



The Relic Master: A Novel

Christopher Buckley

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From *New York Times* bestselling author Christopher Buckley, “one of the funniest writers in the English language” (Tom Wolfe), a compelling and hilarious adventure featuring a sixteenth-century relic hunter and his best friend, Albrecht Dürer, who conspire to forge the Shroud of Turin.

The year is 1517. Dismas is a relic hunter: one who procures “authentic” religious relics for wealthy and influential clients. His two most important patrons are Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony and soon-to-be Cardinal Albrecht of Mainz. While Frederick is drawn to the recent writing of Martin Luther, Albrecht pursues the financial and political benefits of religion and seeks to buy a cardinalship through the selling of indulgences. When Albrecht’s ambitions increase his demands for grander and more marketable relics, Dismas and his artist friend Dürer conspire to manufacture a shroud to sell to the unsuspecting noble. Unfortunately Dürer’s reckless pride exposes Albrecht’s newly acquired shroud as a fake, so Albrecht puts Dismas and Dürer in the custody of four loutish mercenaries and sends them all to steal Christ’s burial cloth (the Shroud of Chambéry), Europe’s most celebrated relic.

On their journey to Savoy where the Shroud will be displayed, they battle a lustful count and are joined by a beautiful female apothecary. It is only when they reach their destination that they realize they are not alone in their intentions to acquire a relic of dubious legitimacy. Filled with fascinating details about art, religion, politics and science; Vatican intrigue; and Buckley’s signature wit, *The Relic Master* is a delightfully rich and intelligent comic adventure.

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