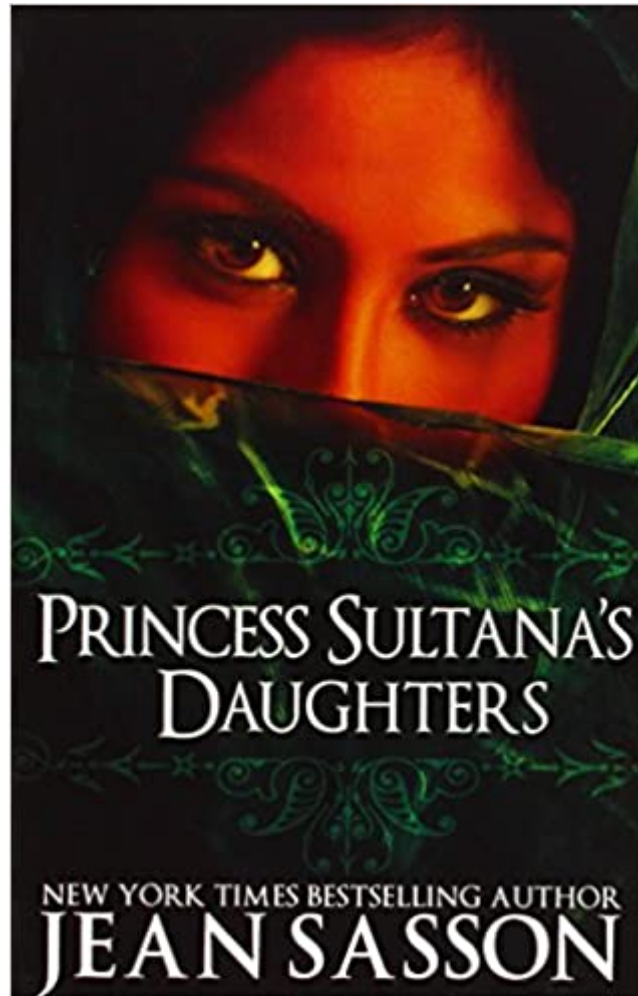




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Princess Sultana's Daughters



Synopsis

Reader's of Princess Sultana's true story, Princess, were gripped by her powerful indictment of women's lives behind the veil within the royal family of Saudi Arabia. Now, the princess and Jean Sasson turn the spotlight on Sultana's two teenage daughters, Maha and Amani. During her own youth, Sultana chafed under the harsh social system into which she was born. Today, despite untold wealth and privilege, Princess Sultana cannot buy the rights and freedoms women in other cultures possess, for herself, or for her daughters. Although Sultana lives with a constant fear of retribution--even death at the hand of her own father or brother, her passion to provide her two daughters with a better life transcends her fear and fuels her desire for change. As second-generation members of the royal family who have benefited from Saudi oil wealth, Maha and Amani have known nothing but opulence and wealth from the moment of their birth. Yet, stilled by the unbearable restrictive lifestyle imposed on them, Maha and Amani have reacted in equally desperate ways. Maha is a headstrong beauty driven by fear and isolation due to Saudi Arabia's feudal justice. Described by her father as a girl of brilliant fragments, Maha's gifted mind cannot focus on one goal. When Maha becomes involved in a lesbian relationship, she ends having an emotional breakdown and requires psychiatric treatment in London. Amani, the youngest daughter, rebels in her way during the religious frenzy of Haj, the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Makkah. Once a sweet and placid animal-lover, Amani emerges almost overnight from her dormant religious faith and embraces Islamic beliefs with unnerving intensity. Amani's fundamental fanaticism threatens to destroy her mother's personal quest to improve women's lot in her native land. With candor and humility, Sultana shares the joy, frustration, and dark intervals of my fear of Saudi Arabian motherhood and marriage. She details the difficulties inherent in raising d

