



House of Sand and Fog

By Andre Dubus III

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The National Book Award finalist, Oprah Book Club pick, #1 *New York Times* bestseller and basis for the Oscar-nominated motion picture.

A former colonel in the Iranian Air Force yearns to restore his family's dignity. A recovering alcoholic and addict down on her luck struggles to hold on to the one thing she has left. And her lover, a married cop, is driven to extremes to win her love.

In this masterpiece of American realism and Shakespearean consequence, Andre Dubus III's unforgettable characters—people with ordinary flaws, looking for a small piece of ground to stand on—careen toward inevitable conflict, their tragedy painting a shockingly true picture of the country we live in today.

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House of Sand and Fog By Andre Dubus III Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Oprah Book Club® Selection, November 2000: Andre Dubus III wastes no time in capturing the dark side of the immigrant experience in America at the end of the 20th century. *House of Sand and Fog* opens with a highway crew composed of several nationalities picking up litter on a hot California summer day. Massoud Amir Behrani, a former colonel in the Iranian military under the Shah, reflects on his job-search efforts since arriving in the U.S. four years before: "I have spent hundreds of dollars copying my credentials; I have worn my French suits and my Italian shoes to hand-deliver my qualifications; I have waited and then called back after the correct waiting time; but there is nothing." The father of two, Behrani has spent most of the money he brought with him from Iran on an apartment and furnishings that are too expensive, desperately trying to keep up appearances in order to enhance his daughter's chances of making a good marriage. Now the daughter is married, and on impulse he sinks his remaining funds into a house he buys at auction, thus unwittingly putting himself and his family on a trajectory to disaster. The house, it seems, once belonged to Kathy Nicolo, a self-destructive alcoholic who wants it back. What starts out as a legal tussle soon escalates into a personal confrontation--with dire results.

Dubus tells his tragic tale from the viewpoints of the two main adversaries, Behrani and Kathy. To both of them, the house represents something more than just a place to live. For the colonel, it is a foot in the door of the American dream; for Kathy, a reminder of a kinder, gentler past. In prose that is simple yet evocative, *House of Sand and Fog* builds to its inevitable denouement, one that is painfully dark but unfailingly honest. --Alix Wilber

From Publishers Weekly

Dubus has created a novel that is nearly perfectly suited to the audio format. Kathy Nicolo is a recovering addict whose husband has left her and who is making her way in the straight world with her own cleaning business. When her house in the California hills is mistakenly seized by the county for back taxes and sold at public auction, she finds herself living out of her car and on the brink of desperation. Once a wealthy and powerful man in Iran and a colonel in the army under the Shah's rule, Behrani is now a struggling immigrant who hopes that he can sell the house for a large profit, so that he can once again provide his family with a lifestyle like the one they enjoyed in Iran. Emotions take precedence over ethics, logic, love and the law as their paths collide in a surprising and tragic conclusion. The reading by the author and his wife is sublime. Dubus's performance as the hot-headed Behrani is frightening in its intensity. His wife captures Kathy's dispassionate disbelief with a flat distance that is as effectively realistic as it is palpable. Based on the Norton hardcover.

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From Library Journal

Through a careless bureaucratic error, Kathy Nicolo is evicted from her three-bedroom home in the California hills near San Francisco. Her marriage is over, her recovery from drug addiction is tenuous, and her income is almost nonexistent. Lester Burdon, the deputy sheriff who evicts her, also falls for her and vows to help her get the house back. Meanwhile, the house is sold at auction to Colonel Behrani, who hopes to resell it at enormous profit to help finance his return to his easy life in prerevolutionary Iran. The legal machinery grinds on slowly too slowly for the humans involved. The three main characters come from different cultures, religions, and social settings. The pleas, threats, arguments, and suggestions of each

individual are incomprehensible to the others, escalating to a tragic and inevitable conclusion. Well produced, this book captures the hope, confusion, resolve, and uncertainty of all the characters. The frustration and anger are visceral, the tension intense. The actions of the players are made meaningful through the descriptions of their histories, cultures, and previous experiences. Read with feeling by the author and his wife, Fontaine Dubus; recommended. Joanna Burkhardt, Univ. of Rhode Island Coll. of Continuing Education Lib., Providence
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Dorothy Shuler:

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