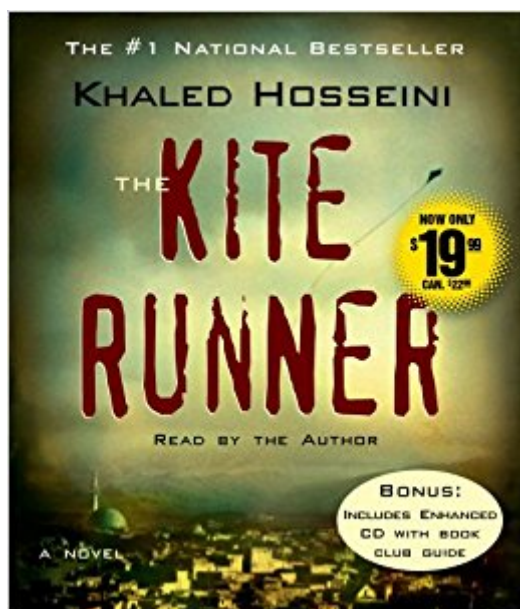


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# The Kite Runner



## Synopsis

The #1 National Bestseller Taking us from Afghanistan in the final days of the monarchy to the present, *The Kite Runner* is the unforgettable and beautifully told story of the friendship between two boys growing up in Kabul. Raised in the same household and sharing the same wet nurse, Amir and Hassan grow up in different worlds: Amir is the son of a prominent and wealthy man, while Hassan, the son of Amir's father's servant, is a Hazara—a shunned ethnic minority. Their intertwined lives, and their fates, reflect the eventual tragedy of the world around them. When Amir and his father flee the country for a new life in California, Amir thinks that he has escaped his past. And yet he cannot leave the memory of Hassan behind him. *The Kite Runner* is a novel about friendship and betrayal, and about the price of loyalty. It is about the bonds between fathers and sons—their love, their sacrifices, and their lies. Written against a backdrop of history that has not been told in fiction before, *The Kite Runner* describes the rich culture and beauty of a land in the process of being destroyed. But through the devastation, Khaled Hosseini offers hope: through the novel's faith in the power of reading and storytelling, and in the possibilities he shows us for redemption.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In his debut novel, *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini accomplishes what very few contemporary novelists are able to do. He manages to provide an educational and eye-opening account of a country's political turmoil—in this case, Afghanistan—while also developing characters whose heartbreaking struggles and emotional triumphs resonate with readers long after the last page has

been turned over. And he does this on his first try. The Kite Runner follows the story of Amir, the privileged son of a wealthy businessman in Kabul, and Hassan, the son of Amir's father's servant. As children in the relatively stable Afghanistan of the early 1970s, the boys are inseparable. They spend idyllic days running kites and telling stories of mystical places and powerful warriors until an unspeakable event changes the nature of their relationship forever, and eventually cements their bond in ways neither boy could have ever predicted. Even after Amir and his father flee to America, Amir remains haunted by his cowardly actions and disloyalty. In part, it is these demons and the sometimes impossible quest for forgiveness that bring him back to his war-torn native land after it comes under Taliban rule. ("...I wondered if that was how forgiveness budded, not with the fanfare of epiphany, but with pain gathering its things, packing up, and slipping away unannounced in the middle of the night.") Some of the plot's turns and twists may be somewhat implausible, but Hosseini has created characters that seem so real that one almost forgets that *The Kite Runner* is a novel and not a memoir. At a time when Afghanistan has been thrust into the forefront of America's collective consciousness ("people sipping lattes at Starbucks were talking about the battle for Kunduz"), Hosseini offers an honest, sometimes tragic, sometimes funny, but always heartfelt view of a fascinating land. Perhaps the only true flaw in this extraordinary novel is that it ends all too soon. --Gisele Toueg --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hosseini's stunning debut novel starts as an eloquent Afghan version of the American immigrant experience in the late 20th century, but betrayal and redemption come to the forefront when the narrator, a writer, returns to his ravaged homeland to rescue the son of his childhood friend after the boy's parents are shot during the Taliban takeover in the mid '90s. Amir, the son of a well-to-do Kabul merchant, is the first-person narrator, who marries, moves to California and becomes a successful novelist. But he remains haunted by a childhood incident in which he betrayed the trust of his best friend, a Hazara boy named Hassan, who receives a brutal beating from some local bullies. After establishing himself in America, Amir learns that the Taliban have murdered Hassan and his wife, raising questions about the fate of his son, Sohrab. Spurred on by childhood guilt, Amir makes the difficult journey to Kabul, only to learn the boy has been enslaved by a former childhood bully who has become a prominent Taliban official. The price Amir must pay to recover the boy is just one of several brilliant, startling plot twists that make this book memorable both as a political chronicle and a deeply personal tale about how childhood choices affect our adult lives. The character studies alone would make this a noteworthy debut, from the portrait of the sensitive, insecure Amir to the multilayered development of his father, Baba, whose sacrifices and scandalous

