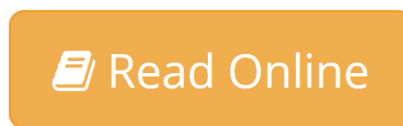


My Uncle Napoleon: A Novel (Modern Library Paperbacks)

By Iraj Pezeshkzad



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The most beloved Iranian novel of the twentieth century

“God forbid, I’ve fallen in love with Layli!” So begins the farce of our narrator’s life, one spent in a large extended Iranian family lorded over by the blustering, paranoid patriarch, Dear Uncle Napoleon. When Uncle Napoleon’s least-favorite nephew falls for his daughter, Layli, family fortunes are reversed, feuds fired up and resolved, and assignations attempted and thwarted.

First published in Iran in the 1970s and adapted into a hugely successful television series, this beloved novel is now “Suggested Reading” in Azar Nafisi’s *Reading Lolita in Tehran*. **My Uncle Napoleon** is a timeless and universal satire of first love and family intrigue.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The obsessions of Dear Uncle Napoleon, as Pezeshkzad's eponymous Iranian patriarch is nicknamed, furnish this epic, episodic farce with a multitude of mock heroic elements: the "centuries old" honor of his petty aristocratic family; the propriety of his distant relatives; the care of his prize sweetbrier; his mythologized exploits in a Cossack regiment; his hero-worship of Bonaparte; and, above all, his paranoia about English international intrigue on his doorstep. Dear Uncle's extended family's antics don't so much distract him as exacerbate his eccentricities with each new misunderstanding, private feud, clandestine affair and arranged marriage. Told from the naive perspective of Dear Uncle's least-favorite nephew (who is chastely, adolescently in love with his daughter), Pezeshkzad's tale, first published in Iran in the early 1970s, seems innocently obsolete after the Iranian Revolution, like Wodehouse after the Blitz, with its comedy relying heavily on conventions?verbal tics, frenetic dialogue, farcical action and acrobatic reversals of fortune. Pezeshkzad supplies an instantly recognizable, universal cast: the foolish family retainer (the Sancho Panza to Dear Uncle's Quixote), the worldly and womanizing uncle, the disgruntled brother-in-law, the officious local police officer, the brawny butcher with an attractive younger wife. While such characters made the novel a huge bestseller and a national touchstone for comic types in Iran, they don't make the best international travelers, and stateside readers may have trouble discerning, or caring about, how they satirize specific elements of Iranian society.

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From Scientific American

A giddily uproarious mixture of farce and slapstick.

From [The New Yorker](#)

An uproarious and endearing Iranian novel ...one of the most entertaining books we're likely to see this year.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donna Beckman:

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