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Customer Reviews

Sasson's sequel to *Princess: A True Story of Life Behind the Veil* is another page-turner related by "Princess Sultana." A member of the royal family of Saudi Arabia, Sultana now is married to a progressive prince, but this privileged status does not protect her or her two daughters from the country's repressive laws against women. Though a devout Muslim, Sultana believes the entrenched male power structure has perverted religious doctrine to justify veiling women and depriving them of basic civil liberties. The lack of opportunity to forge equal relationships with men before and after marriage, Sultana argues, is why one of her daughters became fanatically religious and the other suffered a mental breakdown. This eye-opening account is limited to life among the royals rather than a critique of Saudi Arabian society, although Sultana describes the brutal custom of female circumcision practiced by the poor. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this sequel to the popular *Princess: A True Story of Life Behind the Veil* in Saudi Arabia (LJ 7/92), Sultana continues her shocking and amazing story into the next generation. Feeling that men are generally at the root of female grief, she argues that it is the duty of the discontented like herself to seek change so that her children's generation will have some relief from the oppression that stifles Saudi women's lives today. The book is more than that-it gives insight into the lives of royalty and the views of those who can be religious while flaunting the strict Sunni rules against alcohol and temporary marriage. This book charms the heart and should be a popular item for general collections.--Louise Leonard, Univ. of Florida Libs., Gainesville Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I read "Princess" in 1991 - twice in two weeks--read again Nov 2001 and am now reading for the 4th time. ALL of Jean Sasson's books are difficult to put down. *Princess Sultana* is one courageous and brave woman. Thank goodness there is a royal who is willing to fight for women rights to go forward in The Mid-East countries. There is much humor in the *Princess* series--especially with Sultana's daughters and that EVIL brother of hers--but he is a product of that culture. I can't wait for each of Jean's Sasson's books to come out. ALL of them are fascinating.

It can be the USA or the highest society in Mexico City or another part of the world like Asia or the Middle East and women are found as part of a yet unacknowledged worldwide women's sisterhood all fighting for the same rights and full recognition given to men for half the work women do. Princess Sultana is no exception but even in her privileged status she speaks out for the injustice done by men to women financially and socially like the story she relates of the humble grandmother she knew and aided in the hope to stop the forced circumcision the woman's granddaughter was going to suffer. An abominable tradition not always followed but They failed. East or West women share the same inequality and discrimination camouflaged in different forms and shapes in family tradition. culture, religion or myths created by men and followed by women who are too burdened by work and responsibilities to care to analyze. In the US there's many forms of injustice despite "advances". There's many Anita Hills serving a Clarence Thomas for survival of her job and professional position. Seldom a woman will shackle her chains loud enough to be heard. The main reason is the fear of rebellion who will make men put a woman in check by making her to lose her privileges at home or in the office, or maybe both. A woman's highest handicap is her ignorance and perceived inability to fight for her rights. the acceptance of an unrecognized gender injustice imposed on her in subtle and not so subtle ways. women keep a forced silence for fear of losing status and privilege and being set apart as "difficult" just as Anita Hill was. Too much is lost. We have one life. Princess Sultana is far away from us in Saudi Arabia and she makes us feel free and safe to evaluate and criticize a different culture and the status of Saudi women as mothers, wives and at times as secret lovers. Her obstacles are immense in a society ruled by religion and government enforced by a few. So strong is the double weapon of clergy and royalty that the holiest book: the Koran with all its wisdom and directives is twisted and misquoted to satisfy the will and lust of powerful men who rule over so many women. the liberation seed implanted by the Princess starts to germinate within us and we start to assess our own system and situation. We gain empowerment sharing the dreams and sorrows of a strong woman living a privileged status as Princess Sultana enjoying royal life with all its pains and a good share of almost insurmountable temptations to blind us all to the injustice done to Saudi women by men but Sultana is a woman who is not blinded by luxury and money to silence her conscience and sense of justice. Other women in her family are blinded by diamonds, travel and precious rubies. Unafraid of no one Sultana speaks for the truth and shatters submissiveness in traditional roles. Her husband and males around her learn to fear her and respect her. She fights and loses battles but speaks The truth loud and clear for other women to hear and fight for in their own societies around the world, rich or poor, single or married, beautiful or plain. For themselves and for their daughters and in doing so they begin to transform

