

House of Sand and Fog Study Guide

House of Sand and Fog by Andre Dubus III

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

House of Sand and Fog Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	5
Part I: Section 1.....	6
Part I: Section 2.....	7
Part I: Section 3.....	8
Part I: Section 4.....	9
Part I: Section 5.....	10
Part I: Section 6.....	11
Part I: Section 7.....	12
Part I: Section 8.....	13
Part I: Section 9.....	14
Part I: Section 10.....	15
Part I: Section 11.....	16
Part I: Section 12.....	17
Part I: Section 13.....	18
Part I: Section 14.....	19
Part I: Section 15.....	20
Part I: Section 16.....	21
Part I: Section 17.....	22
Part I: Section 18.....	23
Part I: Section 19.....	24
Part I: Section 20.....	25
Part I: Section 21.....	26
Part I: Section 22.....	27



[Part I: Section 23..... 28](#)

[Part I: Section 24..... 29](#)

[Part I: Section 25..... 30](#)

[Part I: Section 26..... 32](#)

[Part I: Section 27..... 33](#)

[Part I: Section 28..... 34](#)

[Part I: Section 29..... 35](#)

[Part I: Section 30..... 36](#)

[Part I: Section 31..... 37](#)

[Part I: Section 32..... 38](#)

[Part I: Section 33..... 39](#)

[Part II: Section 34..... 40](#)

[Part II: Section 35..... 41](#)

[Part II: Section 36..... 42](#)

[Part II: Section 37..... 43](#)

[Part II: Section 38..... 44](#)

[Part II: Section 39..... 45](#)

[Part II: Section 40..... 46](#)

[Part II: Section 41..... 47](#)

[Part II: Section 42..... 48](#)

[Part II: Section 43..... 49](#)

[Part II: Section 44..... 50](#)

[Part II: Section 45..... 52](#)

[Part II: Section 46..... 53](#)

[Part II: Section 47..... 54](#)

[Part II: Section 48..... 55](#)



[Part II: Section 49.....](#) 56

[Part II: Section 50.....](#) 57

[Part II: Section 51.....](#) 58

[Part II: Section 52.....](#) 59

[Part II: Section 53.....](#) 60

[Part II: Section 54.....](#) 61

[Characters.....](#) 62

[Objects/Places.....](#) 64

[Social Sensitivity.....](#) 65

[Techniques.....](#) 66

[Themes.....](#) 68

[Style.....](#) 73

[Quotes.....](#) 74

[Key Questions.....](#) 75

[Topics for Discussion.....](#) 77

[Literary Precedents.....](#) 78

[Related Titles.....](#) 79

[Copyright Information.....](#) 80



Plot Summary

In the summer of 1993, Kathy Nicolo is mistakenly evicted from her house-34 Bisgrove Street in Corona, California-because she did not pay the back-taxes owed by the owner of the house at 34 *Biscove* Street. Her house is purchased at a public auction by Genob Sarhang Massoud Amir Behrani (formerly a colonel in the Imperial Airforce of Iranian dictator Reza Shah Pahlavi) for \$45,000. Behrani gives the county a \$10,000 certified check drawn on the Bank of America as down payment. He quickly pays the remaining \$35,000 in cash, and, within weeks, has his family moved out of its Berkeley apartment and into the Corona house, from which Kathy was now evicted. Since the house's purchase price was about 1/4 of its market value, Behrani's plan is to resell it for profit. Several weeks prior, his daughter Soraya had married into a wealthy Iranian immigrant family. Although Behrani and his family are U.S. citizens, at this point his new in-laws are not yet.

When Kathy was evicted from her Corona house, she was served papers, one containing a telephone number for a Legal Aid office (under California law, those who could not afford lawyers were given access to the courts through such offices). After Kathy's state-paid lawyer gives notice to the San Mateo County Tax Office, the county recognizes and admits its error and asks Behrani to sell the house back for the full auction price, thereafter to be returned to Kathy. He says he will only sell it back to them for the house's full market value. Although Kathy has redress through the courts, she has nowhere to live while her lawyer's suit against the tax office makes its way through the courts. However, a police officer named Lester Burdon, who happened to be on duty the day Kathy was evicted, falls in love with her; the two create a temporary home at a friend's fishing cabin on the Purisima River-a stiflingly hot cabin where there is no running water, no electricity, and no phone, and where mosquitoes abound.

Conflict over the house in Corona is the core of this novel. Kathy pleads with Behrani (and talks with his wife and son, Nadereh (Nadi) and Esmail). One evening, Officer Lester Burdon, believing that it's not right for Kathy to lose her house to wealthy foreigners because of a bureaucratic error, threatens Behrani by stating that the INS deports people every day. (In response to this threat, Behrani files a formal complaint the next morning.) A day later, Kathy attempts suicide but is rescued by Behrani. She again tries to kill herself, and this time her life is saved by Nadereh, Behrani's wife. Lester later breaks into the Corona house-fearing for Kathy's safety-and holds at gunpoint the very people, he soon realizes, who saved Kathy's life. His realization comes too late to prevent the tragedy that unfolds: the novel concludes with Esmail, Nadereh, and Behrani shot dead and Kathy and Lester in prison.



Part I: Section 1

Part I: Section 1 Summary

It is August, and a crew of Iranian, Chinese, Panamanian, and Vietnamese immigrants pick up litter alongside the road between Golden Gate Park and Sausalito. The fog is so thick that Genob Sarhang Massoud Amir Behrani, part of the California Highway department crew, cannot see in the distance the expensive apartment where he lives with his wife and son. The others are indifferent -to the former Iranian Colonel's threats that in his earlier days, he could have them beaten.

-Originally, Behrani had moved to California to find an aerospace industry job, but his litter crew job and his stint at a convenience store are the only paychecks he has found in the four years he's spent in the U.S. He thinks that, with his daughter having just made a suitable marriage, he can now leave the apartment that has cost him \$3,000 per month for the last four years. (He had fled Iran with \$280,000, out of which \$48,000 remained.) Behrani notices a newspaper ad in the "Seized Property for Sale" section. When the highway shift is over, he walks the four blocks to where his white Buick Regal is parked (he pays to park under the Concourse Hotel, where he can also clean up before returning home). When he telephones, the San Mateo County Tax Office says that, should he win the auction, he must have a \$10,000 check with him to use as a deposit. He purchases the house for \$45,000 and hands his Bank of America check to the auctioneer. He returns home and announces his news, but his wife only shuts the door to her room and turns her tape player back on; his son, a happy 14-year-old with a skateboard, a newspaper route, and a taste for video games and modern music, says he doesn't want to move.

Behrani thinks back to when he stole a plane, at 3 a.m., in 1979, to fly his family to safety in Bahrain. Behrani assumes command of his family again and issues orders: they will be moving (and he will be leaving his two jobs without giving notice).

Part I: Section 1 Analysis

Behrani now picks garbage for the California Highway Department. He remembers his old life as an elite commanding officer under a dictator. He also remembers the execution of General Pourat, his commanding officer and mentor (the day before he stole the plane and escaped Iran to Bahrain). He made his down payment of \$10,000 on Kathy's house with a Bank of America check.



Part I: Section 2

Part I: Section 2 Summary

Kathy steps out of the shower and finds a man in a suit, a locksmith, and two cops at her door: The man in the suit reiterates to Kathy that her house is being sold for back-taxes and that Deputy Lester Burdon will help her vacate. Lester extends his hand, introduces himself, and helps Kathy move her belongings into a storage locker. She gets a motel room adjacent to a truck stop. She remembers the morning her husband Nicky left-they'd married on the east coast a year prior to his leaving and had driven cross-country. She remembers how, when Nicky left, he'd pulled out of the driveway while she pounded on the windows of the car. She schedules an appointment with the Legal Aid office. Her new lawyer is shocked that she was evicted for only \$500 in back-taxes (and does not yet know that furthermore, they were someone else's back-taxes). Sitting in the motel, Kathy continues to remember. She thinks of her mother's Sunday phone calls, how Kathy had been lying to her since Nick left. She thinks back to her cocaine and alcohol addiction recovery program, where she and Nicky met, how he'd also confessed being addicted to porn: she'd been initially attracted to him but repelled by the porn addiction. She remembers what it was like on visitor's day: "a Get Well helium balloon floating in the haze of cigarette smoke above them."

Part I: Section 2 Analysis

Kathy remembers her trip across country-which parallels Behrani's flight west to Bahrain, then France, and then California. She also remembers pounding on the car-an army of one-when Nicky drove away. She thinks back to the recovery program and wonders whether it was Nicky who had made her stop waiting for Death to take her away.



Part I: Section 3

Part I: Section 3 Summary

Behrani wakes to hot tea, sugar cubes, and an apology from his son Esmail. Behrani works his last day on the highway crew and his last night at the convenience store, thinking of the assorted jobs he's held over the years-and that he has regained the dignity he feared had been forever lost.

Part I: Section 3 Analysis

Esmail apologizes, because he knows his father works hard-although the boy does not know the nature of this work-to support his family.



Part I: Section 4

Part I: Section 4 Summary

The fog was coming in that Friday, and although that usually sent Kathy over the edge, this time she tuned it, sure that her lawyer would have good news; however, the lawyer does not. Kathy's house has been sold at the auction and was paid for in full. Later, as Kathy is searching her storage shed, Lester stops by to check on her.

Part I: Section 4 Analysis

Lester's stopping by makes Kathy feel not totally alone in the world. Although Kathy remains optimistic despite the oppressive fog, she learns her house has been auctioned off.



Part I: Section 5

Part I: Section 5 Summary

Behrani looks at Nadi as they sit on the floor of their new home eating pizza. He remembers how she had instructed the movers to be very careful with her "supreme furniture." He also remembers, years earlier, a phone call Nadi placed from their Paris apartment to her sister back in Tehran: afterwards, she had cried that if he hadn't been part of SAVAK, they would not have had to flee. Since Esmail had been outdoors at the time, playing with his friends, Behrani had slapped Nadi and let her lie crying on the floor: he had been in the Shah's Imperial Air Force, not SAVAK.

He also remembers the Thursday nights at General Pourat's estate-especially meeting the general's young nephew, who was in SAVAK. The nephew said he learned methods of torture in the United States-dismembering young children being a particularly effective means of getting parents to talk. Behrani declines a ceremonial gesture from the young torturer (this being the equivalent of a social snub).

Part I: Section 5 Analysis

Behrani has resumed control of his family. He remembers back to Tehran, how he had not felt comfortable with the SAVAK torturer-but that neither he nor any one else complained about the opulence of their lifestyles. He though also remembers having been disturbed when he realized that Pourat had been correct, that he and the members of SAVAK were colleagues.



Part I: Section 6

Part I: Section 6 Summary

After standing alone on the Corona Beach, Kathy returns to the motel and, to her dismay, learns that it may take as long as a few weeks to get her house back. She checks out of the motel, remembering again her drive across the country with Nick, listening to him but not believing him that life without getting high is better. After Nick left, she did a lot of driving. After leaving her storage shed, she drives to the movie theater.

Part I: Section 6 Analysis

Although the fog can come and go as it pleases, Kathy cannot: she left the motel, because she couldn't afford to stay; she left her storage unit, because it was too hot. The only escape she sees at the moment is to the movie theater.



Part I: Section 7

Part I: Section 7 Summary

Behrani didn't know whether it was because of the champagne Nadi drank-or Esmail's having fallen asleep early-or the welcome news that the bungalow was worth four times what he'd paid (finding a buyer would be easy)-or the new cassette player he had bought Nadi. Whatever the reason, for the third time since arriving in the United States Nadi had invited him into her room. He feels like a young man again, remembering their wedding. He later takes his tea outside and notices a young woman sleeping in a red Bonneville (it is Kathy).

Part I: Section 7 Analysis

Behrani shakes his head at the strangeness of American women. Although surprised by his wife Nadi's changed behavior, he is pleased and does not find her strange.



Part I: Section 8

Part I: Section 8 Summary

Kathy wakes up around 8 a.m. outside the Corona house, the taste of last night's cigarettes in her mouth. She notices two carpenters on the roof of her house, yells at them, climbs their ladder, and tells them to get off. They don't, and when she steps on some nails, one of the men takes her to the front door. Nadi cleans and wraps Kathy's wounded foot. Kathy thanks her and leaves. She drives over to her lawyer's office: the legal papers have arrived. She learns that the mess might be over by the weekend. She brushes her teeth and changes clothes in the restroom at a gas station.

Part I: Section 8 Analysis

Kathy is now homeless. Although neither Behrani nor Nadi know of Kathy's relationship to the Corona house-called "the bungalow" by Behrani-they have both seen her before.

