Flashman and the Tiger

Flashman and the Tiger is George MacDonald Frasers 11th chronicle of Sir Harry Flashman, a celebrated Victorian soldier, scoundrel, amorist, and self-confessed poltroon. Written with great wit and ingenuity, the series is presented as a succession of long-lost memoirs, which Fraser is simply editing for a modern readership. Thus does he interrupt Sir Harrys voice with footnotes, appendices, and tail-gunning apologies. Indeed, Fraser, whose editorial persona is humorless and academic, seems almost embarrassed in the presence of his subjects unbridled self-love. This time the year is 1878, and Flashman is poking his nose into some deep political intrigue for a journalist friend whos done him various unsavory favors. Our favorite swashbuckler has just returned from Paris, where he was awarded the Legion of Honor. Yet readers familiar with Flashmans saga will know this is simply one more piece of tin to add to his capacious collection--and that even as hes revered by those around him, he finds it impossible to take himself seriously. Instead he regards himself as one of those fortunate critters who ... are simply without shame, and wouldnt know Conscience if they tripped over it in broad day. As usual, Flashman stumbles through history like a bull in a china shop. At the end of the first section, The Road to Charing Cross, we realize that hes delayed the onset of World War I by various wranglings with the would-be assassins of Emperor Franz Josef of Austria. The following sections put him in contact with the Prince of Wales, a procession of remarkable whores, Zulu warriors, and yet more remarkable whores. Frasers brashly perfect prose both fuels and awakens the imagination. And in the end the reader has to wonder: which wars almost came to pass, but were averted by a half-drunk war hero with a lust for life? --Emily White

My Personal Review:
Given that my introduction to the Flashmen series almost coincided with the tragic (although not unexpected) death of George Macdonald Frasier I have made it my news years resolution to let people know about his wonderful books.
I have to say that this installment of Flashy is actually a better, rounder and tighter notation than a story that is the length of a novel. The first story is in my opinion only a three star but it may be just what other people have ordered it is not my place to judge.

The other two installments are where this particular collection shines in the second story readers finally get to see what I have suspected for awhile Flashy’s wife is capable of being quite devious when she wants to be.

The third story where the collection gets its name is probably my favorite Flashman yet Fraser managed to pull the nose of old Sir Arthur Conan Doyle good for him.

You will find yourself wanting more of this particular installment but they are alas too brief. If ordinary Flashman novels aren’t your thing you might want to give these collections a try.

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