



The Tortilla Curtain

By T.C. Boyle

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T.C. Boyle's "compelling" (*The Chicago Tribune*) novel about assimilation and the price of the American dream

Topanga Canyon is home to two couples on a collision course. Los Angeles liberals Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher lead an ordered sushi-and-recycling existence in a newly gated hilltop community: he a sensitive nature writer, she an obsessive realtor. Mexican illegals Candido and America Rincon desperately cling to their vision of the American Dream as they fight off starvation in a makeshift camp deep in the ravine. And from the moment a freak accident brings Candido and Delaney into intimate contact, these four and their opposing worlds gradually intersect in what becomes a tragicomedy of error and misunderstanding.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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The Tortilla Curtain By T.C. Boyle Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #44061 in eBooks
- Published on: 1996-09-01
- Released on: 1996-09-01
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Boyle's latest concerns two couples in Southern California?one a pair of wealthy suburbanites, the other illegal immigrants from Mexico.

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From Library Journal

Go tell it in the valley: Boyle's newest novel is, according to the publicist, "a timely, provocative account" of immigration in central California. With a 100,000-copy first printing and a 25-city tour, you know the publisher expects this book to be big.

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From [Booklist](#)

PEN/Faulkner award winner and author of various novels, including *The Road to Wellville* (1993), Boyle avoids any potential pitfall of his prior achievement by veering in another direction and seriously examining social and political issues in this timely novel. He establishes an obvious dichotomy by interweaving the scrapping, makeshift, in-the-present lives of illegal aliens Ca{ }ndido and Ame{,}rica Rinco{¢}n with the politically correct, suburban, plan-for-the-future existence of wealthy Americans Delaney and Kyra Mossbacher. The Rinco{¢}ns' lives, though full of fear and hardship, contain far more passion and endurance than the Mossbachers' mundane and materialistic lifestyles. An initial, pivotal car accident briefly unites, and ultimately separates, Delaney and Ca{ }ndido, provoking question after question concerning immigration, unemployment, discrimination, and social responsibility. Surprisingly, Boyle manages to address these issues in a nonjudgmental fashion, depicting the vast inequity in these parallel existences. This highly engaging story subtly plays on our consciences, forcing us to form, confirm, or dispute social, political, and moral viewpoints. This is a profound and tragic tale, one that exposes not only a failed American Dream, but a failing America. *Janet St. John*

Users Review

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