



White Dog Fell from the Sky: A Novel

By Eleanor Morse

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An extraordinary novel of love, friendship, and betrayal for admirers of Abraham Verghese and Edwidge Danticat

Eleanor Morse's rich and intimate portrait of Botswana, and of three people whose intertwined lives are at once tragic and remarkable, is an absorbing and deeply moving story.

In apartheid South Africa in 1976, medical student Isaac Muthethe is forced to flee his country after witnessing a friend murdered by white members of the South African Defense Force. He is smuggled into Botswana, where he is hired as a gardener by a young American woman, Alice Mendelssohn, who has abandoned her Ph.D. studies to follow her husband to Africa. When Isaac goes missing and Alice goes searching for him, what she finds will change her life and inextricably bind her to this sunburned, beautiful land.

Like the African terrain that Alice loves, Morse's novel is alternately austere and lush, spare and lyrical. She is a writer of great and wide-ranging gifts.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

When he sees his activist friend thrown under a train by the apartheid defense force in 1976, medical student Isaac Muthethe gets himself smuggled in a hearse across the border from South Africa to Botswana, where he finds work as a gardener for Alice Mendelssohn (Don't call me Madam), from Rhode Island, who is studying the cave paintings of the earliest humans, the ancient San people. Can Isaac get a letter to his mother in South Africa? Alice is in love with Ian, her English neighbor, whose secret mission is to cut cattle-farm wire fences so that wild animals can roam free and not perish for lack of water. Then Isaac is extradited and tortured. From the first page, the moving personal stories dramatize the big issues of ecology, politics, borders, race relations, art, and history. The rock art of the first nomadic peoples is beyond tourism. And the loss of thousands of wild animals left dying of thirst by fences put up to protect cattle ranches will strike a universal chord. --Hazel Rochman

Review

"*White Dog Fell From the Sky* catches the soul of compassion. It is one of the wisest, most comprehensive, most compelling books I've ever read. Neither human nor beast is treated sentimentally, but the capacity to care is celebrated here in a way that is politically and personally cogent. It's a wild and wooly story in a far away land, yet its relevance is present in our own imperfect hearts: who and how to love and when and why to stop. Here's the real thing, a book of genuine intellect and inspiration, superbly written, fascinating." - Sena Jeter Naslund, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Ahab's Wife*, *Abundance* and *Adam & Eve*

"Magic, friendship, the tragedy of apartheid and the triumph of loyalty are recounted in poetic, powerful prose by this unconventional and intelligent writer. Shattering and uplifting." —Kuki Gallmann, author of *I Dreamed of Africa*

"Eleanor Morse captures the magic of the African landscape and the terror and degradation of life under apartheid...[She] channels her fascination with the factious regions into her courageous characters, whose story roars along and arrives, finally, at hope." —O, *The Oprah Magazine*

"There are not enough adjectives to describe the strength of this story. Eleanor Morse has written a character driven novel with character. *White Dog Fell From the Sky* has a life of its own that blends reality, insight, observation, and nuance with such ease and grace you forget you are reading...A powerful story of love—love of a person, a people, a land and living with purpose...Emotionally riveting, heartbreaking, and at times unbearable, while simultaneously embracing hope, insight, and a sense of perpetual mystery. Each sentence is more beuatiful than the last." —Gabriel Constans, *New York Journal of Books*

"White Dog Fell from the Sky is that rare thing: a convinced and convincing love story. Past that—and this novel's reach is wide—it reminds us, tellingly, how Africa is mother of us all." —Madison Smartt Bell, author of *All Souls' Rising* and *The Color of Night*

"Big issues of ecology, politics, borders, race relations, art, and history." —Hazel Rochman, *Booklist*

"Morse brings the natural world of Botswana to vivid life."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Brutal and beautiful...it explores the strength and friendship, the bonds of love, and the inhumanity regimes are capable of inflicting upon individuals...Morse's unflinching portrayals of extremes of loyalty and cruelty make for an especially memorable novel."—*Publishers Weekly*

"Morse's descriptions of the vast landscapes of Botswana are specific and ravishing."—*BookPage*

"Lyrical and quite beautiful, with searing descriptions of the dusty earth, unforgiving sun, and stark skies."—*Entertainment Weekly*

"The infinite, healing power of love is put to the test...Morse writes heartbreakingly of isolation, loss, and the soul-deadening effect of torture. Her mesmerizing descriptions of Africa will leave readers wondering how a continent of such beauty can harbor so much evil...This is for readers unafraid to plumb the depths of human emotions."—*Library Journal*

"Breathtaking beauty, next to danger and hardships and make-do living...Witness it in all its terrible randomness."—*The Dallas Morning News*

"Eleanor Morse writes with sympathy and precision, sensitive to the dislocations of race and class – the grave imbalance of power...The book unfolds into stories both tragic and transcendent."—*Boston.com*

About the Author

Eleanor Morse is the author of *An Unexpected Forest*, which won the Independent Publisher's Gold Medalist Award for the Best Regional Fiction in the Northeast U.S., and was selected winner of Best Published Fiction by the Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance at the 2008 Maine Literary Awards. She lives on Peaks Island, Maine.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Francis Rutland:

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Walter Godinez:

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Loyd Tyler:

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