Part I: Section 9

Part I: Section 9 Summary

Nadi asks Behrani why he did not stay with her the night before and leads him back to her room. Behrani wonders if the difference in her is perhaps that she is now free of the masquerade. Behrani later cuts the grass, noticing how much progress the workmen have made on the widow's walk. The grass falls to the side of the mower like dead soldiers. One of the carpenters asks him if "that woman" had talked with him, the one who said it was her house. Behrani observes that in the United States crazy people walk around as free as sheep whereas in his country they are hospitalized.

Part I: Section 9 Analysis

Although he still does not associate Kathy with the woman sleeping in her car, Behrani recognizes the threat posed by someone dispossessed. Although he has clear title to the Corona house, he is sufficiently troubled to be grateful for the mower's loud, distracting noise.

Part I: Section 10

Part I: Section 10 Summary

Kathy parks outside the Redwood City Hall of Justice building. She sits for a half hour, chain smoking. Just as she is ready to leave, to find a safe place to park the car for the coming night's sleep, Lester walks out. They plan to meet later for coffee (although he breaks their date because of an emergency). She drives back to her storage shed, where he eventually finds her. They drive to the beach in his patrol car. Sipping her drink, Kathy notices the fog coming in. She asks Lester why he's a cop, and he asks her why her husband left her. He drives her to another, a nicer motel.

Part I: Section 10 Analysis

The fog rolls in, making it hard to see even the ocean. Lester gets Kathy a room near a swimming pool. She asks him to sit beside her: Lester has fallen in love with her, and they have sex for the first time.



Part I: Section 11

Part I: Section 11 Summary

Behrani observes that earlier, there had been fog, but now, the sky is the color of peaches. He watches his son rake the grass, confident that he is listening to the California rock and roll music he finds as pleasant as the sound of an F-16 overhead. He thinks momentarily about Reza Shah Pahlavi (who has died of cancer). He overhears Nadi humming to herself in the kitchen. A courier car pulls up, with a letter from Kathy's Legal Aid lawyer. Behrani notices his name is misspelled and goes inside for his glasses. After reading the letter four times, he tears it to pieces.

Part I: Section 11 Analysis

Esmail cannot hear his father. When Nadi asks him in Farsi what is wrong, he says nothing. He is determined she know nothing of this-and that he is not returning the house. He asks himself what a terrible country this must be where a sale is not a sale.

Part I: Section 12

Part I: Section 12 Summary

Kathy and Lester make love until they're too hungry to continue. When Lester goes out for food, she examines the gun he left behind. After coffee the next morning, she hobbles over to her Wednesday cleaning job and calls her lawyer.

Part I: Section 12 Analysis

Kathy remembers having woken up the morning before in the Bonneville, like a refugee, on the street outside her house. She now knows her lawyer Connie Walsh's telephone number as well as she knows her mother's. Although she had earlier referred to herself as "Kathy Lazaro," she now refers to herself as "Kathy Nicolo."



Part I: Section 13

Part I: Section 13 Summary

Behrani notices that Kathy's lawyer's office is not far from the Concourse Hotel, where he used to park his car, so he parks it there again. He is dressed in his best suit and reminds himself that he is a retired Colonel in the Imperial Air Force. Looking at the gay pride posters on the wall, he asks himself what kind of country is it where people do what they want. He shows Kathy's lawyer the bill of sale, which shows he has paid for the house in full.

Part I: Section 13 Analysis

When Behrani sees Connie Walsh, Kathy's lawyer, he tells her he is looking for a man, a lawyer. She initially mispronounces his name. When she mentions her client's predicament, his response is indignation, that he is the one who has been wronged.



Part I: Section 14

Part I: Section 14 Summary

Kathy spends the rest of that afternoon in a lawn chair by the deep end of the pool, thinking what her lawyer had said about meeting the new owner. Lester stops by to schedule a "proper date" that evening.

Part I: Section 14 Analysis

Kathy wonders what Lester told his wife the night before, what he will tell her about tonight. She remembers back to the only other married man she'd slept with, years ago back in Massachusetts, after she'd done a few lines of coke.

Part I: Section 15

Part I: Section 15 Summary

Nadi is already cooking for the forthcoming feast for their newlywed daughter's return while Behrani was still eating breakfast. He gives the carpenters a \$50 bonus for their professional work on the widow's walk and pays \$150 to a Corona lawyer, who had said that his papers were in order and that no one could force him to sell. He notices that Nadi has hung a photo of himself and General Pourat-taken at Reza Shah Pahlavi's palace-on the wall. He knows that this is to remind others of the caliber of people they are.

Part I: Section 15 Analysis

Behrani plans to drive down the hill to Corona to purchase "tasteful" furniture for their new widow's walk. It is important that others not forget his rank. He is again pleased by his wife's changed behavior.



Part I: Section 16

Part I: Section 16 Summary

Kathy realizes that Lester has gone from being a distraction to the main event. On schedule, he picks her up for their "proper date." Both have dressed up, Kathy now hobbling in heels. Making table talk, Kathy mentions her former coke habit and asks Lester if he's ever done anything illegal. His answer: once, he had planted evidence.

Kathy orders a bottle of chardonnay for him and, deciding that her addiction problem had only been coke, has a glass herself. She says "let's dance"; he says "your foot"; they laugh. Kathy then asks Lester about his wife. He answers that she thinks he's on overnight duty. He also says that they have a son and daughter and that, for the past seven years, he's only loved her like a sister. Later that night she told him a lot about herself-but not the part about how the "white snake wriggled so deep inside" her that, after her brother Frank had found her, she was admitted as a suicide risk. The next day Lester went home to his family, and Kathy did her laundry and called her lawyer's office. The county has admitted its mistake (the bill had been intended for a 34 Biscove Street-not 34 Bisgrove) and was willing to rescind the sale. Kathy forgot about her sore foot and danced around the motel room at such good news. That evening she and Lester celebrate in bed. Waking up hung-over, Lester realizes he's now two hours overdue at home. Kathy calls her lawyer and learns that she probably won't be back in her house any time soon.

Part I: Section 16 Analysis

In a Kafkaesque bureaucratic error, Kathy learns that, although her home was sold by mistake, she still can't get it back. Lester though is relieved that he's late coming home, because that means his wife will begin the dissolution of their marriage. He attributes Kathy's sense of being lost simply to her not being in her own home.



Part I: Section 17

Part I: Section 17 Summary

Saturday, after dressing in his old work clothes and trimming the hedges, Behrani drives Nadi to San Francisco to get her hair done. Because of his appearance, he waits outside and observes the passersby, thinking Americans don't deserve what they have-how, additionally, before coming here, he'd expected to see the same "caliber" of people he dealt with in Tehran, disciplined ladies and gentlemen. He had noticed the difference within a week of arriving: perhaps it was the continual TV watching that gave Americans the scurrying eyes of small children looking for their next amusement (it is obvious, he thinks, why American success stories are immigrant stories). Upon his wife's return, he thinks her beautiful but too thin. Since, in less than two hours, their daughter will return from her honeymoon, Behrani and Nadi stop at a florists. The flowers she purchases fill the trunk of his Buick Regal. Behrani worries about the cost-the flowers along with three \$100 bottles of champagne).

Cresting Bisgrove, they see their son Esmail talking to a woman they each recognize in different ways: Behrani sees the woman who was sleeping in her car and Nadi sees the woman who had hurt her foot. Behrani tells Esmail, speaking in Farsi: "help your mother and tell her nothing; I will explain later," and guides Kathy to the stairs by the widow's walk. Kathy explains that she had wanted to meet "Mr. Bahrooni" face-to-face (he corrects her mispronunciation). She explains that her father had left her the house. Behrani is not sympathetic and tells Kathy to sue the county. Their discussion becomes heated: Kathy swears at Behrani, and he grabs her arm and forces her back to her car. Their "relationship" continues to deteriorate.

Part I: Section 17 Analysis

In this section, Kathy stops using Nick's last name. In this, their first confrontation, Behrani notices that Kathy uses a "cheap" lighter. Behrani tells Kathy to her face that he will not give her back her house.



Part I: Section 18

Part I: Section 18 Summary

Kathy drove south, chain smoking, wishing her brother Frank were there to squish that "Mideastern prick," also wondering whether Nick is back on the east coast. Her champagne hangover has worsened with the day, especially after visiting her lawyer. She now knows that all she can do is sue the county for damages in order to buy another house. Kathy thinks of the "Arab woman" who looked at her as someone to pity (while bandaging her foot). She finds Lester waiting by the pool (his wife has by now asked him to move out). As soon as they're inside her room, Kathy opens two beers and tells him about talking with her lawyer and Behrani. Later they drive up Bisgrove Street and notice that parked in her driveway, in addition to Behrani's car, are a Mercedes and a new Saab. They park by the woods and look up at the new deck and the well-dressed strangers. Kathy stares out the window at Behrani when they drive away.

Part I: Section 18 Analysis

Both Kathy and Lester are basically homeless. In contrast, the Corona house's new inhabitants throw an opulent party for their returning daughter and new in-laws.



Part I: Section 19

Part I: Section 19 Summary

For hours, the house's new inhabitants and their guests talk and laugh. Soraya speaks incessantly of their former life in Iran. Nadi even brings out the family photo albums. Behrani notices the look on his daughter's face when first she saw the bungalow-and thinks that the new furniture, champagne, and flowers probably relieved her of "appearing from a lower station in life." He wants to both reassure her and scold her for grandstanding (all her talk about telephone calls from Reza Shah Pahlavi himself). He also worries about his son, because there had not been time to discuss Kathy before their guests arrived.

Part I: Section 19 Analysis

Although Behrani had looked forward to seeing his daughter again, his daughter flaunts his old position and in so doing belittles his current situation. He also notices Kathy as she and Lester drive away (and cannot discuss his real estate ventures with the aplomb he'd planned). The fact that all his money is tied up in this one California house shows how much the family has fallen. He wishes everyone would leave so he might dream of kings.



Part I: Section 20

Part I: Section 20 Summary

Kathy and Lester buy groceries as casually as if they'd been together for years. Lester was angry about her being robbed of her house, and Kathy is somewhat dizzy from the beer they'd split: she promises herself not to drink any more that day. They head for Lester's friend's fishing cabin on the Purisima River, driving until the road narrows, then walking the rest of the way to the cabin. Lester cleans out the cooler, and Kathy puts on steaks. He pours wine for both-and Kathy sips away her vow. The next morning they clean the filthy cabin of its fish scales, cigarette butts, and cobwebs.

Part I: Section 20 Analysis

The now-clean cabin-without power and running water-is their new home. Kathy is concerned that Lester is worrying about his family. She does not want him to wear a condom although she says she does.



Part I: Section 21

Part I: Section 21 Summary

Early Sunday, Behrani carried a tray with hot tea to his son's room. He tells Esmail that Kathy lost the house because she had not paid her taxes. Esmail asks whether they were rich in Tehran. Behrani's answer is "yes and no." On Monday, the fog rolls in, and Soraya takes Nadi to lunch. When Behrani looks, he finds that Esmail and his skateboard have gone, too. Behrani's first housing prospect cancels. He notes that Nadi makes all the rooms look as though she were expecting special guests.

Part I: Section 21 Analysis

Behrani does not enjoy lying to his son; he justifies it as being the only way to protect Nadi. Behrani thinks people are more likely to spend money in good weather and so is distressed by the fog. His expectations are realized when his first prospect cancels.



Part I: Section 22

Part I: Section 22 Summary

Lester wakes Kathy at dawn Monday, with coffee hot and ready for her. He is wearing his uniform and can drop her off at the motel if, he says, she wants to get her things. She says she does. He pays the motel bill and says he'll meet her back at the cabin at 7 p.m. Kathy later sits smoking in her car, thinking first about what all her counselors would say-using alcohol and sex to self-medicate-but the sex, at least, was beginning to feel like love to her. She checks her mail and notices her most recent gas and electric bills. Then she notices a postcard from her mother asking if she had a new telephone number, saying she might visit over the Labor Day weekend. Kathy writes to the gas and electric company and demands that they bill "Mr. Barmeeny." With six hours to kill before meeting Lester back at the cabin, she decides to go to a movie-but first a drive up Bisgrove Street. She sees Behrani pointing out the new deck on the roof of her house to some prospective customers. Although at first he pretends not to have noticed her, she lays on the horn and screams to the prospective clients that Behrani is trying to sell them a house he stole from her. She turns around at the dead end and buzzes her house again.

Part I: Section 22 Analysis

Kathy wants to numb away her afternoon with a movie but, seeing Behrani trying to sell her house, she strafes it-rather like an airplane might.



