

My Morocco

by Phyllis Chesler



I was working on an opera about a Moroccan Jewish saint named Sol Hachuel but alas, it came to naught. I was about to de-board a cruise ship so I might finally take the measure of Tangier and Casablanca—but that too came to naught. And so, what I know about Morocco is what I've read. I highly recommend Edith Wharton's *In Morocco*, especially for her descriptions of harem life and of the mellah (Jewish ghetto), where sunlight could not penetrate, not even at noon. I also

recommend Tahir Shah's beautifully written *The Caliph's House* about his time renovating a house in Casablanca that was possessed by djinns which had to be exorcised.



And so, my dear friend Merle Hoffman, created a writing room for me in her country home overlooking Gardiner's Bay. She calls it the Moroccan Room—and it is filled with walls of aqua and orange, a mural of an ancient Islamic skyline, tall, embossed vases, glittering cushions, a sedate velvet couch, plants, a blue and silver armoire, an Egyptian scroll, and soft carpets. My mirrored desk overlooks the Bay and here is where I read and write.



Right now, the trees are bare, but spring has come and soon, surely, leaves will sprout, the temperature will climb, and I may be able to assume my position on the verandah, contemplating the water and the sky, reading and dreaming, perhaps, just perhaps.