men of the next generation. Her own son helps a bride escape the clutches of her disapproving family and reunites her away from Saudi Arabia to the husband she would have lost forever. Princess Sultana becomes a friend to every woman alive. Her story is easy and entertaining to read as a woman who sought balance and justice in an oppressive society. She gives us hope and the strength and power to fight for our own unclaimed freedoms and be valued as workers, wives and mothers. By becoming part of Sultana's inner circle we begin to question ourselves, our roles and expectations in the particular society in which we live in and gradually grow to recognize the subtle and insidious ways women are mentally manipulated by men supported by the cultural and economic myths that sustain the "technical" and "modern and progressive" advanced society in which men created and support. Yes, Saudi Arabia does not allow women to drive yet and voting, I believe, is a recent privilege but how many women Presidents have we had in the US? We had Indira Gandhi in India, Golda Mayer in Israel and at least half a dozen supreme heads of state in Latin America in the past and present. But how many women Presidents in the US? Why not so far? Princess Sultana's books far from entertaining are a loving inviting hand not only into her world but a world inside yourself that will empower you to reclaim a world that is yours yet unclaimed. Highly readable and entertaining. Five stars not enough. It opened my eyes and gave me a better sense of the gender battle ground in every society.

I read "Princess" and was absolutely enthralled for about 3/4 of the book. I'm glad I read Princess Sultana's Daughters because I was curious how a person could have shared so much of their life experiences and not expect her identity to be revealed. This, the second book of the series reminded me that children who are raised in such an insular society have trouble developing strong values. I also wondered how they coped with the world in the 2000's. I completed this book, but really should have stopped after reading Princess.

Interesting book by Jean Sassoon, whose books I have found to be informative and entertaining. I can never think of a creative title for these reviews. The two daughters are very different but are blessed with opportunities because of their parents.

Oh my WOW. I couldn't put this down. Learned so much about the culture - can't say I'm a fan of it, because of the treatment and attitude of poor children and females. But glad I read the book - and then ordered the others. Very well done, Ms. Sasson. Thank you!

Amazing story of women in Saudi Arabia. Very sad and disgusting treatment of women. The Princess in this story gave a lot of her time and resources to improved the lives of individual women and families and her daughters have taken up her mantle.

I understand how terrible life would be for women in Saudi and other countries where they are less than second class citizens, but it is often difficult to sympathize with the wealthy, especially the kind of wealthy and powerful, as Sultana's family because they have lives beyond what most of us have beyond our imaginations simply because of their wealth. There are many kinds of prisons and struggling financially, or living in true poverty, is just as bad as when we women have no rights. When you live in poverty, how do you exercise your rights? What good does the right to drive do when you can't afford a car? What about the mother who faces losing her children, not because she has the right to them, but because she is homeless and has no home for them and no way to provide for them? I support equality for women, but I also support a better distribution of wealth. It is obscene for people such the royals of Saudi Arabia to have so much when so many have so little.

I certainly enjoyed this book as well. It goes to show when it comes to dealing with our children we all can't predict their behavior no matter how rich or poor a parent may be. It was good to read how these Arabic women have been able to obtain a measure success with dealing with their husbands. It was especially brave of Sultana for not letting the fear of losing her children when her spouse threaten to take them away she took immediately control and remove her children without their knowledge that a problem existed. I enjoyed reading about these super rich women but I can only feel sadness for their living arrangements and old harmful customs. It seems with all the great things their money can buy freedom of being an individual with ideas and opinions must be silent. Hopefully, as the new breed of Arabic women emerges and has they cleverly raise their sons to appreciate the importance of a women existence things will approve for our sisters.

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