



The Saint of Incipient Insanities: A Novel

Elif Shafak

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The Saint of Incipient Insanities is the comic and heartbreaking story of a group of twenty-something friends, and their never-ending quest for fulfillment.

Omer, Abed and Piyu are roommates, foreigners all recently arrived in the United States. Omer, from Istanbul, is a Ph.D. student in political science who adapts quickly to his new home, and falls in love with the bisexual, suicidal, intellectual chocolate maker Gail. Gail is American yet feels utterly displaced in her homeland and moves from one obsession to another in an effort to find solid ground. Abed pursues a degree in biotechnology, worries about Omer's unruly ways, his mother's unexpected visit, and stereotypes of Arabs in America; he struggles to maintain a connection with his girlfriend back home in Morocco. Piyu is a Spaniard, who is studying to be a dentist in spite of his fear of sharp objects, and is baffled by the many relatives of his Mexican-American girlfriend, Algre, and in many ways by Algre herself.

Keenly insightful and sharply humorous, *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* is a vibrant exploration of love, friendship, culture, nationality, exile and belonging.

Elif Shafak is of Turkish descent, and a prizewinning novelist. She was born in France and spent her childhood in Spain. *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* marks her American debut and is the first of her books to be written in English. She teaches women's studies at the University of Michigan.

The Saint of Incipient Insanities is the heartbreaking story of a group of friends and their never-ending quest for happiness and fulfillment. Ömer, Abed, and Piyu are roommates, foreigners all recently arrived in the United States. Ömer is a Ph.D. student in political science from Istanbul who adapts quickly to his new home and falls in love with the bisexual, intellectual chocolate maker Gail. Gail is American yet feels utterly displaced in her homeland; she moves from one obsession to another in an effort to find solid ground. Abed pursues a degree in biotechnology and worries about Ömer's unruly ways, his mother's unexpected visit, and stereotypes of Arabs in America as he struggles to maintain a connection with his girlfriend back home in Morocco. Piyu is Spanish, studying to be a dentist in spite of his fear of sharp objects, and is baffled by the many relatives of his anorexic Mexican-American girlfriend, Alegre—and in many ways by Alegre herself.

As time passes, their relationships with one another change and challenge these mismatched friends' preconceptions of themselves, their countries, and their adopted homeland. A vibrant exploration of love, friendship, culture, nationality, exile, and belonging, *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* introduces us to a wonderful new voice in international fiction.

"Exuberant."—**Janice P. Nimura**, *The Washington Post Book World*

"This is an exhilarating roller-coaster ride of a novel—a breathless and vivid journey into the lives of a motley assortment of brilliant, obsessive, and often troubled young immigrants, and an American whom one of them marries. With its themes of displacement, its Boston-area setting, and its ease with academic topics, Shafak's novel suggests Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* with the amplifier cranked up all the way to eleven. A work replete with dazzling wordplay, an infatuation with pop culture, and a fearless intellect, *The Saint of Incipient Insanities* marks Elif Shafak as a compellingly original voice in twenty-first-century fiction."—**Adam Langer**, author of *Crossing California*

"Shafak offers us an indelibly haunting portrait of contemporary America, in all its sexual/ethno/religious contortions. Goofy, sad, wise, and heartbreakingly funny, her novel is a bittersweet delight to

read."—**Fernanda Eberstadt**, author of *The Furies*

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Errol Sawyer:

Typically the book The Saint of Incipient Insanities: A Novel has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was written by the very famous author. The writer makes some research previous to write this book. This particular book very easy to read you can get the point easily after looking over this book.

Mac Cutter:

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