Part I: Section 23

Part I: Section 23 Summary

Nadi had gone shopping with Soraya and wants to show Behrani her purchases, assuring him she hadn't spent much money-everything was on sale-and kissing him. Behrani realizes that the only way she can remain happy like this is if he doesn't burden her with their financial problems. Later, sitting on the roof drinking strong tea while Nadi is below washing dishes, he thinks he must do something about "this Kathy Nicolo."

He remembers his cousin Jasmeen, who had an affair with an American oil executive. When the news of this reached her father and brothers (it was known by the village women a month before) they beat and then killed her in the public market in Tabriz. Behrani hated his uncle for this, for his is a family of educated people without need of behaving like peasants or resolving conflicts by spilling blood. Striking his wife does not give him pleasure; once he had slapped Nadi for raising her voice to him in front of a junior officer (he had then burned himself five times in repentance). Kathy though he would like to kill her for threatening his home and his family, and for driving away the prospective buyers.

Part I: Section 23 Analysis

Behrani contrasts the behavior of his educated family-with the exception of the uncle who had murdered his cousin Jasmeen-with that of peasants beneath him. There is, of course, the obvious irony of Jasmeen's having had an affair with an oil executive from the United States, whose government had orchestrated the conditions for the overthrow of Iran's democratically elected leaders, replacing it with the dictatorship of Reza Shah Pahlavi: the American oil executive left an Iranian, a woman, Jasmeen, to absorb the consequences. In this there is gender irony as well as political irony.



Part I: Section 24

Part I: Section 24 Summary

Kathy feels worse after visiting Bisgrove Street. She drives to the fish camp early and finds that Lester had arrived early, too. His day has not gone well: his wife Carol had met him at the police station, screaming at and hitting him, the kids crying in the back seat in their pajamas. Kathy questions Lester, and he says that going back to Carol is not an option. He leaves to make some phone calls. He does not return with good news. She asks what they said could be done about "Bahroony." He shakes his head: nothing. The lawyers say her case is against San Mateo County. He feels badly for Kathy and for his wife. He and Kathy eat on the porch, because it is too hot inside the cabin. They sit quietly, Lester with his thoughts and Kathy wishing she'd made up a better excuse for her mother not to fly to the west coast for a visit.

Lester says that one thing he hates about law enforcement is how, many times, he has had to let people who disobeyed the spirit of the law off the hook. He speaks of the California domestic violence law, how he has to arrest both the woman who defends herself with her hands and the man whom she's trying to defend herself from. He likens this law to what's happened to her house: had she noticed the expensive cars and clothes the other day? Lester contrasts that splendor with Kathy now, literally homeless. He promises to call the INS the next morning. First though he plans to visit the "Colonel" himself since military men sometimes listen to other military men. Kathy kisses him for doing this for her.

Part I: Section 24 Analysis

Lester has been living a life invisible-his unhappiness unknown to his wife-and Kathy one unseen by her mother and east coast relatives. There are obvious physical comparisons to be made between the cabin on the Purisima River and the Bisgrove Street house.



Part I: Section 25

Part I: Section 25 Summary

Out on the widow's walk, Behrani again remembers Jasmine, and his daughter's repeatedly apologizing for the family's current living quarters by talking solely of the grandeur of their life in Iran. He knows he both must sell the house and move his family into more modest housing to stretch out his remaining cash. He recognizes the pity in Soraya's expression...pity and shame. Concluding that he has had too much time on his hands since the fall of his society, he disciplines himself to purchase more "for sale" signs before the department stores close. Esmail says he will take a second paper route and give him all the money he earns. Behrani recognizes this gesture and shakes his hand, although wishing instead to embrace his son. Nadi says she wants to call her sister tomorrow, promising that she will not talk long. Behrani feels his old love for his wife, dressed in an expensive French exercise outfit that fits too loosely.

When Behrani answers the door bell and sees the policeman standing outside, he is relieved that he is called "sir" and responds by saying "come in, Officer." When Lester tells him it's illegal to post a sign on a utility pole, Behrani says he will remove it immediately (and that he is an American citizen). Lester asks Behrani for his full name and the names of his family members and says that he is "Officer Joe Gonzalez." Behrani asks if he's being interrogated. "Joe" responds that he'd heard that Reza Shah Pahlavi had had a habit of interrogating people, and that Behrani is not doing the right thing by not selling the Corona house back to the county for its purchase price so it can be returned to its rightful owner. "Joe" tells Behrani that he's sure they understand each other and that he doesn't think they'll need to see each other again. He also recommends getting a moving van soon: people get deported every day.

Behrani turns to see his wife and son staring at him. He is shaken that the county tax office would send the military against him although he has violated no laws. Nadi begins screaming at him; he slaps her and begins shaking her; his son pulls him off; they fall to the floor; Esmail bolts for his room; Nadi remains on the floor screaming; Behrani walks outside to remove the sign. He finds it has already been torn down and begins wondering, *why, unlike all other American police officers he had seen, did this officer not have a name tag? why did he not have a squad car? why tear down the sign himself?* He concludes that the officer is too amateurish to be credible. He is surprised Nadi has not cleaned up the mess, the broken table and spilled nuts. She is in her room, listening to her tapes. He resolves to file a harassment complaint against the officer the next day.

Behrani later enters his son's room to say he was wrong to have hit his mother, that Esmail should do better. Esmail does not respond. When Behrani says he's being disrespectful, he asks why his father doesn't return the house to its real owner. Behrani explains that the real problem is that the county isn't willing to repurchase the house back from him at the profit he deserves. Esmail says that he's still sorry for "that lady."



Behrani cannot sleep that night. He hears a car and walks over to check the lock on the door. He turns on the porch light but sees nothing; he leaves it on.

Part I: Section 25 Analysis

The honor of the family name is a different use of language than interjecting honorifics like "sir" and "officer." Although Behrani decides to file a legal complaint the next day, his checking the lock and leaving the light on are obvious references to SAVAK.



Part I: Section 26

Part I: Section 26 Summary

Kathy was smoking in her car when Lester marched down Bisgrove Street, ripped off the "for sale" sign, and got inside the car. She drove off before asking what happened. Behrani, Lester said, knew to ask his name (although he had, of course, lied). They laugh; everything seems all right. They go to the nearby bar after gathering supplies like candles and a hibachi from her storage shed. Lester comes back with a pitcher of beer, which they drink and then dance. The next day Kathy wakes up to a patch of sunshine on her face, in bed in the loft at the fish cabin. She remembers having made love in the front seat of the Bonneville, but nothing after that. Her head hurts, and her mouth is dry. Lester returns as she is brushing her teeth, wishing she had a bathroom and a door, hoping she looks better than she feels. Lester says he wishes Carol would find someone who loves her as much as she loves him. Kathy wants a cigarette but does not want him to stop talking. She thinks of her role-although he has assured her she has none-in destroying the lives of Lester's children. She concludes that losing the house was the precipice of a long drift down. She stops to shower at the CPA's house that she cleans, swiping some clean clothes from his daughter, having decided to talk with the "Colonel's wife."

Part I: Section 26 Analysis

Kathy moves from exhilaration-at Lester's daring (done for her) -to despair, thinking of him the next day with his children and thinking of the role she's confident she's played in the destruction of their world. Since she no longer has a home, she invades that of a CPA whose house she cleans (although realizing it wrong to do so).

Part I: Section 27

Part I: Section 27 Summary

Behrani has paid the lawyer another \$150 to confirm what he thought, that it is unlikely that the tax office sent a policeman to threaten him. The lawyer calls the police department; there is no "Officer Gonzalez." Behrani, invited over to discuss the matter further, identifies the photo of Lester as "Officer Gonzalez" (to Lieutenant Alvarez in Internal Affairs). He takes an hour filling out the form describing the incident. Driving back to Corona, he thinks how comfortable he felt amidst the uniformed men in the Hall of Justice, and that perhaps he could look for a job there. He also knows from experience how military men respond to someone who reports on one of them and wonders how to protect himself and his family. He had sold his only weapon (a pistol, the gift of an American defense contractor on the occasion of purchasing many F-16s) in Bahrain to avoid any legal troubles getting into Europe. He dismisses the idea of violence: he is not his uncle. He stops to buy wood glue to fix the broken table. He again visualizes the image of Pourat's body hanging, his blood still dripping.

Part I: Section 27 Analysis

Again the specter of the role the U.S. played in creating and sustaining Behrani's society—the brutal dictatorship of Pahlavi—is raised. Behrani, though, eschews violence as a way of dealing with Lester and remembers again the image of Pourat's body hanging above the tarmac.



Part I: Section 28

Part I: Section 28 Summary

Kathy is relieved to not see "the Colonel's" white car when she crests Bisgrove Street. She rings the bell and Nadi eventually answers, recognizing her only as the woman whose foot was hurt. As she had when introducing herself to Behrani, she extends her hand, which Nadi shakes in some confusion. She introduces herself as Kathy Nicolo, whose father had left her this house. Nadi, thinking of "Officer Gonzalez" the night before-and knowing how SAVAK works-asks whether they will be forced to return to Iran, where they will be killed. Kathy tries to comfort Nadi, who is now crying. Kathy also writes down the details on paper so Nadi will know what to discuss with her husband. Kathy asks Nadi if she is pronouncing her name correctly. Nadi repeats that Kathy is a nice girl and that her husband Behrani has only wanted what's best for his family. Kathy looks at the family portrait, especially Soraya, who projects knowing that she is in a class above others (Kathy thinks of herself at that age, married to a welder and snorting "white snakes" of coke).

Part I: Section 28 Analysis

Although Kathy's coming to plead her case may not have been a good idea, both she and Nadi behave like intelligent women under difficult circumstances. This contrasts with Soraya's overly developed self-esteem.

Part I: Section 29

Part I: Section 29 Summary

Behrani purchases wood glue, more "for sale" signs mounted on stakes, and a large metal bar for pounding them into the ground. When he sees Kathy's car, he bolts from his own while Nadi screams protests, and then he grabs Kathy, moves her off the porch to her car, squeezes her forearms, and shakes her until she cries. He wants to kill her but instead shoves her into her car and tells her that she is nothing, unworthy even to raise her eyes to him.

Part I: Section 29 Analysis

Behrani's behavior is in stark contrast to that of the two women in the previous chapter.



Part I: Section 30

Part I: Section 30 Summary

Kathy's arms are bruised. She feels like she's in a basement from which she can't escape. She stops at a Mexican restaurant (part of an authentic west coast chain) and orders guacamole and one margarita, then another. She decides that Lester will not leave his wife, will continue his life of quiet despair to spare his children from pain. She tells the waitress that her guacamole is too green and orders a third margarita. Knowing that mall restaurants have a three-drink limit, she leaves her young waitress a nice tip and walks out, looking for another restaurant (when she thinks of herself as a daughter, her body "feels too small and filthy to live in"). At a pizzeria, she sits in the back and orders a glass of white wine and then another. She drops a lit match on the table, thinking of the Corona house engulfed in flames, everything burning in the hot flame—she'd get "Mrs. Bahroony" and her son out of the house before she torched it. She buys a gasoline can at Sears. As she opens the trunk of the Bonneville to put the gas can in, she notices Lester had left his gun, and she takes it out. She cradles it in one hand as she drives towards San Bruno, where, after stopping at a package store, she sits in her car sipping rum and smoking. She next stops at a gas station, fills her gas can, pulls the gun out of her purse and waves it at the cashier. She drives away, the gas can still at the pump and the trunk of her car still open.

Part I: Section 30 Analysis

Kathy starts her drinking binge at a Mexican restaurant (part of an authentic California chain): Its blonde waitress is young, green, not yet realizing that the world will eat her as, Kathy thinks, it has eaten her and everyone else. After the three margaritas, two glasses of wine, and an unknown amount of rum, Kathy no longer cares (or knows).



Part I: Section 31

Part I: Section 31 Summary

Behrani kneels gluing Nadi's mother's table. After Kathy drives away weeping, Nadi pushes the note in front of him, her eyes glaring with mistrust and anger. She curses him in Farsi as a dog with no father. He lets her curses pass over him like training jets without ammunition (he thinks Nadi had always been superstitious, taking extra coins with her when she went shopping, to give to whomever asked: the victims of SAVAK, the blind, and the lame).

Part I: Section 31 Analysis

Nadi curses Behrani: it is because of him that all their names are on the death list. She retreats and barricades herself in her room. It is only when she calls him selfish that he responds angrily, listing all he's done for his family.

Part I: Section 32

Part I: Section 32 Summary

Kathy drives west towards Corona, thinking it would not be long before the police come looking for her. She notices "the Colonel's" white Buick when she crests Bisgrove Street. She parks next to it, but no one comes out. She holds Lester's gun to her chest and passes out.

