

Khaled Hosseini

A modern day storyteller

Mostafa Abdullah

The Times portrays him as “a truly gifted teller of tales ... he’s not afraid to pull every string in your heart to make it sing”. *The Evening Standard* hails his work as “A masterful narrative ... He is a storyteller of dizzying power”. *The Daily Telegraph* states, “Hosseini has that rare thing, a Dickensian knack for storytelling”.

Khaled Hosseini suddenly emerged as a shooting star from nowhere in the literary world after the publication of his first novel *The Kite Runner* in 2003. This debut of his became an overnight sensation worldwide. It has been sold in at least seventy countries and remained in the *New York Times* bestsellers list for over hundred weeks. His second novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, published in 2007, occupied the number one spot on the *New York Times* bestsellers list for fifteen weeks and remained there for almost a year. More than 10 million copies of these two books have been sold in the United States and over 38 million copies worldwide. Khaled Hosseini’s much waited third debut *And the Mountains Echoed* was published recently in May 2013. Just like his previous works, this is receiving its fare share of acclamation owing to Hosseini’s mastery of storytelling skills.

Khaled Hosseini’s first novel *The Kite Runner* is an epic heart rendering story of an unusual friendship between a wealthy boy and the son of his father’s servant. It is a beautifully crafted novel set in Afghanistan. It could be set in any other culture as it deals with issues that are universal. While reading this book, a reader is drawn into the world of the two main characters and becomes a part of the plot. Twelve year old Amir is desperate to win the local kite flying competition to earn the love admiration of his own distant father. His loyal friend Hassan promises to do whatever is needed, pledging; “for you, a thousand times over”. But what happens that afternoon shatters their lives, a secret that troubles Amir for the rest of his life. Amir’s family is forced to flee

to America after the Russians invade Afghanistan. As Amir starts over in America, his secret still haunts him. He realizes that he must return to Afghanistan even at the peril of his life to seek redemption – which he does.

This is a story about friendship, loyalty, cruelty, longing for acceptance, redemption and survival. It effortlessly glides between the past and the present while each of the main characters takes the centre stage that makes the plot exceptionally engrossing. The reader never knows what to expect next as the story often takes unexpected turns in a world full of emotions, of broken lives and man's quest for his self-discovery. “The kite runner” is just as unpredictable as a loose kite flying in turbulent skies. It is a highly recommended book. One that is likely to leave one very disturbed and thinking.

Hosseini's second novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a superb account of thirty years of Afghan history and a deeply touching story of family, friendship, faith, and the salvation to be found in love. Mariam and Laila are two women distanced by their age and background and with very different ideas about life, love and family. They are brought eerily together by war, by loss and by fate. They endure ever escalating perils together around them in their home and outside. They come to grow a connection that makes them both sisters and mother-daughter to each other that ultimately alter the course of their own lives and that of the next generation. With heart-wrenching power and suspense, Hosseini's story tells how a woman's love for her family can move her to shocking and heroic acts of self-sacrifice. Ultimately it is love or the longing for love that becomes a trigger for survival.

In the words of the *Washington Post*, "Just in case you're wondering whether Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is as good as *The Kite Runner*, here's the answer: No. It's better."

I am now eagerly waiting to have a copy of Hosseini's third debut *And the Mountains echoed*. I am sure I will be equally enchanted with it.

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965. His father was a diplomat in the Afghan Foreign Ministry and his mother taught Farsi and

history at a high school in Kabul. During 1980 while Hosseinis were stationed in Paris, Afghanistan witnessed a violent communist takeover and the invasion of the Soviet Army. The family sought and was granted political asylum in the United States. Hosseini graduated from high school in 1984 and enrolled at Santa Clara University, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Biology in 1988. The following year he entered the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine, where he earned a medical degree in 1993. He completed his residency at Cedars-Sinai medical center in Los Angeles and practiced as an Intern between 1996 and 2004.

In 2006, Hosseini was named a Goodwill Envoy to UNHCR, the United Nations Refugee Agency. Inspired by a trip he made to Afghanistan with the UNHCR, he later established The Khaled Hosseini Foundation, a nonprofit organization, which provides humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. He now lives in Northern California.

Sourced from Wikipedia and other resources containing comments and reviews about Khaled Hosseini and his works.