behavior are fully revealed only when Amir returns to Afghanistan and learns the true nature of his relationship to Hassan. Add an incisive, perceptive examination of recent Afghan history and its ramifications in both America and the Middle East, and the result is a complete work of literature that succeeds in exploring the culture of a previously obscure nation that has become a pivot point in the global politics of the new millennium. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I hesitated to read this book for quite a while. The last novel that got both critical and popular acclaim comparable to the "Kite Runner" was "Cold Mountain" which I absolutely disliked. In fact, I disliked "Cold Mountain" as much as I loved this book. Many other reviews have talked in depth about the plot and characters in this book and there is not much for me to add there. A few thoughts that I had on how this book affected me. As one review said, this book did not read like a novel but rather a memoir. Many of the themes were universal in nature -- the nature of friendship in spite of cultural differences and the tension in a father/son relationship. However, the beauty of Hosseini's book is threefold: (1) his writing style is wonderfully simple but emotionally evocative, (2) brings culture, people and place closer to people, most of whom have only recently paid attention to post 9/11 and (3) this is his first novel. This book left both powerful scars and wonderful memories with me. I don't regret the former and cherish the latter. The scars help remind us of the obstacles, challenges and trauma that individuals half a world away have gone through and continue to suffer through. They also have a universality with things that many of us have encountered in our own lives in a different way. Ultimately, I cherish novels that affect me on both an emotional and rational level. This book does both in an exceptional way and is a novel not to be missed.

Although I follow the news and try to keep up with what is going on in the Middle East, it is not always easy to imagine. This author, having been born in Afghanistan, paints a very vivid picture of life in Afghanistan before and after the war over there, the war torn cities, and the effects on the lives of the citizens. His character also spent time in Pakistan, then returned to his current home in the United States, all the while revealing the sharp contrasts among the areas traveled. Finally, the struggles of the immigrants to adjust to their new country were highlighted. Although "Kite Runner" is a work of fiction, it is written in the first person and feels very much like an autobiography. This book kept my attention from wandering. I enjoyed it very much!!

I read the book a long time ago. This recent one was a present for my grand-daughter. While school

is still on the reading hasn't started yet...The plot was interesting as I remember, I read it from A-Z very caught up in the tale. Everybody should read it as it makes us understand better other people from different lives and cultures.

My 16 year old daughter was assigned this book to read in school. I often read my high school aged children's literature assignments but rarely have I been so riveted by one. This story is not for the faint of heart. It's down right brutal at times and the language and subject matter are such that adults should think carefully before allowing their younger teens to read. But for older and more mature teens, there are important lessons to be learned. And for a born and bred American, it's refreshing to get a middle eastern perspective on the world that is honest and thoughtful. I don't know if it's accurate to say I enjoyed reading this book but I was certainly enriched by the experience.

I choose this book because my doctor raved about it. After reading it, I understood why. This book, although fiction, felt like a historical account of real events. It dealt with the coming of age and/or the discovery of a young man, and how events in his life shaped him. The book dealt with ethnicity, class, loyalty, betrayal, guilt, forgiveness and redemption. There is something in this book that would resonate with every reader. The most important (perhaps) is being brave enough to face your past, and having the courage to forgive others, as well as yourself. One of the most profound statements made in this book is when the main character, said at 38 years of age "that I realize that my whole life has been defined by what I saw in that alley when I was 12 years old." That statement gave me pause, because a great many of people have difficulty overcoming past situations. - Last, but not least, excellent character development. This book clearly deserves 5 stars.

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