



The Colonel: A Novel

Mahmoud Dowlatabadi

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Winner of the 2013 Jan Michalski Prize

Longlisted for the Man Asian Literary Prize

A new novel by the master of Iranian letters that directly engages politics in Iran today

Ten years in the writing, this fearless novel—so powerful it's banned in Iran—tells the stirring story of a tortured people forced to live under successive oppressive regimes.

It begins on a pitch black, rainy night, when there's a knock on the Colonel's door. Two policemen have come to summon him to collect the tortured body of his youngest daughter. The Islamic Revolution is devouring its own children. Set over the course of a single night, the novel follows the Colonel as he pays a bribe to recover his daughter's body and then races to bury her before sunrise.

As we watch him struggle with the death of his innocent child, we find him wracked with guilt and anger over the condition of his country, particularly as represented by his own children: a son who fell during the 1979 revolution; another driven to madness after being tortured during the Shah's regime; a third who went off to martyr himself fighting for the ayatollahs in their war against Iraq; one murdered daughter, and another who survives by being married to a cruel opportunist.

An incredibly powerful novel about nation, history and family, *The Colonel* is a startling illumination of the consequences of years of oppression and political upheaval in Iran.

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