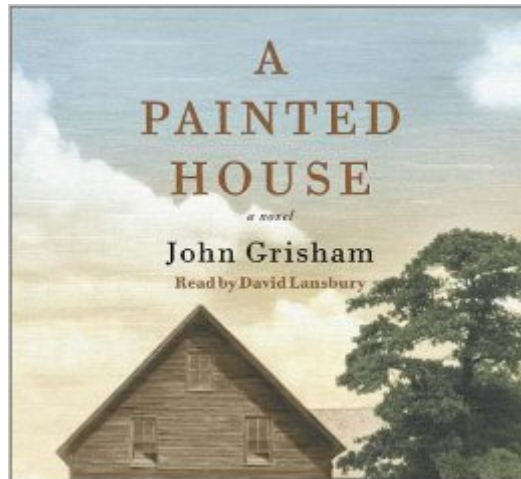


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# A Painted House (John Grisham)



## Synopsis

Five CDs, approx. 5 hrs. performance by David Lansbury  
The hill people and the Mexicans arrived on the same day. It was a Wednesday, early in September 1952. The Cardinals were five games behind the Dodgers with three weeks to go, and the season looked hopeless. The cotton, however, was waist-high to my father, over my head, and he and my grandfather could be heard before supper whispering words that were seldom heard. It could be a "good crop." Thus begins the new novel from John Grisham, a story inspired by his own childhood in rural Arkansas. The narrator is a farm boy named Luke Chandler, age seven, who lives in the cotton fields with his parents and grandparents in a little house that's never been painted. The Chandlers farm eighty acres that they rent, not own, and when the cotton is ready they hire a truckload of Mexicans and a family from the Ozarks to help harvest it. For six weeks they pick cotton, battling the heat, the rain, and fatigue, and, sometimes, each other. As the weeks pass Luke sees and hears things no seven-year-old could possibly be prepared for, and finds himself keeping secrets that not only threaten the crop but will change the lives of the Chandlers forever. **A PAINTED HOUSE** is a moving story of one boy's journey from innocence to experience.

## Book Information

Series: John Grisham

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1,670 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,068,852 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #44 in [Books > Books on CD >](#)

[Authors, A-Z > \( G \) > Grisham, John](#) #2022 in [Books > Books on CD > General](#) #2568

in [Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Unabridged](#)

## Customer Reviews

No, it is not the typical John Grisham suspense novel, but this book gave me a greater appreciation for Grisham and his writing abilities. **A PAINTED HOUSE** is a work of literary fiction that shows Grisham has a command of more than the tried and true lawyer/suspense formula and is darn good

at it. I have read some of the unfavorable reviews and have to guess that these are people who rarely venture out of the "reading comfort zone" of popular fiction. Grisham in suspense mode is great, as is Baldacci, Patterson and others. But, there is a whole other world of great writing and Grisham has dared to venture into the serious world of true-blue literary fiction. The story is narrated by seven year-old Luke Chandler, the son of an Arkansas family renting and farming in 1952 Arkansas. To say Luke "grows up" between the covers would be an understatement. Luke tells us a story of cotton pickers that will have you feeling every possible emotion, right along with young Luke. No, there are no slick lawyers or beautiful law students in A PAINTED HOUSE, but there ARE plenty of wonderful characters that come to life on the pages of this Grisham classic. To stay away from this John Grisham novel because it is not "typical" Grisham, would not be giving yourself enough credit for being able to appreciate a great author, and his work, because he is not writing something that is ready-for-the-screen. Trust the man who brought us THE FIRM, THE PELICAN BRIEF and others to keep you entertained in a different genre, to be sure, but entertained and mesmerized nonetheless. Do yourself a favor -- suspend your judgement about "literary fiction" -- and don't miss this one!!

As an ex-country boy, now living in the city, A Painted House really struck a chord with me. Farm life is tough. The people who live on farms have to be tougher or they won't survive. I felt John Grisham captured this observation beautifully. We look at cotton farming in Arkansas in the 1950s during harvest. We experience the many different apprehensions involved with this season. That of hiring hill folk and the Mexicans, what the weather will do, whether the price will be high or low, will the Cardinals have a winning season. The big strength of this book is the way the characters are brought to life so wonderfully. We experience their joys over simple pleasures such as sitting on the verandah listening to baseball, the loneliness of farm-life, despair of ever finishing harvest, wariness of the strangers employed, intermingled with the acceptance of the life they lead. Sure it's not what you'd normally expect from a Grisham book and yes, we're not glued to our seats with heart-hammering courtroom drama, but so what? We experience the drama of racing to bring the crop in, the troubles that come from mixing people of different backgrounds together, and life on the land as it was in the 1950s. I can't recommend this book highly enough for anyone who enjoys looking back on simpler times.

Luke is a wonderfully mischevious seven year old boy growing up in rural Arkansas during the time of the Korean War. He lives with his mother and father and his father's parents in a small unpainted

house on a farm. They are cotton farmers. When cotton picking time arrives, Luke's quota for the day is 50 pounds. This story is told through Luke's experiences of watching the adults worry about the weather, the price of cotton, hiring Mexicans and Hill People to help pick cotton and through his part in a struggling proud family who all live, work, and worry together. Any reader who has ever known a seven year old boy will love Luke as he narrates the hiring of the Mexicans and watches the hill people move in and camp in his front yard right over home plate. Luke's ambition is to grow up and become a baseball player for the Cardinals in St. Louis. As you read through the days of cotton picking and some difficult adult situations that Luke sees happen, you hope that all his dreams will come true and he will be able to get away from the hardships he has witnessed. Grisham does not need a courtroom and a chase scene to write a memorable book with characters that will come to mind again and again. I have enjoyed his legal thrillers, but *A Painted House* offers up a beautiful sensitivity that proves he can write just as well when he reaches out to a new format.

I have read every one of Grisham's books. You could call me a real fan. I read this book in *Oxford Magazine*, and I found only one fault in it. It was too short. Yes, it is much different than anything else he has written, but so what, it is a great, yes great book. I can't wait until my 15 year old daughter gets time to read it. I see it as a classic for almost any school kid. Told from the view of this 7 year old boy on a poor farm, it had me from page one, and while it was not a great thriller it was a great story that could not have sounded more real. Do yourself a big time favor and don't pass up this wonderfully told story.

I like many people first thought that this book was not going to be a good book. I mean, think about it, Grisham, not writing a Legal Thriller? That's his masterpiece work, why change? But you have to give this book a chance. I went out this morning and bought the book and just finished reading it. This book is definitely a book to add to your John Grisham collection. Even though sometimes it doesn't have same suspense of a legal thriller it has its' own way of maneuvering your mind to the extent that you can't put it down. This is another great book by John Grisham!

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