linda Chaikin trilogy! Egypt, WW1, murders, mysteries, espionage, and the incomparable Bret Holden!!! ♥?

Krysti says

Absolutely loved this book! The historical aspect is what initially draws you in but then you get further hooked by the characters and their story! Couldnt recommend this series more.

Brooke Barenfanger says

Arabian Winds is the first book in my favorite series. I've read other series by this author, but this one is my absolute favorite. Arabian Winds is very heavy in espionage and a little lighter in the romance area. However, through each of the three books in the series the couple who are falling in love become closer and closer. I usually don't care much for mysteries, but this series is the exception. Chaikin is very talented at weaving the plot, giving it depth, and taking it all the way through to the end.
