



The Man Who Turned Both Cheeks: A Novel

Gillian Royes

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Jamaica is the picturesque background for this explosive novel about love, fear, and intolerance, the second in Gillian Royes's mystery series featuring charming and charismatic bartender-turned-detective Shad.

PICTURESQUE AND IMPOVERISHED Largo Bay is the background for this explosive novel about love and fear, the second in Gillian Royes's mystery series featuring Shad, a Jamaican bartender-detective. With the arrival of Joseph, estranged son of Eric, the bar's owner, hopes for the village's future come alive but are soon to be threatened. Janna, who has returned to the island, falls for Joseph's good looks and charm, but she isn't the only one with an eye for this mysterious man.

As questions about Joseph's sexuality arise, Shad struggles with protecting the survival of his beloved birthplace amid the deeply ingrained culture of intolerance that surrounds him. What it means to be a man and a father raises questions within the bartender's own home, as his longtime love, Beth, pressures him to make a commitment.

In a land where religion is strong, but life is cheap and violence is often the answer, what will it take for Shad to protect Eric and his family? In this truth-telling sequel to *The Goat Woman of Largo Bay*, the village must confront its own darkness or lose a bright future.

The Man Who Turned Both Cheeks: A Novel Details

Date : Published December 4th 2012 by Atria Books

ISBN : 9781451627435

Author : Gillian Royes

Format : Paperback 464 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction



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Harvee says

A sobering exposé of intolerance that mars this beautiful island and keeps some visitors away. Interesting and poignant novel with a story that is as revealing as it is disturbing.

Jennifer Goudreau says

I still have not got my book

Lorca Damon says

Part mystery, part exposé, and part travelogue, *The Man Who Turned Both Cheeks* (Atria) is the second book from Gillian Royes featuring the bartender Shadrack from Largo Bay, Jamaica. Every bit as suspenseful as the first book, this second fiction titles from Royes takes the reader places—both geographical and spiritual—that he never expected.

When Shad's employer Eric wants to rebuild some of the town business after Hurricane Albert destroyed the hotel, he looks to his long-parted son Joseph to come to Jamaica and help him negotiate with the investor and secure all the necessary legalities. But Joseph brings with him more than just a tense father-son relationship, one in which they might speak on the phone twice a year. He brings rumors about his sexuality to a place that has been called the deadliest location for a homosexual individual on Earth. Despite a passionate romance brewing between Joseph and returned-home local Janna, Joseph's lover, Raheem, arrives for a visit and tears apart any thread that held the townspeople back from their hatred.

When picking up a novel about the popular resort destination, a sunny locale whose reputation is about tourism and once-in-a-lifetime vacations, it's heart-rending to read about the hostility and hatred towards outsiders who are even suspected of homosexuality. The lynch mobs that roam the streets at night, armed with machetes and clubs and ready to burn down homes, belie the visions of sun-kissed beaches and cocktails under umbrellas. But in Royes' sequel to *The Goat Woman* from Largo Bay, that undercurrent of hatred and violence threatens to destroy the entire town as the people seem bent on practicing generations'-old intolerance and brutality rather than put aside their prejudices to rebuild the struggling town's tourism economy.

Nannika says

Not something I would have gone for initially, but turned out to be a good read. Being part of the Caribbean, I liked the references :)

Anne Ponder says

This book felt more like a sermon than a story. It seemed that the characters were formed to the purpose of the lesson, rather than an interesting story about people. I loved the first book, and hope that The Sea Grape Tree will be more like that one. I am extremely happy to find this author and her stories about Jamaica. May she bring us many!

Barrett King says

*****I received this book as part of a Goodreads First Reads giveaway. Thanks to Atria for the copy. Please note that this was an advanced copy uncorrected for proofs, so the quotes may not be totally accurate.*****

The Man Who Turned Both Cheeks is the second book in a series featuring Shadrack Myers. Admittedly I did not read the first book, although if I can get my hands on a copy, I plan to. I won't go into a summary of the plot since the description above does a decent job of it.

At first I had difficulty getting into the book. Some of the dialogue was tough to access as Gillian Royes was staying true to Jamaican dialectic. After a while, though, I got used to it. The book tackles difficult, but important questions, including homosexuality and the hate that it often receives, the nature of fatherhood, race, and more. Occasionally Royes borders on the didactic, but it often fits the characters and she didn't go too far.

Occasionally Royes' symbolism is a bit obvious. At one point Royes describes a scene where, "[b]elow the table, Janna's feet were in two squares, one black, one white, and she shifted them both to the white one." This is probably more of a personal criticism, as I prefer being forced to read into things rather than have them stated obviously.

All in all, though, Royes is a good writer, able to come up with the sort of memorable lines I enjoy:

"Everybody want to control things, for good or for bad. Some people try to do it by praying, some people by controlling other people, and some people by magic. But it all come from being afraid and wanting to control things. Fear can make people do all kind of craziness."

Amy Lignor says

Taking place in the stunning surroundings of Largo Bay, Jamaica, this second novel in Royes' series is even more interesting than the first, as it delves into the true human vice of intolerance.

We begin with the familiar character of Shad Myers. First introduced in, "The Goat Women of Largo Bay," Shad is a bartender and 'unofficial investigator' who helps interpret Jamaican culture. Sadly for Shad, Largo Bay is no longer the 'in' spot and most of the younger generation is now heading off to Kingston hoping to

become famous disc jockeys - so things are getting a tad bit on the boring side.

But...good news is on the horizon. Simone, an American lady, contacts the owner of the bar where Shad works. His name is Eric, and the woman lets him know of an investor who wants to help the bartender rebuild his resort hotel that was severely damaged in a hurricane. Seeing as how this hotel had been Eric's retirement dream, he immediately calls his son, Joseph, to draw up a business plan and promises payment when the prospective investor agrees to finance the project.

Being unemployed, Joseph jumps on a plane and heads to Jamaica. However, what Joseph doesn't expect to find, is Janna; the daughter of a wealthy contractor who has also returned to Largo Bay. The two young people look like a perfect match, but there is something stopping them from becoming the 'beautiful couple' - especially when Joseph's sexuality becomes a question that some island natives can't seem to come to terms with.

Shad, who knows Jamaica like the back of his hand, keeps a weathered eye on the horizon as he watches Joseph and Janna become close, and literally feels a level of violence and hatred just waiting to explode.

An unforgettable Jamaican experience. :)
