



Whitefly: A Novel (Hoopoe Fiction)

By Abdelilah Hamdouchi

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The traffickers. The drug dealers. The smugglers.

They know what it takes to get a gun into Morocco, and so does Detective Laafrit.

When a fourth corpse in three days washes up in Tangier with a bullet in the chest, Laafrit knows this isn't just another 'illegal' who didn't make it to the Spanish coast.

As his team hunts for the murder weapon, Laafrit follows a hunch and reveals the killer at the heart of an international conspiracy.

A fast-paced crime thriller from the Arab west.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Arabic crime fiction pioneer Hamdouchi's native Morocco serves as the setting for this hard-boiled noir, which demonstrates that the genre's themes know no borders. While most of the Tangier police force mobilizes to deal with mass protests by the unemployed, Det. Khalid Ibrahim, who's known by the nickname Laafrit ("crafty"), is busy writing a report on a premeditated poisoning case that claimed three victims. After he finishes his report, Laafrit manages to defuse one of the protests by talking to a group of unemployed university graduates. Then Laafrit gets word that the fourth drowning victim in three days has just washed up on shore. The other three corpses were apparently dumped at sea by callous human traffickers, but the latest body was shot four times, execution style. Laafrit's path to the truth is appropriately convoluted, and he comes across as a believable lead—a gifted investigator struggling with everyday problems—who could sustain a series. (Mar.)

Review

"A refreshing and refined crime thriller Events unfold cleanly, with a sniper's precision. *Whitefly* is an entertaining crime novel, a slice of insight into police culture. However, it is also a subtle hint at some of the most pressing issues tormenting contemporary Morocco, bubbling beneath the surface, and of all that cannot be filed away and put on the backburner quite as easily as a police case."--*Banipal*

"Abdelilah Hamdouchi seems to have found the formula for the emergence of the Moroccan detective novel."--*Libération Kaleidoscope*

"The plotting is tight and watching the story's resolution unfold is a delight. . . . As a guilty-pleasure read, it is a winner."--M. Lynx Qualey, *The National*

"Much is packed into this relatively short, fast-paced novel. "--Sally Bland, *The Jordan Times*

"A fast-paced crime thriller from the Arab west."--Darf Publishers blog

"An enjoyable quick read, a police procedural offering a decent crime-story as well as a nice slice of local color and customs."--*The Complete Review*

"Hamdouchi is known for his detective fiction and screenplays and has written the scripts for seven police thrillers in Morocco. No surprise, then, that his fast-paced novel, full of twists and turns, is an entertaining read, but the text also captures the tragic fate of undocumented Moroccan immigrants who are exploited by

those more corrupt and powerful in Spain."--Gretchen McCullough, *Exchanges Literary Journal*

"In the saturated field of crime fiction, *Whitefly* is as canny as the waxy, winged creature to which it owes its name. Set in contemporary Morocco, Hamdouchi lifts the blanket on Tangier's twisted network of traffickers, dealers and dubious crime investigators. Hamdouchi is an artful storyteller unafraid of loose ends, and will lift the ground from beneath you just when it feels most solid."--*Tank Magazine*

About the Author

Born in Meknes, Morocco in 1958, **Abdelilah Hamdouchi** is one of the first writers of police fiction in Arabic and a prolific, award-winning screenwriter of police thrillers. Many of his novels, including the acclaimed *The Final Bet*, address democratic and human rights issues. He lives in Rabat, Morocco.

Translator **Jonathan Smolin** is the author of *Moroccan Noir: Police, Crime, and Politics in Popular Culture* (2013). He lives in Hanover, NH.

Users Review

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