Part I: Section 32 Analysis

Kathy has no place to go, so she went home, to the house from which the county had mistakenly evicted her, the house from which Behrani has twice physically ejected her (the more recent time, earlier this same day, forcefully enough to have left finger-mark bruises on her arms).



Part I: Section 33

Part I: Section 33 Summary

Behrani wraps one table leg in tape and then the other, thinking about his daughter shaming them by talking about them as though they were nothing without referring to his once powerful position: it is not his fault they are in California where only money counts. His words ring hollow inside his own head, though, since the bungalow is smaller than the garage where his former chauffeur had parked his car. He looks up and sees Kathy's car-then is quickly outside on the driveway, noticing first the gun. His arms stretch into the car to take it away from Kathy (who, passed out, offers no resistance). He notices there is not a bullet in the chamber and puts the loaded magazine clip in his pocket, the gun in the back waistband of his pants. He helps Kathy from her car, into the house, and into Esmail's bed. With Kathy now lying in Esmail's bed, Behrani turns to tell Nadi she must cook some food.

Part I: Section 33 Analysis

Behrani thinks again of his cousin Jasmeen when he first sees Kathy with the gun and after he lays her in Esmail's bed. He cannot bring himself to call the police on her, because he knows she only wishes to hurt herself. He remembers the parties at Pourat's estate, where he drank enough for three men, and then for days afterwards issuing orders where his only goal was to demonstrate he was in charge. His turning to tell Nadi to prepare food is not a command like that.



Part II: Section 34

Part II: Section 34 Summary

Lester has been sitting on the porch of the fishing cabin for two hours, waiting in the fog for Kathy. Earlier that day he had sat with his wife Carol at their kitchen table and listened to her speak calmly about their nine-year marriage and their children. He also listened when she screamed and cursed him (and "his whore"). He tried to comfort her when she cried, and he admired her when she slipped into the mother role when their daughter came home. Lieutenant Alvarez from Internal Affairs had calls him: Lester has not driven back to the office as ordered.

He lights the Coleman lantern, wishing Kathy were there. Where was Kathy? He realizes that, had he driven to the Hall of Justice as Alvarez ordered, he could have denied the whole incident-it would be one person's word against another's. Now, though, he has violated a direct order. He thinks about what had attracted him to Carol before, when they were students: it was her conviction, he realizes. While Carol had planned to graduate and then travel the world with a notebook and camera, documenting U.S. imperialism wherever she found it, she instead married Lester, had two children, and lived in a housing tract. Lester's goals were less clear (it was after they were married that he saw a police recruiting poster depicting a domestic violence scene-the slogan of which was "world peace begins at home" -that he decided to become a police officer); all he knew was that he wanted to do good. Lester writes a note to Kathy-begging her not to leave and heads to town to leave a voice message for Alvarez. He watches hopefully for Kathy's Bonneville and, contemplating the possible reasons for which Alvarez could nail him, leaves that voice message. He tries to call his family and gets Carol's recorded message that begins "The Burdon family..." Lester hangs up, knowing nothing will be right until he sees Kathy again. He heads for Corona.

Part II: Section 34 Analysis

Lester thinks of the day, miserable though it was, as a type of new beginning: now, finally, the truth is out about his marriage, and all he needs to do is ride out the storm. He knows the only way to right what was wrong now is to see Kathy again. The fog is so thick he has to drive slowly and carefully as he heads toward Corona.



Part II: Section 35

Part II: Section 35 Summary

Kathy is woken by Nadi, who insists that Kathy drink something. Kathy makes it to the bathroom before vomiting. Later, sitting on the toilet, she tries to remember what the bathroom floor had been like before. Nadi knocks, carrying a towel and bathrobe, pushing back the stray hairs from around Kathy's face, telling her to bathe and relax, that she is cooking for them. Kathy remembers the gun and leans against the wash basin. She opens the medicine chest, finding a prescription bottle of Halcion for "Mrs. N. Behrani," about three quarters full. The pills go down her throat like "little embryos of solution." She hears Behrani and Nadi speaking in Farsi, no longer enemy voices (she hopes the "Colonel's wife" won't blame herself too much). She counts the drips from the faucet, all the way up to 36.

Part II: Section 35 Analysis

Although the author does not say how many pills were in the bottle, Kathy's goal is obviously suicide, and Nadi's, to sustain her life.



Part II: Section 36

Part II: Section 36 Summary

Behrani thinks how quickly and purposefully Nadi left her room for the broken woman in Esmail's. He hopes this will be enough to deflect Kathy's attention to the tax office and away from him and his family. Nadi scolds him to put Lester's gun-now on the kitchen counter-out of sight. He instead remembers back to the American-built firing range, how his own aim had always been more accurate than Pourat's (Pourat would laugh at himself in front of even the junior officers and later gave Behrani a nickname, "Duke," after the American actor John Wayne).

When Esmail returns home, Behrani shows him the unloaded gun and explains everything he can. They sit at the waiting meal while Nadi goes to knock on the bathroom door. Behrani hears the quiet after Nadi's knock and is on his feet down the hall as she turns the doorknob. He hears her scream and sees the empty bottle. He helps Nadi pull Kathy from the tub. Nadi says that "she must lose her stomach" and orders him out of the room. When he returns, Kathy is making sounds and Nadi says "very good, very good." He hears Kathy trying to tell Nadi that she is beautiful, and his wife clearly saying that Kathy is beautiful. He envisions the two kneeling before the toilet and then hears the vomit hitting the water. He returns to his 14-year-old son, who had begun eating. Esmail asks him Kathy had tried to kill herself because of the house. Behrani does not at first understand the question, because his teenage son's mouth is full of food. Behrani scolds his manners, and then answers that he does not know.

Part II: Section 36 Analysis

Nadi has saved Kathy's life (Kathy, of course, is beyond comprehending the current situation). Nadi commands her husband to leave them be. Behrani does not know why Kathy is trying to kill herself. That he does not know is all he can tell his son.



Part II: Section 37

Part II: Section 37 Summary

It is so foggy that Lester has to drive slowly. He knows that Kathy might be at the storage shed; she might have been too spooked by the fog to drive; perhaps she'd stopped at the truck stop. He'd planned to try the storage shed, the motel, and the truck stop, but he finds himself at the intersection that leads to Bisgrove Street. He downshifts driving up the hill and sees Kathy's red Bonneville parked next to the Colonel's white Buick. He first peers into Kathy's car, not knowing what he's looking for but seeing his empty gun belt. He leans against the house and hears the Colonel and a woman having a heated discussion. But where is Kathy? He's now at the backdoor and sees Esmail (and the gun lying atop a paper napkin on the kitchen counter). He hears a loud thump, kicks in the window, and grabs the knob from the inside, so startling Esmail that he falls over backwards. Lester, now inside the kitchen, grabs his gun, inserts the loaded magazine, sends a bullet into the chamber, and thumbs off the safety lock. He sees Kathy lying on the floor in a robe, eyes partially open, looking at the ceiling "with either great interest or none at all." Nadi and Esmail scream in Farsi. The Colonel enters from a side room carrying a heavy iron bar. Lester aims the gun directly at him and commands him to drop the bar.

Part II: Section 37 Analysis

It is hard for Lester to not instantaneously stop the screaming, get them all away from Kathy's body. His thoughts before were unclear but now has a single purpose: whatever it is that is happening, he must remove Kathy from danger.



Part II: Section 38

Part II: Section 38 Summary

Behrani, too, has a single wish, to step between Lester's gun and his wife and son (although he knows he cannot do this without stepping over Kathy's body, which he knows the deputy will not allow). Lester points the gun at Nadi, who stops screaming, clutching Esmail, who, too, is silent. Kathy moans for Lester to stop. Lester orders the three into the bathroom. He demands to know what they had done to Kathy. Esmail says she took a bottle of his mother's sleeping pills. As the three move Kathy to Nadi's room, Behrani recognizes Lester's love for Kathy but, as he and his family are Lester's prisoners, he worries about what else he is capable of doing. Lester calls Kathy's name and touches her hair: she weeps and closes her eyes. Behrani is ready to step forward and recommend calling the hospital, but Lester telephones it first. Nadi urges Behrani to speak but he refrains, recognizing Lester's confusion and knowing how much more dangerous that makes him. After speaking with the nurse, Lester tells the family to leave, that Kathy needs rest.

Part II: Section 38 Analysis

Kathy is out of immediate danger. Behrani, Nadi, and Esmail are in immediate danger. Lester *is* the immediate danger.



Part II: Section 39

Part II: Section 39 Summary

Lester still has the gun and notices, for the first time, the food-white rice and radishes-and the three clean plates. When they reach the kitchen, Lester, thinking hard, orders them to "sit down and eat." Esmail takes his plate from the kitchen counter, takes a long look at Lester's gun, and then sits with his parents. Lester pushes clicks the gun's safetybutton back on and sticks it in his back waistband: he knows they had not harmed Kathy. He walks over to the kitchen, takes the broom, and starts sweeping up the backdoor glass he had broken when he had stormed into the house.

Part II: Section 39 Analysis

This is for Lester, as he put it, "where the rubber hit the road," where he stands-because this is where Kathy is. He cannot understand what events after that morning at the cabin could have possibly led to this.



Part II: Section 40

Part II: Section 40 Summary

Nadi urges Behrani to invite Lester to eat with them. Behrani does, but Lester declines, sitting at the kitchen counter watching them instead. He asks, "What happened?" Behrani explains that he saw Kathy's car in the driveway and didn't know how long she'd been there, that he saw that she was weeping and holding the gun to her heart (thought later, when he checked, he found the safety still engaged, no bullet in the chamber). He had taken the gun and then helped her into the house. Esmail interjects that that's exactly what happened, that his father would not lie. Behrani carefully notes that Kathy could not walk or speak well.

Part II: Section 40 Analysis

Lester begins by interrogating his prisoners, asking those who saved the life of the woman he loved what they knew about what had happened.



Part II: Section 41

Part II: Section 41 Summary

The room feels too small to Lester; he feels a post-adrenaline physical need to move. He thinks he should take Kathy home...but where is "home"? She has no home, he thinks, because of this Colonel, who keeps glancing over at his wife and son, then over at him and the gun at the back of his waistband. A small part of him wants to apologize profusely for breaking and entering, to say he'd be back in the morning for Kathy, to take her to wherever home might be. But he cannot imagine leaving her there, cannot imagine the series of decisions she had made that led to the present situation. He also knows that now the Colonel has new charges on him (brandishing a weapon, along with breaking and entering). He wonders whether the entire mystery could be explained by the abuse of alcohol. He now desires tea but does not want to ask for it, does not want to appear conciliatory. Instead, first he orders his captives to go into Esmail's room; there, Lester looks around and orders the boy to unplug the modem, being careful not to point his gun at him. He then orders Esmail to stay in his room and his parents to return with him to the kitchen. Behrani inquires about his intentions. Lester asks him about Alvarez. He demands to know when he's giving the house back to Kathy. He demands to know whether Behrani needs this tiny house. Behrani responds that it is not his business.

Lester reacts to this by holding the barrel of the gun under Behrani's chin, the safety still on but the hammer cocked. Kathy, and everything about her, *is* his business, he says. Nadi is weeping, pleading with him, insisting that they are good people. Lester notices that the Colonel's eyes are wet but cannot tell whether from emotion or from not blinking. Lester thumbs the hammer back to quarter lock and sets the pistol beside him. When he looks again at the Colonel-his face empty of color, lips tight, eyes narrowed-he knows that he has crossed a line. He again waves the gun at Behrani and Nadi, who is still weeping softly, ordering them now to Nadi's room to see "the owner of the house."

Part II: Section 41 Analysis

Lester follows them holding his gun at his side, trying to make it seem less like an overreaction. It is unclear why Behrani-whose only wish had been to shield his wife and son, who had carefully stated Kathy's degree of drunkenness and prefaced the part about her swallowing the pills with a "sir" -would tell Lester that the answer to his question is "none of his business." Also unknown are Lester's motives for sticking his gun under Behrani's chin: did he do so because of what Behrani had said or because of the picture of Behrani and Pourat with Reza Shah Pahlavi hanging on the wall?



