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Exiles in the Garden

Ward Just

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Exiles in the Garden

Ward Just

Exiles in the Garden Ward Just
"One of the most astute writers of American fiction" (*New York Times Book Review*) delivers the resonant story of Alec Malone, a senator's son who rejects the family business of politics for a career as a newspaper photographer. Alec and his Swiss wife, Lucia, settle in Georgetown next door to a couple whose émigré gatherings in their garden remind Lucia of all the things Americans are not. She leaves Alec as his career founders on his refusal of an assignment to cover the Vietnam War — a slyly subversive fictional choice from Ward Just, who was himself a renowned war correspondent.

At the center of the novel is Alec's unforeseen reckoning with Lucia's long-absent father, Andre Duran, a Czech living out the end of his life in a hostel called Goya House. Duran's career as an adventurer and antifascist commando is everything Alec's is not. The encounter forces Alec to confront just how different a life where things — "terrible things, terrible things" — happen is from a life where nothing much happens at all.

Once again, "Ward Just writes the kind of books they say no one writes anymore: smart, well-crafted narratives — wise to the ways of the world — that use fiction to show us how we live" (Joseph Kanon, *Los Angeles Times*).

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