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Hosseini, Khaled. And the Mountains Echoed

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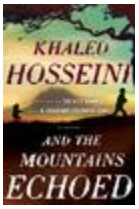

Afghanistan, 1952. Abdullah and his sister Pari live with their father and stepmother in the small village of Shadbagh. Their father, Saboor, is constantly in search of work and they struggle together through poverty and brutal winters. To Abdullah, Pari – as beautiful and sweet-natured as the fairy for which she was named – is everything. More like a parent than a brother, Abdullah will do anything for her.

But Saboor, a laborer, has an entire family to think of, and that means hard choices. And so they leave their poor village of Shadbagh for Kabul, where his brother-in-law, Nabi, a chauffeur, introduces them to his wealthy employer, Suleiman, and Suleiman's wife Nila…a woman who cannot have children of her own. The deal she brokers will Saboor will mean that his family will have money enough to live a while longer…and Pari, now being raised as the child of rich parents, will have a better life than Saboor could ever give her.

This one act causes ripples which resonate through the lives of all of those affected. The novel opens up from its initial tight focus on Abdullah and Pari to examine in turn the interlinked, branching lives of their families, their descendents, their friends, and those affected by them as the story crosses generations and continents.

The beauty of the writing is only matched by the humanity of the characters. Hosseini takes us inside their minds and their hearts and we see them laid bare, essentially good people but with their flaws and weaknesses exposed, to us and to themselves. Although much of the book takes place in Europe and America, Afghanistan remains at the heart of the story because Afganistan remains in the hearts of the characters, despite all the disparate paths their lives eventually take. A masterful and compassionate storyteller, Hosseini traces the traumas and scarring of tyranny, war, crime, lies, and illness in the intricately interconnected, heartbreaking, and extraordinary lives of his vibrantly realized characters. Perhaps his best yet!

hosseini and mountains echoed
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