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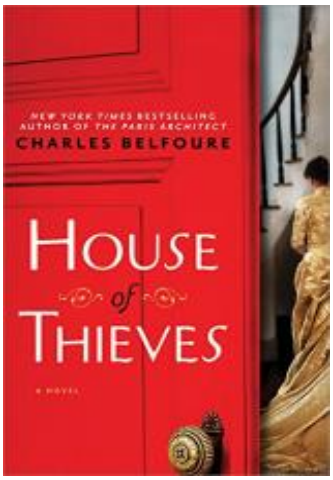
House of Thieves

by Charles Belfoure



About the Book

From the *New York Times* bestselling author of THE PARIS ARCHITECT

Could you do the wrong things if you had the right reasons?

When architect John Cross?s son racks up a dangerous gambling debt to the wrong gang, Cross finds himself far away from gilded upper-crust parlors. Deep in the world of desperation and deception, Cross must use his inside knowledge of high-society mansions and museums to craft a robbery even the smartest detectives can?t solve.

With a newfound talent for sniffing out vulnerable --- and lucrative --- targets, Cross becomes invaluable to the gang. But Cross?s entire life has become a balancing act, and it will take only one mistake for it all to come crashing down.

Discussion Guide

1. In order to save his family, John Cross must do something he finds morally reprehensible. Would you resort to criminality to save your family from death?

2. This is a story about the double lives a family chooses to live. Which was your favorite?

3. Until 1914, Americans could ingest any drug they wanted, including dangerous drugs that are outlawed today. What did you think of Granny?s preference for opium?

4. James T. Kent, a well-bred gentleman from a wealthy family, is a cold-blooded killer and gets an almost sexual satisfaction from committing crimes. Was he a compelling villain?

5. New York high society had a very strict code of behavior that one had to obey or be banished. What did you think of that code? Why did that code devolve into the less-stringent rules of behavior we have today?

6. How does poverty in America today compare with that portrayed in the Gilded Age in New York City?

7. Homelessness is a great concern in our cities today. What did you think of the fact that about 20,000 children roamed the streets of New York in the 1880s?

8. Cross?s children form friendships with people they normally would never come into contact with. What did you like about Julia and Nolan?s friendship? Charlie and Eddie?s? George and Kitty?s?

9. George?s gambling addiction was the source of all the troubles. How did you feel about George and his illness? Were you angry with him?

10. Cross was devastated when he learned of his son?s secret. What would you as a parent have been thinking and feeling?

Author Bio

Charles Belfoure is the international bestselling author of THE PARIS ARCHITECT, HOUSE OF THIEVES and THE FALLEN ARCHITECT, and is an architect by profession, with a specialty in historical preservation. He graduated from the Pratt Institute and Columbia University, has been a freelance writer for the *Baltimore Sun* and the *New York Times*, and has written several architectural histories.

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