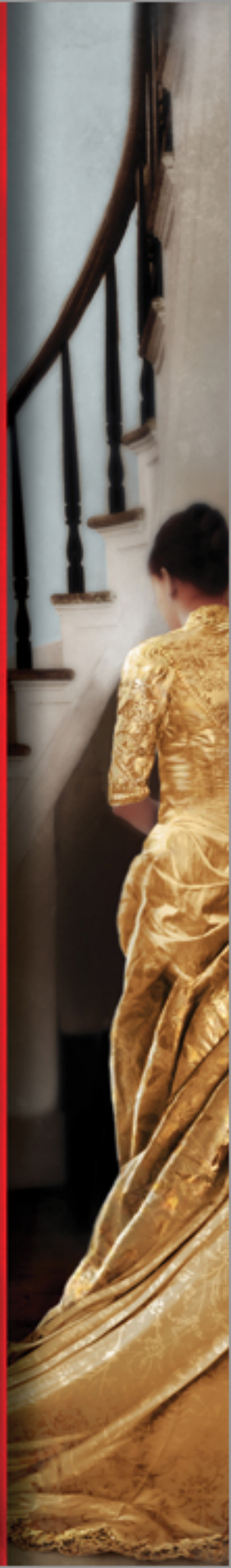


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING
AUTHOR OF *THE PARIS ARCHITECT*
CHARLES BELFOURE

HOUSE *of* THIEVES

A NOVEL



Reading Group Guide

1. In order to save his family, John Cross must do something he finds morally reprehensible. Would you resort to criminality to save your family from death?
2. This is a story about the double lives a family chooses to live. Which was your favorite?
3. Until 1914, Americans could ingest any drug they wanted, including dangerous drugs that are outlawed today. What did you think of Granny's preference for opium?
4. James T. Kent, a well-bred gentleman from a wealthy family, is a cold-blooded killer and gets an almost sexual satisfaction from committing crime. Was he a compelling villain?
5. New York high society had a very strict code of behavior that one had to obey or be banished. What did you think of that code? Why did that code devolve into the less-stringent rules of behavior we have today?
6. How does poverty in America today compare with that portrayed in the Gilded Age in New York City?

7. Homelessness is a great concern in our cities today. What did you think of the fact that about twenty thousand children roamed the streets of New York in the 1880s?
8. Cross's children form friendships with people they normally would never come into contact with. What did you like about Julia and Nolan's friendship? Charlie and Eddie's? George and Kitty's?
9. George's gambling addiction was the source of all the troubles. How did you feel about George and his illness? Were you angry with him?
10. Cross was devastated when he learned of his son's secret. What would you as a parent have been thinking and feeling?