



The Relic Master: A Novel

By Christopher Buckley

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The Relic Master: A Novel By Christopher Buckley

From *New York Times* bestselling author Christopher Buckley, “one of the funniest writers in the English language” (Tom Wolfe), a compelling and hilarious adventure featuring a sixteenth-century relic hunter and his best friend, Albrecht Dürer, who conspire to forge the Shroud of Turin.

The year is 1517. Dismas is a relic hunter: one who procures “authentic” religious relics for wealthy and influential clients. His two most important patrons are Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony and soon-to-be Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz. While Frederick is drawn to the recent writing of Martin Luther, Albrecht pursues the financial and political benefits of religion and seeks to buy a cardinalship through the selling of indulgences. When Albrecht’s ambitions increase his demands for grander and more marketable relics, Dismas and his artist friend Dürer conspire to manufacture a shroud to sell to the unsuspecting noble. Unfortunately Dürer’s reckless pride exposes Albrecht’s newly acquired shroud as a fake, so Albrecht puts Dismas and Dürer in the custody of four loutish mercenaries and sends them all to steal Christ’s burial cloth (the Shroud of Chambéry), Europe’s most celebrated relic.

On their journey to Savoy where the Shroud will be displayed, they battle a lustful count and are joined by a beautiful female apothecary. It is only when they reach their destination that they realize they are not alone in their intentions to acquire a relic of dubious legitimacy. Filled with fascinating details about art, religion, politics and science; Vatican intrigue; and Buckley’s signature wit, *The Relic Master* is a delightfully rich and intelligent comic adventure.

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The Relic Master: A Novel By Christopher Buckley Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of December 2015: Christopher Buckley is best known for his satirical treatment of contemporary politics, so at first blush *The Relic Master* seems like a departure. Set in the 1500s, the novel follows the exploits of Dismas the Relic Master, who partners with Albrecht Dürer (yes, the famous painter) to pit two wealthy relic collectors against one another. Greed, ego, and high jinks ensue as this smart, funny, fast-paced novel shows us that money and power have always corrupted, and if not always absolutely, at least in ways that will leave onlookers scratching their heads in wonder. Of course Dismas wants to separate his patron from as much money as possible; by setting the story in a different time and place, Buckley is able to dissect human behavior (and weirdness) where a more contemporary examination might just seem too personal. Plus, *The Relic Master* is a fun adventure novel set during a very interesting time in religious history. You'll think, you'll laugh, you may even wince at times—and you'll be entertained. -- *Chris Schluep*

Review

"An inspired piece of literary gymnastics [that] tumbles into an exuberant adventure caper. . . so tightly written that it holds the reader till the very last page. . . a smart, tart, well researched romp into one of history's most irresistibly grubby and outrageous periods of excess." (New York Times Book Review)

"We may be in 1517, but this is still a political send up, and it's as rascally and convivial as any that Mr. Buckley has written." (The Wall Street Journal)

"Buckley hasn't abandoned political satire at all — he's just found a different playing field for his favorite sport. The calamitous 16th century proves a supple mistress for this Washington writer.... lively, entertaining and occasionally educational." (Washington Post)

"Might be pitched Hollywood style as *The Princess Bride* meets *Ocean's XIII*." (Kirkus Reviews, starred review)

"A humorous and enchanting adventure." (Bustle.com)

"A madcap heist adventure...that's as comical as any in Buckley's modern era tales. Buckley's many fans will be pleased." (Booklist)

"This historical novel is part Monty Python and part *Ocean's 11*. The clever narrative is filled with laugh out loud one liners but, amazingly, doesn't stint on the suspense.... Through the cheeky humor, the author gives readers a very real sense of the early 16th century, when science and superstition held equal sway, and a man was always a sword's breadth away from a horrible death." (Publishers Weekly)

"Christopher Buckley has transported his signature wit and irreverence from the Beltway to sixteenth century Europe in *The Relic Master*. Think of it as *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* meets *Pawn Stars*, which is to say it's hilarious, absurd, and mildly infuriating (in a good way). You really can't go wrong when one of America's savviest humor writers takes on relic mongers, artifact forgeries (*about* that Shroud of Turin . . .), and corrupt religious leaders. In short, *The Relic Master* is a rollicking good time set in an era just begging for Buckley's biting satire." (GQ)

“A witty, deft and often surprisingly big hearted pleasure....Buckley is one of America’s wiliest satirists.”
(Seattle Times)

"Beguiling, funny, and slyly erudite." (National Review)

About the Author

Christopher Buckley is a novelist, essayist, humorist, critic, magazine editor and memoirist. His books have been translated into sixteen foreign languages. He worked as a merchant seaman and White House speechwriter. He has written for many newspapers and magazines and has lectured in over seventy cities around the world. He was awarded the Thurber Prize for American Humor and the Washington Irving Medal for Literary Excellence.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Brown:

In this 21st centuries, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these survives, being in the middle of the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated that for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a guide your ability to survive boost then having chance to stand than other is high. In your case who want to start reading the book, we give you this The Relic Master: A Novel book as beginner and daily reading publication. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Sylvia Langley:

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