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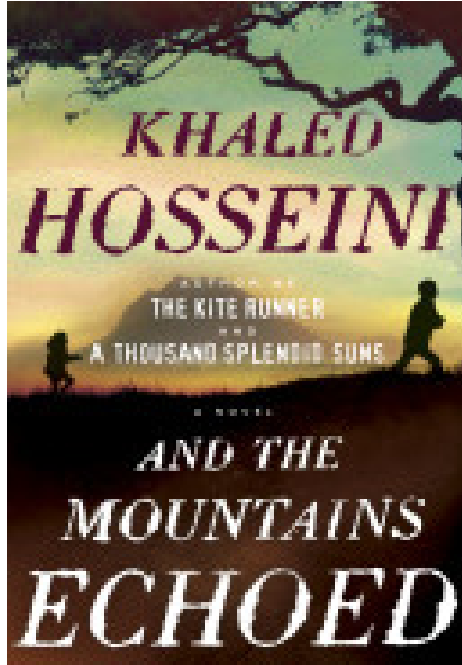
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Book: *And the Mountains Echoed*

Author: Khaled Hosseini

Publisher: BLOOMSBURY (2013)

ISBN: 9789382951001

Binding: Paperback

Language: English

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And the Mountains Echoed is the third novel by master storyteller, Khaled Hosseini. He is a doctor by profession, settled in the United States and has written two novels before this one. All of his novels have Afghanistan as their setting and Taliban terror as one of its themes. But each of these novels deal with a different issue like *The Kite Runner* deals with master-servant relationship and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* revolves around the issue of female bonding.

And the Mountains Echoed was released on 31st May, 2013 and the *New York Times* said about the book 'Khaled Hosseini gives us a vivid and engaging story that reminds us how long his people have been struggling to triumph over the force of violence-forces that continue to threaten them even today.'

Khaled Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed* begins with a fable that a father tells his two children Pari and Abdullah : A farmer who works hard to make a living for his family is forced to give up one of his five children to *djinn*. He and his wife decide to choose randomly, and the

unlucky chosen child also happens to be their favorite one. Eventually over the years, the farmer, maddened with grief and guilt, tracks down the *djinn* and finds his son playing in a lush garden full of happy children, with no memory of his family. The father is unable to summon the will and courage to take the child from this place of plenty back to his drought stricken village and so he decides to leave without him. As a gesture of kindness, the giant gives the farmer a potion to makes him forget his son.

It's a very simple story, but it captures the very essence of what the reader is going to understand in relation to the lives of the siblings who are torn apart in one devastating moment in their lives timeline. It also leads us to ask some difficult moral questions: Is being torn from one's family a better fate than living a life of penury? Is there no mercy in the souls of the fortunate ones for the less privileged? Why do the elders suffocate a child under the burden of their own unsatisfied desires/life? Does a man forget his origins once he gains power and wealth? Is it a blessing of God to make a person forget his past? Then what about the silent cutting pain he felt when he had memory of the turning events of his life? Do love bonds fall weak in front of memory?

This book is by far Hosseini's most ambitious work till date and its multifaceted story is more emotionally reverberative and globe-trotting than his earlier best-selling two novels. At times the story seems to be leaving its main path and we feel that what is the use of some minor characters but we forget that the master storyteller has the threads carefully woven in the story and through our hearts. Nevertheless the effect of the work is very unsettling and moving, from the very beginning where the father who tells the tale of the *djinn* is about to give up his favorite child and destines to separate his own children, Pari and Abdullah who have been inseparable since the death of their mother. Abdullah loves his sister so much, she is almost like his own daughter. So when destiny tears them apart, both of their lives are changed forever. Ten-year-old Abdullah stays in their father's small village in Afghanistan, while 3-year-old Pari is adopted by a wealthy couple and eventually taken by her half-French mother, a poetess, to live in Paris when she discovers that her husband has always been in love with his male servant, Nabi. Through the years that pass we meet friends, doctors, chauffeurs, people whose lives are changed due to the separation of the siblings. *And the Mountains Echoed* is a story that crosses oceans, teaching us what it means to love and lose and then how to live with that sense of knowledge of the unsaid, unknown loss.