

Disaster at Bushehr

Reginald Nelson

URLink Print and Media

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An American dentist is drawn into an investigation of a terrorist attack in Iran in the bombastic thriller Disaster at Bushehr.

When Israel is blamed for the bombing of an Iranian nuclear site, a small team of covert American operatives is called to investigate in *Disaster at Bushehr*, the second installment in Reginald Nelson's international thriller series.

After inventing a tracking device that can be implanted in a tooth, sexagenarian dentist Reginald and his Dubai-based American operations team, I.N.C.I.S.O.R., use the devices to track terrorists' movements and to safeguard important people against kidnapping. When an Iranian nuclear site is bombed, leaving one million people dead, the Israeli prime minister calls Reginald personally—not because his expertise is required, but because so few Americans are close by. The events that follow strain credulity: a cartoonish American president demands answers, and I.N.C.I.S.O.R. has no obvious connection to the case.

Reginald is a plain and unmemorable lead. His personality is indistinct from his colleagues'; his speaking style is flat, and he acts without revealing deeper facets of himself. Others are underdeveloped as well: Reginald's two closest colleagues, Lance and Ashonte', blend together, and Reginald's wife, Becky, responds to danger like an anxious child, which comes off as demeaning. Political leaders speak in harsh, declaratory statements that resemble a satirical situation room script. The heroes are good and the villains are evil; this book does not deal in moral gray areas.

Despite the book's drama, excitement is hindered by detail saturation, as with information on the populations of various cities and the number of centrifuges in a given place. Multipage tangents are dedicated to military specifications and descriptions of historical events; at one point, Reginald says that he's "getting really bored" with a colleague's information dumping. Further, important details are glossed over. For example, the wives of Lance and Ashonte' are introduced at the same time, though which woman is married to which man is not clarified until much later.

Secondary narrators are introduced at random and without contextual details, including their job titles and countries of origin, muddying the book's progression. For example, a radiation expert is implied to be connected to an organization that I.N.C.I.S.O.R. is working with, but this isn't confirmed right away. And the prose is choppy and plain, though also flush with exclamation points that undercut its serious subject matter.

Disaster at Bushehr is an international political thriller in which a team of Americans responds to a terrorist attack in Iran.

LEAH BLOCK (October 1, 2024)

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