Part II: Section 42

Part II: Section 42 Summary

Behrani has no difficulty imagining the impact of a large caliber bullet tearing through his flesh. He now has one goal, to kill Lester, the man who broke into his house, after his family had saved his pitiful girlfriend's life. Lester next orders them back to Esmail's room. Behrani notices immediately that the bedroom window is wide open and whispers instructions to Esmail in Farsi...but Lester has also noticed, nearly knocking the boy down reaching over to close it. Although the gun is now within his grasp, Behrani does nothing, because of the obvious threat to his wife and son if it were to go off in a struggle. Lester demands "Ishmael" to explain what he was doing; "Esmail," corrects the 14-year-old boy. Behrani squeezes his son's shoulder, hoping he interprets that as a sign not to be aggressive in the face of their captor. Esmail says he was going to go out but did not. Lester orders the three into the bathroom, which still reeks of Kathy's vomit, and closes the door behind him.

Part II: Section 42 Analysis

Behrani's desire to kill Lester is obviously intensified by the interrogation of his son. However, Behrani cannot act on this desire, not because he fears Lester but because he fears for the safety of Nadi and Esmail.



Part II: Section 43

Part II: Section 43 Summary

Lester sticks his gun into the rear waistband of his pants and steps outside, observing no indication that Esmail had contacted anyone. He returns inside, checking on Kathy: her color isn't any better, but her pulse is strong. He finds only women's clothing in the closet: gold and silver buckles, 30 pairs of shoes, silk and wool garments, hat boxes with French labels. These symbols of wealth anger him. He goes back into the hall and picks up the iron bar he had ordered Behrani to drop. He goes to the Colonel's office and notices a shoe rack six feet long, as well as over 30 suits and uniforms.

He uses two silk neckties to tie the iron bar to the bathroom door. He goes to Esmail's room and turns off his computer and bedside lamp; he locks the front door and pulls down the living room shades. Finding no coffee in the kitchen, he pours himself some tea from the samovar. He takes off his shoes and tries, unsuccessfully, to wake up Kathy. He hears the family talking, the Colonel's centered voice in particular. He kicks the barricaded bathroom door, and their silence is instant. He thinks that the "rich prick" isn't taking him seriously...and that is going to change. He ejects the bullet from the chamber in his gun onto the floor and inserts another. He commands Behrani through the door that the first thing he's going to do tomorrow is sell the house back to the county. Behrani says nothing. Lester thinks it would've been better if the woman and kid weren't there. He again asks Behrani what he's going to do first thing tomorrow. Behrani still says nothing. Lester thinks he is perhaps talking to an empty room, that his captives have escaped. Behrani finally speaks up, saying that perhaps Lester should tell him what to do. Lester does-and suddenly wonders if it is that simple, if he could expect them, or anyone, to simply drive away and leave after this. He realizes, too, that not only can the new charges against him be corroborated but also that they are sufficient to get him jailed-an imprisoned cop amidst other imprisoned criminals. Lester demands that Behrani answer him again. He hears Nadi speaking softly. The anger leaves him and remorse takes its place, moving in like a cold fog.

Part II: Section 43 Analysis

Lester's anger comes and goes; here it is the evidence of wealth he sees in the closets that sets him off. His anger, though, frightens him less than does his coherent thinking, his wondering if anyone could possibly ignore what he has done.



Part II: Section 44

Part II: Section 44 Summary

About three hours after Lester Burdon made his threats through the closed door, Esmail asks his father what he is going to do. Nadi takes charge, telling her son to clean up. She drains the tub and makes a bed for him there. She tells him that his father is a colonel and will easily take care of this business. Behrani tells Esmail not to be afraid. His son now rests on a bed of towels inside the tub and his wife on a bed of towels beside him.

Behrani thinks back to the family's being driven through the back alleys of the burning streets of Mehrabad, Nadi holding Esmail, his one hand holding Soraya and the other the .45 that the American officer had given him. When they arrived at the gates, the guards had waved them on; his copilot was already there and had started the airplane's engines. He and Nadi boarded with their children, three trunks, and four pieces of luggage. Nadi had not complained then but she had not known what was to follow, that they would never return to their home, that the revolutionary fundamentalist government would become stronger-and that their names would be placed on the death list.

It was not until they had arrived at this house that Nadi had regained her old happiness. He knows that if he touches her, she will pull away, that when she'd earlier told Lester that her husband was only good, what she had meant was that he only had his good intentions left. Behrani suspects she has one of her headaches but does not at the moment care. Esmail says he wants to move back to Berkeley. Behrani tells him no, that this is a good place, and that he will not be bullied by thugs (he speaks only in Farsi now while he explains to his son). He plans to pretend to do whatever Lester orders and then, when his family is safe, report him. Esmail asks whether they weren't also "thugs" for taking Kathy's house, which Behrani denies. Nadi, however, says that Behrani has brought this on them. He stands and tells them both to shut up. Nadi stands and asks him what he will do, tell SAVAK they are being disrespectful? Behrani and Nadi argue, both only wanting to do what was best for the kids, and Esmail, now also standing, asks them to stop. He asks his father about his role in SAVAK. Behrani denies having any role.

Behrani thinks again of Pourat, watching his son being gunned down against a wall, and his anger disperses. He tells Esmail to lay down and rest, that they will need their concentration in the morning. He tells Esmail that he respects his courage but wants him to appear frightened and to do everything "that man" commands. Behrani does not say that he fears his son might do something brash. Esmail says Soraya's new brother-in-law says that Reza Shah Pahlavi had ordered entire families of men who read certain books to be murdered. Behrani tells him to sleep-but he has heard the same stories himself. He reflects that, were it not for the presence of his wife and son, he would perhaps be getting what he deserved.



Part II: Section 44 Analysis

Behrani's anger dissipates for a different reason than Lester's: his anger does not give way to remorse (at least initially) but to a crouched calmness. In the end though he thinks that, were he alone, it would be "time for Colonel Massoud Amir Behrani to face his accusers." He remains with his family inside the bathroom that Lester has barricaded from the outside.

Part II: Section 45

Part II: Section 45 Summary

Lester leaves a brief note for Kathy, exits the house, puts his car in neutral, coasts down Bisgrove in the fog, and drives to the fishing cabin to freshen up. He pulls into the parking lot behind the Hall of Justice as Alvarez is locking his Jeep. He reflects on a lot of things he could have done better-maybe tonight he would take his kids, Bethany and Nate, out for hamburgers and milkshakes. He plans to tell Alvarez the absolute truth about Monday night.

Part II: Section 45 Analysis

Hamburgers and milkshakes? Lester is not thinking straight, is not focusing on the real matter at hand.

Part II: Section 46

Part II: Section 46 Summary

Kathy wakes up under a purple wool blanket. She begins crying. A few minutes later, Lester returns, and he fetches Kleenex and asks her what happened. He shows her the note he had written, and she asks, "In the bathroom"? He explains the events of the day (she'd thought he wasn't coming back). He sits on the bed and puts his arms around her. He hears the Colonel ask if his family could be allowed out to eat. Lester says he can eat when he sells, and Behrani says, clearly, he will sell. Lester is triumphant and Kathy is not sure what she has won. She says that she wouldn't have done what she did if she hadn't been drunk. The Colonel again knocks, and Lester tells Kathy that he's got to "keep the heat on" his captives until they leave her house. He suggests she leave; she says she'll stay; he asks if that's a promise (and she doesn't know whether to kiss him or move away). Lester tells his captives they are free. Standing beside Lester, Kathy is glad things are turning out this way, that Behrani is nearly "Middle Eastern history" for her. When she sees that Nadi is afraid, Kathy only looks down. Lester tells her she is free to use the bathroom now (she finds her clothes neatly folded on a shelf). She hears Behrani placing a phone call and hopes Lester isn't pointing his gun directly at anyone.

Part II: Section 46 Analysis

It is no surprise that Kathy wakes up after all-Nadi had induced vomiting before she had digested the pills. It is no surprise that Kathy's mouth felt terrible (vomit does that). It is no surprise that she is glad to find her clothes (although some are not her own). It is surprising, though, that she can only look down at her feet when she sees that the woman who saved her life is afraid.



Part II: Section 47

Part II: Section 47 Summary

Behrani has followed Burdon's orders and sits at the kitchen counter sipping bitter tea (the samovar had been on all night). He observes that Lester and his girlfriend sit on his sofa eating his bread and drinking his tea. He sees that the fog has lifted. Nadi is as silent as the night they fled Iran; for this, he is both grateful and resentful that she has surrendered the burden of action to him. Esmail has finished eating and looks at him hopefully. But Behrani has no real plan (the tax bureaucrat he had spoken to on the phone was overjoyed he was selling the house back to the county). He could do as instructed, which would be to drive to Redwood City and pick up the cashier's check made out to him. He thinks about the hotel bills that will eat up his savings. He thinks about the years spearing garbage on the California highways. He got through those years by thinking of them as a test-not as a punishment for having lived regally amongst beggars in Iran. He regards the present situation as a test within a test. Lester calls to see if there had been a vehicular identification when Kathy had brandished his gun in front of the cashier at the gas station. Esmail looks at Lester's gun protruding from the front of his trousers, then to his father and back again. Lester hangs up the phone and orders Behrani and Esmail to get dressed and come with him.

Part II: Section 47 Analysis

Behrani does as he has told Esmail to do: he follows Lester's orders. It was perhaps the obvious sigh of relief from the San Mateo County Tax Office-the entity that made the huge mistake in the first place-that temporarily makes him doubt his plan (get free of his captor and then report him). Or perhaps it was something in Esmail's eyes. But he does not have time for reflection-...there are new orders to follow.



Part II: Section 48

Part II: Section 48 Summary

Lester orders the Colonel and the boy into their rooms, his gun on double safety, hanging at his side. He now wishes that it "wasn't part of the equation at all." His meeting with Alvarez had gone better than he'd expected-he'd been let off with only an oral reprimand. Now, standing in front of the bathroom, listening to Behrani speak in Farsi to Esmail, Lester suddenly realizes that the Colonel is "too proud" to just let this slide, to put his family and his things into a U-Haul-a humiliation in itself-and drive away. He starts breathing more quickly, realizing how crazy the situation really is. He gives Kathy the bullets in his gun, tells her that they have to bail, and that she needs to sell Behrani the house for the amount he paid for it, after which he can do with it as he wishes: she protests that her father had given her the house (and begins crying that this is all her fault). Lester orders Behrani and Esmail into the kitchen. Kathy says his plan won't work, that he hasn't seen Behrani 's temper. Lester notices that Behrani looks like he's losing patience (and that Esmail's arms are folded defiantly across his chest). He concludes that Kathy is correct and that they must flee. Everything will be under surveillance, but they'll rent disguises and use assumed names.

Lester now sits in the back seat of the Bonneville, with Behrani driving and Esmail in the front passenger seat. He presses the gun barrel to the back of Behrani 's neck (and tells Esmail to play it carefully). After the Bonneville is parked in the back, they get into the white Buick, Lester this time behind Esmail. He asks the Colonel how much he paid for the house. Lester is angered by the answer: \$45,000, about 1/4 of its value (why, he asks, should Behrani get such a sweet deal?). He tells the Colonel to get the check from the county, sign it over to Kathy, who would then give him clear title to the house. Lester asks Behrani whether they are agreed; Behrani says that once the tax bureaucrats have put his name on the deed to the property, he will give Kathy the money. Lester concludes that the Colonel's somber tone is due merely to the specific circumstances of their discussion (namely, the gun pressed to his head). Lester decides against a simple apology-he had just been concerned about Kathy and had overreacted, is all-because it would show vulnerability to his captive. Realizing that Behrani will get nothing out of the deal, Lester's new goal becomes getting the check and getting back to Kathy.

Part II: Section 48 Analysis

Lester thinks it is a good sign that he and Behrani are now talking, man to man. That is most certainly the case and most obviously the problem.



Part II: Section 49

Part II: Section 49 Summary

After Lester, the Colonel, and Esmail left, Kathy listened to Nadi ("Mrs. Behrani" now) cleaning the kitchen. Kathy does not like being alone with her, because she does not know what to say. And she envisions Frank and her mother finding out she'd sold the house without telling them and only got auction price. She looks at the window and is glad to see Lester bullying Behrani with his empty gun. Fearing that Nadi will flee to inform on Lester, she checks the kitchen. Nadi, pressing her temples, asks Kathy if Lester will hurt her son, Kathy answers no. Nadi then gives in to her migraine headache, walks down the hall, and vomits up her small breakfast. Kathy is relieved that Nadereh has some medication by her bed. Kathy watches her, recognizes a frequently repeated ritual, and decides she's standing in a place where she has no business. Kathy pulls the curtain down before she leaves the house. She sits in her Bonneville, smokes, and waits for Lester.

Part II: Section 49 Analysis

Although Kathy assured Nadi that Esmail would not be harmed, she did not show her the bullets, did not offer the proof she had available. Nadi gives in to her migraine only after being reassured about Esmail's safety.



