



# The Drowning Guard: A Novel of the Ottoman Empire

*Linda Lafferty*

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**The Drowning Guard: A Novel of the Ottoman Empire** Linda Lafferty

2014 winner Colorado Book Award - Historical Fiction

Each morning in the hour before dawn, a silent boat launches on the Bosphorous, moving swiftly into the deepest part of the waters halfway between Europe and Asia, where a man will die...

*The Drowning Guard* is the tale of the Ottoman princess, Esma Sultan—one of the most powerful women in Ottoman history and unlike any other woman in the Islamic world. In a gender reversal of Scheherazade in 1001 Arabian Nights, Esma seduces a different Christian lover each night, only to have him drowned in the morning. The Sultanness's true passion burns only for the Christian-born soldier charged with carrying out the brutal nightly death sentence: her drowning guard, Ivan Postivich.

*The Drowning Guard* explores the riddle of Esma—who is at once a murderer and a champion and liberator of women—and the man who loves her in spite of her horrifying crimes. This textured historical novel, set in the opulence and squalor of Istanbul in 1826, is woven with the complexity and consequences of love.

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