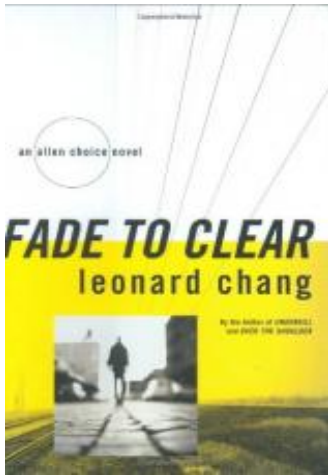


Fade to Clear: An Allen Choice Novel

by Leonard Chang



About the Book

In this new installment, Allen Choice, now a full partner at Baxter & Choice Investigations, finds his life in upheaval by the reappearance of his ex-lover Linda. Over the objections of his current girlfriend Serena, Allen reluctantly takes on the case of finding Linda's niece, who was abducted by her father in a bitter divorce battle.

Fade to Clear is Leonard Chang's most electrifying and riveting crime novel, following the critically acclaimed successes of **Underkill** and **Over the Shoulder**.

As Allen delves deeper into the investigation, unearthing links to drug smuggling and money laundering, he becomes the target of larger, deadlier forces that strike a tragic blow. In the wake of personal loss, he compels himself forward in this perilous case and at the same time makes profound decisions that will reverberate throughout his life.

Once again, Chang weaves a masterful tale that is as much an edgy, fast-paced mystery as it is a deep look into the complex interior life of Allen Choice, a fallible and human character who is quickly becoming a truly memorable name in the world of noir.

Discussion Guide

1. In the opening chapters of the novel there's an extended section on Allen as a nine-year-old. Why do you think the author give us this, and how is it relevant to the rest of the novel? How does it tie into the ending?
2. The novel is written in the third-person point-of-view, and in the present tense. What do you think of this authorial choice, and how did it affect your reading, if at all? What other novels are written in this style? What are the benefits and disadvantages for this approach?

3. The philosophy of Kierkegaard is a thread that runs throughout the narrative. What did you think of Allen's preoccupation with this, and how did it affect your reading and understanding of Allen's character?
4. How did Allen arrive at his conclusions about the communal sphere? Do you agree or disagree with his sentiments? Why?
5. How did the reappearance of Linda cause problems for Allen? Would your reaction have been different had you been Allen? How did you feel about Serena's reaction to Linda's presence?
6. How are the events and issues of Allen's childhood related to his adulthood? Are there childhood events that similarly reverberate into your adulthood, and how would these reverberations manifest themselves?
7. What did you think of Larry's actions in this novel? Were they understandable? Sympathetic? Objectionable?
8. The various relationships in this novel are often strained in various ways. Which relationships did you find the most interesting? How were these relationships strained, if at all, and how did this affect the relationships?
9. How were the issues of race and ethnicity relevant to some of these relationships?
10. Why is the title **Fade to Clear**?
11. Where do you think the story and characters go on from here?
12. If you've read the previous two novels of the Allen Choice series, how has he changed and developed? What aspects of his personality haven't changed?

Author Bio

Leonard Chang was born in New York City and studied philosophy at Dartmouth College and Harvard University. He received his MFA from the University of California at Irvine, and is the author of four previous novels: **The Fruit 'N Food**, **Dispatches from the Cold**, **Over the Shoulder**, and **Underkill**. He was recently the Distinguished Visiting Writer at Mills College and is on the faculty at Antioch University's MFA Program in Los Angeles. His short stories have been published in literary journals such as *Prairie Schooner* and *Confluence*. He lives in the San Francisco Bay Area, and is working on a new Allen Choice novel.

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