



Courtship, Valentine's Day, 1918: Three Plays from the Orphans' Home Cycle (Foote, Horton)

By Horton Foote

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This is the central volume in Horton Foote's remarkable nine-play Orphans' Home Cycle, in which the author chronicles the evolution of a family—the strengths that bind its members together and the strains that force them apart—and the cataclysmic changes in Southern society over twenty-six turbulent years. Beginning in 1902 with the death of the protagonist's father—a loss that sends twelve-year-old Horace Robedaux on an odyssey to the darkest corners of the heart—and ending in 1928 with another momentous funeral, Foote traces a lineage of loss and regeneration.

Caught in a conflict as old as society itself, Elizabeth Vaughn is at once drawn and propelled toward Horace Robedaux. The proud and wealthy Vaughns frown on their daughter's love for the orphaned clothing salesman, but the revolving mirrors of time turn and turn about, and both the Vaughns and the newly married Robedauxs are tested not only by their pride but also by the shadows of death and disease, and the more subtle pressures of their family's and their society's future.

The Orphans' Home Cycle (a title based on a poem by Marianne Moore) is a unique series of plays spanning thirty years in the lives of its central characters. Moving and complete as individual plays, the entire cycle is a panoramic and penetrating picture of American society during a crucial period in our history.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Foote is a major American playwright. His disappearance from the Hollywood establishment after his 1963 Oscar for the screenplay of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, marks the start of work on his cycle of nine plays called *The Orphan's Home*. These plays are set in small town Texas between the turn of the century and 1928. They are loosely based on Foote's family and follow the marriage of Horace Robedaux and Elizabeth Vaughan through the turmoil of World War I, social and economic struggle, and alcoholism, insanity, and epidemic. The three plays anthologized here are the sixth, seventh, and eighth in the cycle. Their stage language is lyrical realism, which builds quietly to a depth of feeling and insight that rivals O'Neill at his best.

Recommended. Thomas E. Luddy, English Dept., Salem State Coll., Mass.

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About the Author

Horton Foote

Foote is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Pulitzer Prize, an Emmy, an Outer Critics Circle Award, and induction into the Theatre Hall of Fame.

Price attended North Carolina schools and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Duke University.

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