Part II: Section 50

Part II: Section 50 Summary

When the Colonel finds a parking space and looks over his shoulder to parallel park, Lester does not move out of his range of vision—doing so would be courteous, and he does not wish to show courtesy. Although Lester wishes Esmail wasn't part of the scenario, he tries to use him as a hostage, telling Behrani that if he's not back in a half hour, he and the boy will be gone. Behrani, though, says he will do nothing without his son. Lester recognizes that he'd do the same if it were his son, and the three leave the car, with Lester walking behind. Lester tells them first to walk faster and then slower. He is angry and wishes his gun were loaded when the Colonel simply stops walking, his back turned to Lester—such rudeness!—and waits for him to catch up.

After they cross the street, Esmail grabs the gun from Lester and holds it on him. Behrani then grabs Lester's arm and yells for someone to call the police. Lester knows he should tell Esmail that the gun is empty. He sees other police officers running to the scene and stomps on the Colonel's foot. He yells out for everyone to stop—but it is too late. Esmail is taken down by two bullets, the first in the upper torso and the second in the leg. Behrani screams and crawls past Lester. Lester realizes that he could probably escape, but he notices the other officers are putting on protective gloves and meanwhile Esmail is bleeding to death. He rips off part of his shirt and sticks it into the leg wound, pressing as hard as he can until the paramedics arrive. The Colonel is not allowed to go with Esmail. As the other deputies handcuff him, he screams at Lester, "I will kill you." Behrani is pushed into a squad car. Another officer asks Lester what happened. He explains.

Part II: Section 50 Analysis

Lester wanted to ride up like a cloud and drift away; however, it is too late, because Esmail has been shot. Lester could have told the boy the gun was empty, but whether or not that would have made a difference—he chose not to inform him.



Part II: Section 51

Part II: Section 51 Summary

Kathy feels restless and walks back into the house, looking in on Nadi, wishing she could do something for her, remembering how she had looked at her own bruises as though they pained her. She feels dirty but doesn't want to be showering when Lester returns. Most of all, she wants him to still want her.

Part II: Section 51 Analysis

Now that Nadi is incapacitated, Kathy does not worry about her escaping. Not knowing exactly what to do to help Nadi with her migraine, she fetches a glass of ice water and puts it on the table by the tape player.



Part II: Section 52

Part II: Section 52 Summary

Behrani wants only his son. Alvarez enters the room and says he can press charges (again, he says: I want my son). He is offered an escort but instead runs to the hospital. The surgeon enters the waiting room and shakes his hand, too long. He is with Esmail's body, holding his son's head, knowing that it is no longer his son underneath his touch. He now must tell Nadi to prepare him for burial—but how can he tell her he told his son to hold the gun strong until the police arrived, which was the reason he was shot dead?

He thinks Pourat escaped at least living much beyond his son. He will not let the man who killed his son escape. He drives blindly for home. He sees Kathy, and his hands are immediately on her throat. It is as if he is watching himself from the outside as he breaks the tendons in her neck, one by one. She struggles and her nails dig into his flesh. There is blood but not enough. He lifts her; he drops her to the floor; he sits on her body and once again feels as if he is back in his own body. It is the time of day that Esmail returns, makes that sound as he kicks his skateboard into his hands. Behrani walks into Nadi's room and sees her sleeping, her smooth brow indicating the sleep of one now out of pain. He cannot wake her to tell this. He strangles her and then kisses her lips: "Sleep Nadereh." He walks past Esmail's room with difficulty and pulls out a uniform last worn in Bahrain from his own closet. He stands at the kitchen counter and writes to Soraya that he and Nadi have loved her more than life and that she should name her first son after Esmail.

He writes out a will, specifying that the bungalow and its full contents go to Soraya and signs his full name. He troubles over "full contents," because that includes Kathy Nicolò's body. He writes a note on his will in Farsi: don't sell the bungalow for less than \$100,000. He secures both documents to the refrigerator with a magnet. He drags Kathy's body out into her car. There is not much time. He takes the tape they used for their moving boxes and the plastic dry cleaner bag from his office. He goes to Nadi's room, creates his own suffocation chamber, reaches for her hand, and dies.

Part II: Section 52 Analysis

Behrani arrives at the hospital to find his son dead. He grieves in ways idiosyncratic to him, ways typical of his culture, and ways common to parents anywhere. Since he cannot find Lester in the Hall of Justice, he drives home, breaks Kathy's neck, asphyxiates his wife, and suffocates himself.



Part II: Section 53

Part II: Section 53 Summary

Lester had confessed everything before his mug shot was taken and he was escorted to his cell. There was no bail for kidnapping. The Chicano officer escorting him recommends he keep the fact that he is "Deputy Sheriff Burdon" to himself. He knows that Esmail's being shot will add a decade to his sentence. He wants to see Kathy. The patrol cars will soon be in Corona, probably to charge her with everything he is charged with.

Part II: Section 53 Analysis

Lester's hope that Esmail is OK is doubtlessly sincere. He now recognizes that it was his fear that deprived the boy of the knowledge that the gun was empty_knowledge that might have saved his life.



Part II: Section 54

Part II: Section 54 Summary

Kathy sees the sky turn from black to blue just before a strip of bright coral opens on the horizon outside her hospital window. She remembers the door opening and Behrani going for her throat. When she asks the detective in her hospital room what Behrani is going to be charged with, he responds that "Mr. Behrani is deceased." Kathy figures that if he's dead, Lester must have killed him. Another detective tells her that he hopes she's satisfied after having ruined Lester's career, that he'll be thrown to the hounds, and that she'll be imprisoned as well. A doctor recommends she not speak for at least another two weeks. Connie Walsh tells her that Lester is in custody and that Esmail is dead. Kathy sits by her window looking at her own reflection, dirty like that of a sick child.

In prison, she wishes it was she who had died, that Mr. Behrani hadn't tried to save her from Lester's gun and Mrs. Behrani from her pill overdose. She tells her lawyer she doesn't want to appear innocent to make Lester appear guilty, that because of her a family is gone. Her brother Frank and her mother visit her (they had seen the house blocked off by police tape); there, her mother asks what she has done. Rather than responding, Kathy walks back to the women's recreational room and points to someone's pack of cigarettes, holding her fingers in a V up to her mouth to indicate she'd like to bum a smoke.

Part II: Section 54 Analysis

Kathy learns the truth that Esmail and his parents (now referred to as "Mr. and Mrs. Behrani") are dead. It feels right to her to have a plate glass window between herself and her mother. Ownership of the house can now be argued by Behrani's daughter and Kathy's brother.



Characters

Genob Sarhang Massoud Amir Behrani (Colonel, Imperial Air Force)

A wealthy and powerful man under the command of Reza Shah Pahlavi, whose puppet government was set up by the United States during the Cold War. Behrani and his family fled a week to the day after the Shah fled to Cairo in 1979. Of the \$280,000 he took with him out of Iran, he has \$48,000 left. He is now 56. Before moving to California four years ago, looking for an aerospace job, he had spent a decade in France. He is trying to keep up the appearance of his former prestige and wealth but is struggling by, only able to obtain menial jobs. He and his wife Nadereh (Nadi) have two children, Esmail and Soraya. Although the marriage between Behrani and Nadi was arranged, he thinks he would have married her anyway.

Nadereh Behrani

Also called Nadi by her husband. She insists on maintaining their old lavish lifestyle in the United States (so her daughter could marry well, she says). She regains her former happiness in the relatively plain Corona house. Although a "consumer" who enjoys shopping, she is a compassionate person, carefully bandaging Kathy's foot in Part I of the novel and saving her life in Part II.

Esmail Kamfar Behrani

Behrani's and Nadereh's 14-year-old son. He is as normal and happy a teen as any. He has a newspaper route, a skateboard, a Walkman, video games, and friends. In some ways (for example, he is already taller than his father) he is already a young man. He displays his decency of character when, for example, he feels sorry for the lady who had lost her house.

Soraya Behrani Farahsat

Behrani's and Nadereh's daughter. Depicted as self-centered, this 20-year-old has married well - to a young man from another wealthy Iranian immigrant family - weeks before the novel begins.

Kathy Nicolo/Kathy Lazaro

A 36-year-old who, when her father died, was left a house on Bisgrove Street in Corona, California. She met Nick in an addiction recovery program, married him, and took his last name (Lazaro). After he left her in her Corona house (partly because she wanted



children and he didn't) she doesn't open incoming surface mail for months; in doing so, she misses the notices of overdue back-taxes and eviction threats). One of the police officers at her eviction falls in love with her. Kathy had been put on a suicide watch once before; she makes two later suicide attempts as the book unfolds, one at the end of Part I and the second at the beginning of Part II.

Connie Walsh

Kathy's Legal Aid lawyer. Although Kathy cannot afford a lawyer - and her lawyer cannot dispense "justice" - Kathy, through California State law, does have access to the courts. Without the assistance of a competent attorney, Kathy would not have been able to get the San Mateo County Tax Office to even admit its mistake.

Lester Burdon

The police officer who falls in love with Kathy after she is evicted from her Corona house. He is in a joyless marriage with another woman, Carol, and has two young children. He helps Kathy first by getting her possessions into a storage shed and then by renting her a motel room so she won't be homeless. Although Lester is not in love with his wife, he wishes her the best - as he does all the victimized and powerless people with whom he comes into contact.



Objects/Places

The Corona House

34 Bisgrove Street: The deceased father of Kathy and her brother Frank (both of whom lived in Boston) left them a house in Corona, California. Kathy is living in it as the novel begins but is soon mistakenly evicted. The house is purchased at public auction by an immigrant Iranian, who gets the house at about a quarter of its market value (after the auction, he uses a \$10,000 check drawn on the Bank of America as down payment and then pays the other \$35,000 in cash). The Tax Office had advertised the house as having a "widow's walk" (a term from the 18th century eastern U.S. coast for a flat roof with a railing, where widows were said to look to sea for their whaling husbands who never returned). Nadereh calls this widow's walk the "roof porch" and Kathy calls it a "deck."

Automobiles

A lot of events in the novel revolve around cars and driving. Behrani's clerk job is several towns away from his Berkeley apartment (so no one will recognize him): He drives a white luxury Buick Regal-when he is picking up garbage, he pays to park it underneath the Concourse Hotel; he keeps a change of clothes necessary for maintaining his double identity in a garment bag in the back seat; he drives this car to the tax office when Esmail is in the front passenger seat and Lester and his gun are in the back seat; he returns to the Corona house in this car. Kathy spends a lot of time driving too: her car is a red Bonneville, a vintage low-mileage luxury car, a wedding gift from her brother Frank, which she and Nick drove to the west coast in a single nonstop one-week roadtrip; shortly after being evicted from her house, the car becomes Kathy's home for a night; she uses it to strafe her house when she sees Behrani showing the house to a prospective client; she and Lester make love on its front seat one night; after Behrani thinks he's killed Kathy, he drags her body out of the Corona house and into this car. As for Lester: Behrani is quickly suspicious that Lester (a.k.a. "Officer Gonzalez") is without a squad car; when Lester leaves his captives barricaded in the bathroom, he doesn't start his engine-he puts it into neutral, holds the door open, and kicks it until it begins rolling down the hill; and Lester's most painful confrontation with his wife, where his kids are crying in the back of the family station wagon, occurs in a parking lot.

The Fishing Cabin on the Purisima River

No electricity, no running water, and no phone. Kathy and Lester clean it their first morning there. It is the first and last home they share.



Social Sensitivity

As Andre Dubus III opens *House of Sand and Fog*, his third book, a very proud, strong, fifty-six-year-old Iranian man is working on a highway trash crew with a group of Mexicans, Panamanians, Vietnamese, and Chinese workers. Here, at the bottom rung of American working society are the immigrants, the expatriates, the men who have left their native countries because of war, economics, and politics. Regardless of their skills, educations, or positions in their home countries, they must work at one of the most menial jobs, collecting trash along the side of a busy highway above Sausalito and the Golden Gate Park. In this riveting opening scene on a highway in California, the Golden State, are symbolically enacted both the promise of new lives and the obstacles facing those trying to obtain them. Dubus announces the immigrant theme in this scene and the social issues surrounding immigrants. The experience here is anything but promising, and the reactions of each of the men on the trash crew in the face of their challenges and adversities range from escape via the bottle or drugs to planning a better life while working two or more jobs, while still dreaming of the old life. The Iranian man was, as Colonel Behrani in the Imperial Iranian air force serving Shahanshah Reza Pahlavi, near the top of Persian society and enjoyed the benefits of wealth and respect. When the revolution toppled the Shah, it brought men like Colonel Behrani and his family down as well. Even though they escaped with possessions and money, they own no home and have no source of income.

