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The Man Who Guarded the Bomb: Stories

Gregory Orfalea

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The Man Who Guarded the Bomb: Stories Gregory Orfalea
A boy finds himself alone with his first love in a toboggan stalled atop the Matterhorn at Disneyland. A woman, bitter about her marriage to a man turned blind, must decide if he lives or dies. A man haunted by his role in creating the H-bomb suddenly disappears in old age, only to turn up at Alamagordo, seeking an Indian and redemption. Such characters, at the crossroads of emotion and ethics, confounding loss and resurrection, populate this unforgettable collection of tales. Loosely connected, the stories chronicle the lives of the Matters, a captivating, tragic, yet ultimately exultant Arab American family. Spanning continents and a century, the stories center on the balm that human relationships offer. In "The Chandelier," a boy desperate to feed his starving family hauls a stolen chandelier over a snowy mountain in Lebanon during World War I. A young Mexican nurse and her lover wind their way through eighteenth-century California missions in "Fabiola." Against the backdrop of the September 11 attacks, an Arab American man is thrown from a bus, echoing past racial discriminations, in "Get Off the Bus." With a poet's ear and a historian's keen eye for detail, Orfalea offers readers beautifully crafted stories filled with flawed yet irresistible characters who are rendered with great tenderness and aching complexity.

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