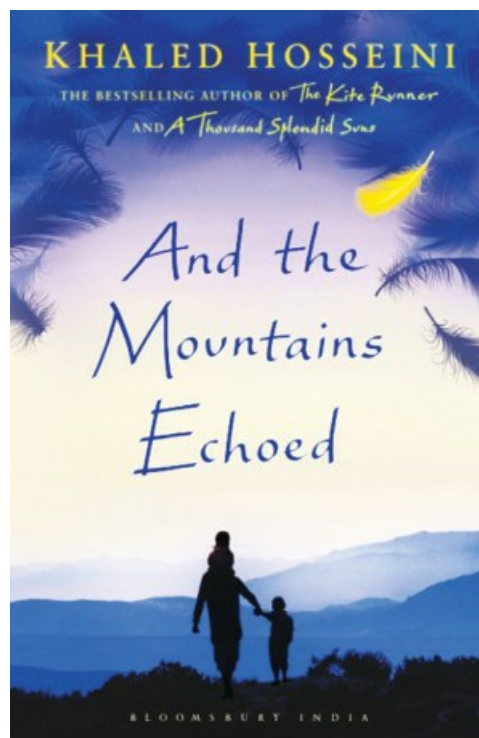


Book review: And the Mountains Echoed – Khaled Hosseini

Hosseini certainly lives up to his name of ‘master storyteller’ in a novel that explores unspoken feelings and regrets. [Heather Stewart](#) reviews

Tuesday 18 June 2013



Khaled Hosseini has set the bar high with his first two novels, *The Kite Runner* (2003) and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2009); fortunately his latest release, *And the Mountains Echoed*, doesn't disappoint and proves to be a more than worthy successor. The novel is once again set in Afghanistan, but feels original despite the same backdrop of war.

The story opens with a father telling his children a fable: one that ruthlessly foreshadows the separation of brother and sister, Abdulla and Pari, who share an unusually strong bond and adore one another immensely. As Pari is whisked away from the small countryside village of Shadbagh to bustling Kabul, the lives of the siblings change forever.

The initial rupture leads to a splintering circumstances that perpetuate throughout the story that spans 60 years. The story unfolds by telling of the subsequent ramifications that stem from the single line in the fable, "A finger had to be cut to save the hand." Just as things start to look up for Pari and she settles into a new life with the wealthy Wahdati family, she finds herself relocated to Paris where she will grow up with mysterious voids and unexplainable absences in her life. Hosseini is incredibly skilled in juggling between the third and first person narrative, interconnecting the multi-faceted short stories, and in

spanning three continents; he explores these stories with such precision, depth, and variety, whilst continually achieving a sense of unity and coherence.

Hosseini encompasses both the political and domestic worlds, as with his other novels, but he also explores the deeply personal: the selfish and deceitful decisions made by one character and the consequent ripples this will have on the whole network of characters. Defying the established principles, Hosseini introduces a vast multitude of different relationships and stories that would ordinarily attract criticism, but none seem superfluous, none seem contrived.



Instead, they all appear important in demonstrating the complexities of Afghan society. It is true that certain aspects are perhaps lingered upon, characters developed who could be dispensed with, perhaps Hosseini is a little too intent on incorporating his own experiences, but none of this proves jarring. The narrative digressions allow one to become absorbed in the book, to empathise anew for each of the characters and to create suspense throughout by forming an atmosphere in which we are on edge, not knowing where Hosseini will ultimately taking us.

The ending is a slight departure from what Hosseini fans might be used to, the ends come neatly together, but we are not indulged with the typical 'happy ending.' Nevertheless, the conclusion is aptly bittersweet, it is touching if not so much heart-warming or fulfilling.

Ultimately it is a novel that explores unspoken feelings and regrets obliging any reader to linger upon their own missed opportunities, fractured relationships, and reassessing the direction their life has taken; Hosseini certainly lives up to his name of 'master storyteller'.



One comment

Baljinder

25 Dec '15 at 2:47 am

I read it. And, I can't say I loved it. I mean, I've been looking fwoarrd to this book for ten years. I actually gave Drown (Diaz's short stories) as gifts, which I have never done with any book of short stories. And Oscar Wao just seemed kind of messy to me. I found myself looking fwoarrd to my next book because I would just finally get into one character when the story would switch to another time, place and character. It was distracting. I'll be interested to see what you think. I ultimately can see why it's supposed to be great, but I just don't think it was fully achieved.

[Report](#)

Most Read

Discussed

1. [The Movements: The Theatre of Cruelty](#)
2. [Old Favourites: Mary Poppins](#)
3. [Theatre Review: An Inspector Calls](#)
4. [Old Favourites: Looking for Alaska](#)
5. [Theatre Review: Antigone](#)
6. [Review: After The End](#)

Write for Nouse Arts

[Get in touch with the editors](#)

[Join the Facebook group](#)

More in Arts

[Old Favourites: Mary Poppins](#)

[Old Favourites: Looking for Alaska](#)

[Theatre Review: Antigone](#)

[Matilda's Turning Thirty](#)

[Listen Up: Generation Podcast](#)

[A Simple Light in the Dark](#)

[About Nouse](#)
[Who's Nouse](#)
[Website Credits](#)
[Contact Us](#)
[Advertising](#)
[Archives](#)
[Student Discounts](#)
[Print Editions](#)
[Mini-Sites](#)
[Nouse on Twitter](#)
[Nouse on Facebook](#)
[Nouse on Google+](#)

© 1964–2018 Nouse

[Policies](#) |