Another significant social issue explored in the novel is the immorality of the United States support of dictators such as Shah Reza Pahlavi, whose regime the U.S. supported with arms and money during the "Cold War" with the Soviet Union. Dubus makes good use of several aspects of the relationship between Iran and the U.S. during the "Cold War" to develop the "back story" of his novel. For instance, we learn in a chilling scene remembered with distaste by Colonel Behrani that the U.S. had trained the Shah's secret police (the dreaded SAVAK) in their methods of brutal torture, which later earned the country the sobriquet of "The Great Satan."



Techniques

House of Sand and Fog is not a novel of initiation. It is a tragedy, a novel about the destruction of decent but flawed people with basically good intentions and normal desires. Their weaknesses of temperament, judgment, and emotion are those that most readers will identify with and thus feel pity and terror—to use Aristotle's terms—emotions the arousal of which by the force of the narrative will lead to catharsis. Life is lived linearly but understood recursively.

Therefore, one may say, Dubus tells his story in a focused, linear fashion but makes it make sense and persuades us of its truth by using flashbacks to anticipate a character's decisions and choices that lead to his or her entrapment and to allow the dramatic impact to build inevitably. While the nature of their entrapment can be partially understood in terms of social issues and concerns, readers take pleasure in the structured development of the fiction, the arrangement of the events that move the characters to fulfill the destinies of their histories and their characters, their "fates" one might say. Thus we respond to Dubus's skill of imitation, of mimesis, that makes not only the surface of their actions realistic but also makes the acts themselves credible and inevitable. Their actions are rhythmic, indeed comprising a kind of dance as they move toward the house and each other and then away, coming together in a final, cataclysmic collision that destroys harmony and in its effects wipes out three families. Only Kathy and Lester are left to tell the tale, and they have neither the freedom nor the capacity to do so.

This fiction also reinforces a normative order and establishes a valuation of motives, goals, and actions. Dubus also suggests strongly that all ill-conceived, alcohol-impaired, or emotionally disturbed responses to societal acts, in this case bureaucratic mistakes, will result in destruction. In this case, that destruction comes at the hands of other agents of the same government that made the inciting mistake in the first place, whether in support of a bloody Iranian dictator or of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department.

The growing importance of the theme of order over disorder and even over justice is one of the surprises of this book. Dubus's plot would appear to argue that society, although crippled and rife with error, must be preserved essentially as it is, the equilibrium of the status quo much to be desired over the chaos of sexual passion, correction of clerical error, marital fidelity, and human kindness and compassion. That these conclusions may be repellent is no argument against the compelling merit of this book. Perhaps it is to argue no more than that human life, regardless of the political system, is messy and full of error.

Two of Dubus's characters, Kathy and Colonel Behrani, speak in the first person telling their parts of the story; Dubus also reveals their characters via their actions, which are sometimes related internally and sometimes through the observations of the authorial observer. We also learn much about them from their speech to other characters, both major and minor, and their interior monologues. Lester, however, is revealed only



through his actions, including his speech as well as via the narrator's awareness of what he is thinking. We hear his voice as he speaks with Kathy and Behrani.

Dubus has commented usefully on some aspects of his authorial technique in an interview with bookreporter.com writer Liz Keuffer, noting that "The colonel begins in the present tense. [Kathy's] in past tense. I heard his voice in first person present, hers in first person past. There is a limited subjective narrator. . . . Voices and points of view are very intuitive. I wait for the sound to come" (2000). Dubus says in the interview that a writer must hear the characters speaking in their voices to enter into the mysteries of things, especially the mysteries of human beings and why they act the way they do. When he hears their voices, then he is drawn to discover as much as he can about them. In making his discoveries he has created three memorable and tragic characters, each of whom has been damaged in some significant way by past experiences. Colonel Behrani is, of the three, perhaps the most admirable because he is completely dedicated to the survival and comfort of his family whereas Lester seems able to give up his family and his career to "care for" Kathy Lazaro. Dubus lets us see the images that both men have in their minds of scenes from the past, scenes that involve women who were deeply connected with them and who suffered pain and death.

Dubus appears to be arguing for the strong, perhaps inescapable consequences of memory and emotion on the capacities of his characters (and most of humankind?) to act. Memory and emotion trump rationality.

Thus, Dubus's principal technique, it is clear, is to find characters who interest him, "listen" to them, put them and their stories together in various ways, and then see what happens. He believes it important not to plot things out first but to discover what his characters do and think, what trouble they get into, and how they get out of it—or fail in the attempt. He is clearly a novelist of character, believing that plot develops organically out of character. In the same bookreporter.com interview, Dubus said, "I love this quote from Jane Burroway, 'Plot is how we arrange the causal sequence of events that make up a story.' I generally take two, three, to four years to write the story, then months more arranging it and putting the parts in sequence. You have to cooperate with the truth of a piece" (2000).



Themes

Appearances and Realities

The novel though begins with Behrani living a double life: he leaves home well dressed-then changes clothes and goes to work picking up trash for the Highway Department by day, acting as a convenience store clerk by night...then he changes back and returns home well dressed. His wife Nadi thinks that maintaining the appearance of wealth is essential to their daughter's finding a wealthy husband (indeed, such a marriage occurred shortly before the novel begins). Kathy also tries to keep up appearances by not telling her mother that Nick has left her, pretending that everything is fine, which in a way she thinks it is, when she and Lester fall in love-but things are certainly not all right in the way she leads her mother to believe. Appearances are also changed by the fog, which obscures even the most familiar objects close at hand, and comes and goes independent of human activity. Appearances are also masked or changed when Nadereh, Behrani notices, starts using cosmetics again after moving out of the \$3,000-per-month Berkeley apartment into the more ordinary Corona house. And Kathy, when her eyes look strained from lack of sleep, applies a little eyeliner to disguise her tiredness. At one point, Kathy appears to be dead after Behrani chokes her and drags what he thinks is her lifeless body into her car. The cruelest illusion, though, occurs near the end of the novel, after Lester, Esmail, and Behrani have left the white car and are walking toward the tax office: Esmail grabs Lester's gun and Behrani yells for someone to call the police; the police are summoned and they subsequently shoot and kill "the gunman," Esmail. Only Lester had known that the gun was not loaded. Thus, Esmail dies for nothing.

The American Dream and the Westward Migration

Kathy Nicolo's father, a man born of an Italian immigrant family, ran a linen business on the east coast of the U.S. He left Kathy and Frank a house in on its west coast. Kathy and her new husband Nick travel west in their Bonneville (as an interesting sidenote, a Captain James Bonneville was used by one of the first explorers of the U.S. Rocky Mountain West). Kathy and Nick migrate to their new west coast home, making the crossing in a one-week nonstop trip. Kathy's memory of the trip is somewhat blurred-for example, when she imagines that the car was on cruise-control the entire trip (cars, of course, kick out of cruise-or burn up their motors-going up steep hills, like the Rocky Mountains).

Massoud Behrani had also migrated west. The first part of his journey was in a bulletproof limousine through the back alleys of the burning streets to his military base, where, as planned, his copilot had the engines of the plane they were going to steal already turned on. Behrani flies west first to Bahrain, then Paris, and, finally, California.



The American Dream and Home Ownership

Kathy finds out how tenuous is the dream of home ownership. Through no fault of her own, she is evicted from her legally owned home by a bureaucratic clerical error (the tax office was seeking payment for the house on Biscove Street, not Bisgrove Street). Although Kathy cannot afford a lawyer, she is assisted by a Legal Aid lawyer, paid for by the state. Although Kathy's lawyer has filed suit against the county whose tax office made the error, Kathy has nowhere to go after she is evicted and, were it not for Lester's help, would become homeless. Behrani sees an ad in the legal section of a newspaper for the auction of the Corona house; he gets the house for \$45,000, paying in full, first with a \$10,000 certified check drawn on the Bank of America and then with cash. Although he moves his family into the house immediately, he plans to sell it and quadruple his investment.

The American Dream and the Rule of Law

Kathy, who cleans houses for a living, has a competent Legal Aid lawyer (Behrani pays his lawyer \$300). The police department has a Division of Internal Affairs (to monitor the police themselves); knowing this, it does not take long for Behrani to suspect that the tax office had not sent an armed policeman to interrogate him—surely this wouldn't happen in the United States, where there is no SAVAK. After Lester's visit as "Officer Gonzalez," Behrani reasons that, since this is the United States, he shouldn't expect the military to arrive on his doorstep in the dead of night, especially since Behrani hadn't broken any rules. He had the \$10,000 Bank of America check with him when he arrived at the auction; he then paid off the balance of the auctioned amount in full. He confirms his reasoning with a lawyer, who calls the Police Department for him, and then files a complaint at the Hall of Justice building. The California police department's Office of Internal Affairs contrasts with SAVAK, the Iranian Shah's secret police. Behrani—who, it is intimated, maintained an extravagant lifestyle off the backs of his fellow Iranians—distances himself from the armed thugs who torture and kill others at someone's whim (at least, he protests by socially snubbing General Pourat's nephew). However, Behrani was sufficiently high on the imperial ladder (as Pourat had reminded him, he and SAVAK were on the same side) to have his name placed on the ayatollahs' "death list."

The rule of law is also contrasted with the law of the mob: Behrani frequently remembers his old friend and commanding officer, General Pourat, hanging from his feet above the tarmac, blood still dripping from his sleeves, his murdered family around him. Since the Shah's regime was the puppet government of the United States, it is expected that Behrani became a U.S. citizen after having been granted asylum by the U.S. government. And, as the reader discovers, the rule of the mob is not necessarily different in effect than even trained police officers wanting to do good (but who are as error-prone as the rest of humankind). It is not just SAVAK that contrasts with the California legal system: Behrani frequently remembers the murder of his cousin Jasmine (by her father's gun, held down by her elder brother, for having had an affair with a U.S. oil executive, a scandal which became public knowledge). Although Behrani



hated his uncle for murdering Jasmineen, no one punished the uncle: at that time, it was his right to do so in Iran, to preserve the honor of the family name. Behrani strikes his wife Nadereh on several occasions, though he does not though take pleasure in it (and tells his son Esmail that doing so is wrong and to not behave like him). There is also the California domestic violence law described by Lester: a woman defending herself with her fists against a man trying to stab her with a knife would also be charged. Although Behrani thinks at one point that he has killed Kathy, he does so only because Lester loves her. And, ironically, he, at least at some level, kills his wife because he really loves her, as he had loved his son Esmail. The author contrasts the California legal system with past imperialism of the U.S. federal government in the form of the rule of the Shaw of Iran; Jasmineen's affair with a U.S. oil executive; Behrani's gun, a gift from a U.S. defense contractor; Lester's wife Carol's college passion to travel the world with a camera and notebook to document American imperialism wherever she found it; and Pourat's nephew, who said he learned the best techniques-dismembering children in front of their parents-in the U.S.

The American Dream and Justice

Justice does not prevail in this novel, because no amount of good intentions suffice. Lester muddles through Part II of the book, blinded initially by his love for Kathy and later, at least in part, from lack of sleep and anger at the chasm between Kathy's and Behrani's relative capitol assets. He is blinded ultimately though, because he is a military man: for example, he fears the Colonel isn't taking him seriously; he didn't think the Colonel's pride would allow this to slide; he doesn't move out of Behrani's line of vision when he's parallel parking because doing so would be simple courtesy.

Some might deem it poetic justice where this Iranian military man was terrorized, although he had done nothing wrong: his fate was not totally dissimilar to those attracting SAVAK's attention, and he apparently lived ostentatiously at the expense of others (in the general way that totalitarian countries function, with the few dictating all material rewards to the many). Behrani also at one time wonders whether his fate is not the inevitable consequence of his life near the top of the imperial heap. Some would deem the events that unfold horrifyingly in Part II of the book to be "mischance": Behrani bought the house because it was up for auction, not to hurt Kathy. He had the cash and knew it was a good deal. Kathy overdosed on sleeping pills, because they were available in the medicine cabinet. The officers shooting Esmail did not know the gun he was holding was not loaded. Some would attribute the lack of justice to bureaucratic ineptitude: Behrani would have never purchased the house if San Mateo County had not erroneously auctioned it off for back-taxes, and Kathy would not have been evicted from what was rightly hers. Both have a legal and legitimate claim to the Corona street house. In the sense that the function of the rule of law is to arbitrate in conflicts (which this most certainly is), Lester's suggestion would have been brilliant had he thought of it sooner (his idea was that Behrani sell the house back to San Mateo County, which admitted its error, for the full amount he paid, and sign the check over to Kathy, who would then give him clear deed to the house). It was a legal compromise that could have worked, but things went so wrong.



