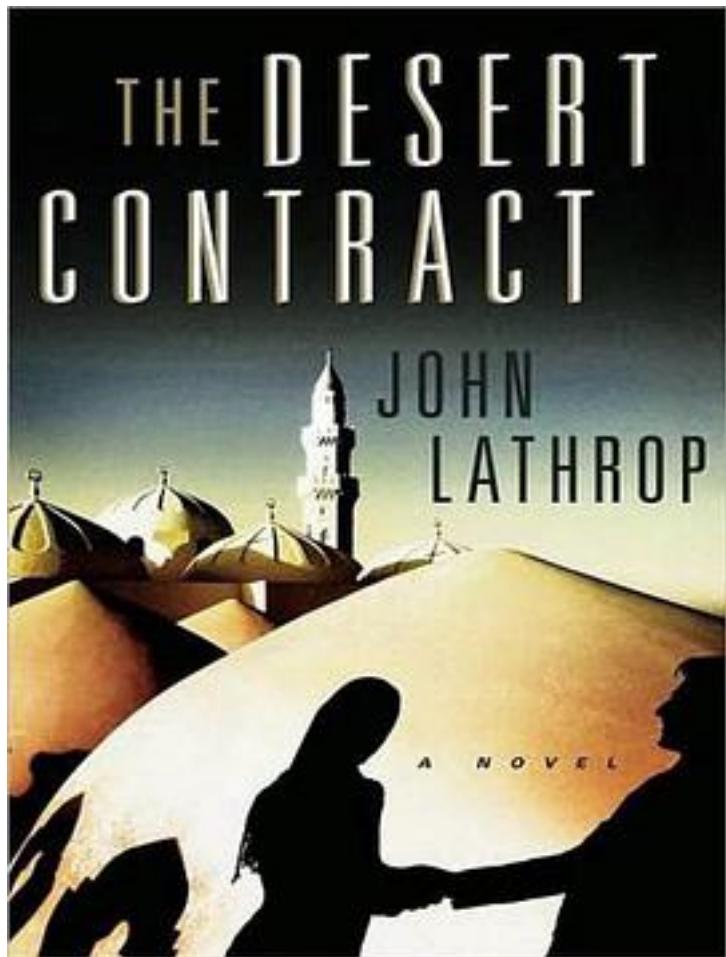


The Desert Contract



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Late at night on the eleventh-floor balcony of a deserted building on the Persian Gulf, American businessman Steve Kemp finds himself falling back in love with Helen -- the Irishwoman he'd left more than a decade before -- as bombs explode below. Kemp

returned to the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia as a last attempt to find success. Fired from his job in L.A. and divorced from his wife, he hoped to salvage his finances in a peaceful part of the Middle East. But he arrived to find a country on the verge of a political meltdown, where an explosive mix of resentment, revolt, and jihadists threatened the regime. And he found his old flame Helen, who was now married to a diplomat at the end of his career. The overextended military props up the crumbling monarchy, buying a little time -- time Kemp and Helen use to rekindle their affair. As the country plunges into violent political crisis, Kemp focuses on financing his escape with Helen. All he needs is one last big sale -- their contract out. The country enters its final descent when Kemp's sale at last appears. The deal will be complete once Kemp visits a correspondent bank. It is standard procedure. But suddenly the picture darkens. The bank is on the wrong side of an obscure island. Helen, and even her husband, may have had a hand in the sale. And the terms may be more ambiguous -- and more dangerous -- than Kemp had thought. Written with compassion and a true understanding of the current politics and business world of the Middle East, *The Desert Contract* paints a dead-on portrait of Saudi Arabia's near future and, at the same time, deftly examines what happens when passion, commitment, and loyalties collide.

作者介绍:

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