Arabian Sands is Wilfred Thesiger's stunning account of five years spent crossing the Arabian Peninsula by foot and on camels, with nomadic Bedouin tribesmen as guides. Travelling between 1945 and 1950, the British explorer treks through Yemen, The Empty Quarter, Oman and parts of the then Trucial States, crossing and re-crossing around 250,000 miles of this most inhospitable terrain. He was the first European ever to set eyes on the dunes and wadis of these deserts. Faced with constant challenges and trials beneath the punishing sun, his journey is also spiritual and enriching, as it requires the utmost courage, patience, generosity and humour. In clear and evocative prose, Thesiger documents a journey of unimaginable hardship and startling beauty, as well as a time, place and people on the cusp of change.

Laurence Kennedy's theatre credits include Communicating Doors, An Inspector Calls and Steptoe and Son (West End), and various productions for the Royal Exchange, Chichester Festival, Stephen Joseph and Crucible theatres. His television credits include The Musketeers (BBC), Upstairs Downstairs (BBC), The Hour (BBC), Close to the Enemy (BBC) and Complicit (Channel 4), and his film work includes Hitler: The Rise Of Evil, Wimbledon, The Rizen and The Imitation Game.

Total running time: 12:58:58 • 11 CDs

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We descended into the valley again... 13:55

10. Preparations for a Second Crossing

Muhammad pressed me to spend the night... 10:26

We left Shibam on 17 December... 12:51

The pursuit party had used as their battle-cry... 9:48

11. The Second Crossing of the Empty Quarter

We rode across gravel steppes... 10:36

It was a crisp morning with a gentle breeze. 10:51

Wet, cold, and tired, we started early...

12. From Sulaiyil to Abu Dhabi

The first afternoon we overtook two Yam... 8:28

The hatred which I encountered...

Later, Muhammad and Amair went off...

Next day was fine and sunny and our spirit rose...

13. The Trucial Coast

The evening before we reached Buraimi... 9:49

Zayid, as Shakhbut’s representative... 8:52

We arrived at Sharja on 10 May. 10:44

14. A Holiday in Buraimi

At Lahamma well we found many day-old tracks... 10:02

We were hungry before we arrived at Zayid’s fort... 8:11

We were astir early next morning. 10:31

15. The Quicksands of Umm al Samim

Ahmad fetched Ali’s camel... 10:18

We camped next day within ten miles of Nazwa. 6:16

16. The Wahiba Sands

Three days later we were camped... 8:42

One morning they came back before breakfast... 8:22

Total running time: 12:58:58 • 11 CDs

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