Justice prevails here only to punish the perpetrators in the aftermath. Lester is in prison and will remain there for many years, as will Kathy, who didn't really do anything illegal—except for drunken driving. Justice, though, does prevail in an ironic twist on the American dream: Behrani, although struggling, is wealthy enough that the reader can conclude that money is insufficient to purchase justice.

The drive to provide a home for one's family is central among the themes and social issues explored in *House of Sand and Fog*. The title is instructive, because the two images of "sand" and "fog" perfectly symbolize the ironies inherent in the actions of the characters as they seek to satisfy this basic drive. Each of the three principal characters—Kathy Nicola Lazaro, Colonel Behrani, and Lester Burdon—wants the security of a home, the experience of a family, a position in the community. The situation of each is similar at the beginning of the novel; each is experiencing a serious dislocation, a wrenching separation from the home that he or she had previously had.

Although the particulars of each person's situation are different, at the center of each is a gaping psychological void of such dimension that each character is essentially hollow and thus terribly fragile. Consequently, each makes choices that, instead of leading to the desired goal of home, family, and security, result in cumulative disasters that echo those of ancient Greek tragedy.

As the Greeks put it, the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, and the "house," the palace, the family is brought down as these fundamentally good but flawed people find their fates intersecting in this house of fog and sand.

At the center of the novel is a cluster of social issues and values that define the theme of the American dream. Stated positively, the dream includes a loving marriage, a home of one's own, a decent job in which one feels useful and respected, and the ability to provide security for one's posterity, and being, consequently, justly proud of his or her position both within the family and in the community. In addition to these external values there are a related set of values that are more internal, such as the desire for happiness, for love, for the strength to cope with the problems that arise in life.

These are some of the novel's issues, but what makes them powerful is, of course, their embodiment within the lives of five particular people, each of whom is caught inexorably in a web of the consequences of their actions in both the past and the present. And the house itself, the house of sand and fog, is physically and symbolically at the center, the stage on which their fates are worked out.

The house itself not only appears and disappears in the famous fog of the San Francisco Bay area, it also exists in the psychological fog of means and motives.

Furthermore, its foundations are clearly based on "sand," an allusion surely to scriptural admonitions to avoid building one's house on a foundation of sand. The foundations of one's life must, the book argues, be solid. One must build (or acquire) a house based upon a bedrock of character, of morality, of truthfulness and honor. Otherwise, catastrophe and chaos result. While Dubus does not state this theme with such inartistic

baldness, the movements of the plot and the lives of the characters combine to make it clear.



Style

Point of View

The story is told from the first person in three voices: those of Kathy, Behrani, and Lester.

Setting

Late August to early September, 1993; inside and around the house at 34 Bisgrove Street, Corona, California, United States of America.

Language and Meaning

This book is written primarily in English (certain conversations are in Farsi). This book contains numerous imperative statements or commands: Behrani used to utter commands after he'd drunk too much, just to show who was in charge. Nadi orders him out of the bathroom after she says Kathy must "lose her stomach." There are also the numerous commands Lester issues after he has broken into the Corona house, initially fearing for Kathy's safety. And Behrani commands someone in the crowd to call the police after Esmail grabs Lester's gun. However, he finally finds himself at a loss for words and cannot tell Nadi that her son is dead.

Structure

House of Sand and Fog is divided into two parts: Behrani and Kathy take turns telling Part I of the book (the first chapter is Behrani's and the second Kathy's: they alternate, each becoming an increasing part of the other's daily life). At the end of the last unnumbered section in Part I, Kathy is lying passed out in Esmail's bed, rescued from her car by Behrani. At the beginning of Part II, Kathy takes an overdose of sleeping pills (and is rescued by Nadi). The unnumbered sections in Part II alternate primarily between the voices of Behrani and Lester (Kathy is passed out until near the end: she speaks in the last section, from inside prison).



Quotes

"Of course, all the best aerocompanies are here in California but in four years I have spent hundreds of dollars copying my credentials; I have worn my French suits and my Italian shoes to hand-deliver my qualifications; I have waited and then called back after the correct waiting time; but there is nothing." Part 1, Section 1, p. 17.

"My hangover had settled deep and black into me." Part 1, Section 26, p. 180.

"I stood in the cafe, not knowing if I wanted to eat something or not, but on the sound system was that meditative new age music, this very steady rising and falling of computerized notes that had all the rhythm of the respirator beside my father's hospital bed just before he died." Part 1, Section 31, p. 200.

"Usually most of them spoke in slogans, the kind of language you see on military recruiting posters on bulletin boards in community colleges: I want to make a difference. I need to make a contribution. I don't know, I feel the need to serve." Part 1, Section 34, p. 235.

"And so she began to talk, and talk, unloading three history courses worth of news: the United States Marines being sent into Nicaragua in the early thirties to kill hungry peasants for United Fruit, the CIA killing the elected leader of Iran in 1953 for oil fields for the Rockefellers, the U.S. government supporting the fourteen murderous families who own all of the land of El Salvador. She talked and talked, her cheeks flushed red, her voice getting raspy. Lester finally sat on the ground next to the table, listening, feeling he was in the presence of someone he hadn't seen in a long, long time, someone who was as easily outraged by the unfairness of things as he." Part 2, Section 34, p. 238.



Key Questions

Several areas of inquiry may be especially fruitful of excellent discussions. Classic (Sophoclean/Aristotelian) ideas of human tragedy and responsibility; the experience as represented in fiction of recent immigrants in the United States, especially those from Southeast Asia, Iran, the Balkans, and other areas of the world torn by war and revolution, especially those in which the U.S. has had a hand; the condition of single women, especially recovering substance abusers. In each of these general areas, the questions of individual responsibility and the consequences of one's actions seem dominant. While society exerts pressure on individuals, minorities such as recent immigrants and women have struggled to achieve acceptance and success in the United States, but often at great costs and often with serious but unintended consequences for the individual and his or her family and community. In addition, the very idea of "home" as in "homeland" as well as in "this is my home" is powerfully present in much of human experience.

1. Is Colonel Behrani a tragic figure? Explain why or why not. Is he a victim of prejudice based on race, gender, age? What is the relationship between the actions he takes and the various forms of societal and individual prejudice that he experiences? Is Behrani ultimately responsible for his fate?
2. Is Dubus's virtual aside that the tax office had been sending the notices to the wrong street intended to absolve Kathy Lazaro of responsibility for losing her house or is it intended to reflect the inability of bureaucracies to respond in a human-being fashion to real problems or is this event simply a convenient one for Dubus to use as an inciting incident and not useful as a critique of American society?
3. Much is made in the novel about guilt of various kinds. Identify and analyze the causes and consequences of guilt as Dubus embodies it in various characters. What uncorrectable act or event does each of the three main characters feel guilty about? How does that guilt affect his or her actions within the plot?
4. Is Sheriff Lester Burdon simply a sexual predator who uses his position of authority to take advantage of women in distress, or does he genuinely care for Kathy? Does his leaving Carol and his children demonstrate weakness and make an ironic comment on his father's having left Lester's mother and the children? Is Lester simply repeating the model provided by his father? Relate this question to that of plot models for this novel to be found in classical Greek drama.
5. Research the phenomenon of "forced" immigration into the United States in the late twentieth century. What differences have existed among the economic, educational, and cultural status of the various groups? What other novels, especially by immigrant authors, have examined this issue? Have some groups been able to assimilate and acquire the trappings of cultural membership (jobs, positions, home ownership, comfort) more easily than others? What are the most fundamental social issues today that are



related to immigrants and immigration? Does racism play a role in the difficulties of some groups to attain their goals?

6. Dubus raises the issues of poor education, substance abuse, the interrelationships among various addictive substances, and various modes of addictive therapy. Research the question thoroughly enough to form a supportable opinion about the kinds of therapy most effective and those least effective. Is Kathy Lazaro's diminished capacity because of drugs and alcohol exculpatory or is it merely one more element that arouses our pity and fear in good Aristotelian fashion?

7. Discuss Dubus's use of different points of view in the novel. Find other novels with multiple and different technical narrative points of view and compare their use with Dubus's use in this novel.

What are the advantages? What are the disadvantages?

8. Analyze Dubus's use of allusion, imagery, and "atmospherics" (nighttimes, the lake, seedy motels) to advance his themes and develop his characters.

9. Dubus argues that his fictions are character driven. Analyze the relationship among plot, character, and theme(s).

Which of these elements seems to you to be the most important? Why?



Topics for Discussion

Is Behrani a racist? For example, he reminds the other immigrants (from China, Vietnam, and Panama) on his garbage crew that, in his country, he could order them all flogged (and he always calls Mendez a "pig"). He at one point thinks that Americans don't deserve America (such opportunities as the U.S. offers are taken by immigrants, he says, because the native-born Americans are watching their televisions). He is repulsed that his uncle, who had murdered his cousin Jasmeen, had acted like a peasant. He tells Kathy she is unworthy even to raise her eyes to him.

Is Kathy a racist? She mentions "Mr. Bahrooni," the "Mideastern prick," the "Arab woman," "Mr. Barmeeny," and "Mrs. Bahroony." She is glad that Behrani will become "Middle Eastern history." She does not give Nadi-the woman who so compassionately saved her life-what seemed to be the absolute answer to her question, by emptying her pockets to show that Lester cannot shoot Esmail, because his gun is empty (Kathy only says to Nadi that Esmail will be fine).

Is Lester a racist? He refers to Behrani as that "rich prick" and once called Esmail "Ishmael."

Why does Esmail feel sorry for "that lady"? Why does Nadi offer up compassion to Kathy by saving her life?

Why do Esmail and Nadi die? Are their deaths different from Behrani's?

Behrani is the only character to express any kind of religious thinking. Does that make his death less tragic?

Does Behrani believe in the rule of law in the U.S.? At the beginning of the novel, he is flummoxed by how in his country crazy people are hospitalized but in America they roam freely like sheep. Near the end of the novel, he wants someone to call the police.

Whose rules did he follow when he was Colonel in the Shah's Imperial Airforce? Why do his thoughts return repeatedly to Pourat and Jasmeen?

Why does Kathy, when thinking about herself as a daughter, feel her body "too filthy to inhabit"? Why is she glad to have that prison window between herself and her mother?

?? ?? ?? ??

Literary Precedents

Dubus has publicly praised such books as Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*, William Kennedy's *Ironweed*, Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*, and Larry Brown's *Father and Son*. But if one looks for books that, because of their tragic view of life, may have engendered in some way *House of Sand and Fog*, several candidates come to mind from the vast library of nineteenth- and twentieth-century long fictions.

Thomas Hardy's view of implacable fate may, in fact, be closer to Dubus's than just about any other writer. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure*, and *The Return of the Native* all examine the unforeseen consequences of untidy passions on plans and desires for a secure home, a position in society, a satisfactory income, and a loving, whole family.

Like Hardy, Dubus is skillful in arranging the incidents of his plot so that the actions close inexorably around the struggling human figures on his dark canvas. And of course novels as technically different from each other as Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Philip Roth's *The Human Stain* deal with the idea of one's fate resulting from one's character, choices, and circumstance to such a degree that it seems inevitable.



Related Titles

Dubus's *Bluesman* (1969) is a coming-of-age novel set in the summer of 1967 when Leo Suther is about to turn eighteen.

Everyone—father, girlfriend, her father— has something to teach Leo. Important instruction comes from Ryder, a family friend, who wants to show Leo the magic of the blues harp, the harmonica. But perhaps the most important instruction comes from his mother's poems and diaries, her voice coming to him over the thirteen years since her death, a crucial testimony of her love for Leo. Dubus's second book was *The Cage Keeper and Other Stories* (1989).



Copyright Information

Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Editor - Kirk H. Beetz, Ph.D.

Library of Congress
Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Includes bibliographical references.

Summary: A multi-volume compilation of analytical essays on and study activities for fiction, nonfiction, and biographies written for young adults.

Includes a short biography for the author of each analyzed work.

1. Young adults—Books and reading. 2. Young adult literature—History and criticism. 3.

Young adult literature—Bio-bibliography. 4. Biography—Bio-bibliography.

[1. Literature—History and criticism. 2. Literature—Bio-bibliography]

I. Beetz, Kirk H., 1952

Z1037.A1G85 1994 028.1'62 94-18048 ISBN 0-933833-32-6

Copyright ©, 1994, by Walton Beacham. All rights to this book are reserved. No part of this work may be used or reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or in any information or storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. For information, write the publisher, Beacham Publishing, Inc., 2100 "S" Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

Printed in the United States of America First Printing, November 1994