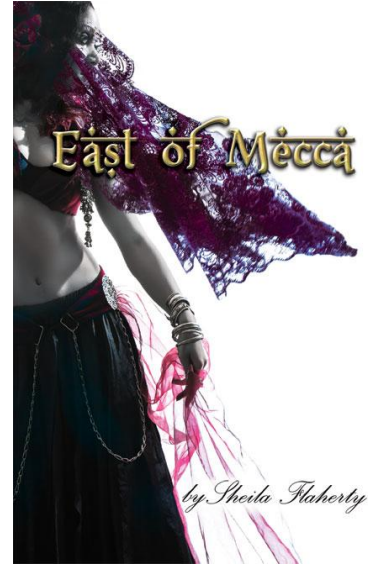


## *East of Mecca* by Sheila Flaherty

This moving and unforgettable debut novel *East of Mecca* tells a timely, harrowing, and heartbreaking story of love and betrayal, the transcendent power of friendship, and the ultimate price of oppression. Driven by financial desperation, Sarah and Max Hayes are seduced by promises of a glamorous expatriate lifestyle in Saudi Arabia. Sarah surrenders her career when Max accepts a prestigious job with Ocmara Oil Company and they relocate their family to the shores of the Persian Gulf. Locked inside the heavily-guarded Ocmara compound, Sarah becomes invisible within the fundamentalist Islamic Kingdom. Gradually, she is drawn into a clandestine, illicit friendship with Yasmeen, a Saudi woman. Together they find freedom beneath the veils and behind the walls of the Saudi women's quarters—until inconceivable events force Sarah to make life-or-death decisions. Told with riveting authenticity and exquisite detail, *East of Mecca* explores the abuse of absolute power with an elegant balance of cultural nuance and moral inquiry. Long after you have turned the last page, you will be haunted by the vivid characters and powerful scenes illuminating this tour de force.



Now an [Amazon Best Seller](#) in Middle Eastern Fiction

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IndieReader Approved - [5 Star Review](#)

Flaherty is a writer and clinical psychologist who specializes in helping people navigate through life changes with grace and ease. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's in Behavioral Sciences from the University of Houston. Flaherty earned her Ph. D. in Clinical Psychology from Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago. Sheila has been awarded three residencies at the Ragdale Foundation for her work in fiction.

Sheila Flaherty's novel "East of Mecca" is forged from the crucible of personal experience and from the experiences of others close to her while living as an expat in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Through the narrator's eyes, we witness the hardships and injustices faced by Saudi women. More surprising—and more unsettling, perhaps—are the oppression and domestic miseries borne by wives and daughters in some expat communities, which Flaherty depicts with unflinching realism and compassion. —*Mary Trouille, Professor of Women's Studies, Illinois State University*

Violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her. - *Moradian, Azad. "Domestic Violence against Single and Married Women in Iranian Society". Tolerancy International. September 2009. Retrieved 16 Nov. 2011.*

*East of Mecca* is available in paperback and ebook on [Amazon](#), and [Barnes & Noble](#),  
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