



American Romantic

Ward Just

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“Ward Just is both a writer’s writer and an astute tracker of human souls under duplicity and duress . . . *American Romantic*, his eighteenth, is one of his finest.”—Gail Godwin, *New York Times Book Review*

Harry Sanders is a young Foreign Service officer in 1960s Indochina when a dangerous and clandestine meeting with insurgents—ending in quiet disaster—and a brief but passionate encounter with Sieglinde, a young German woman, alter the course of his life.

Absorbing the impact of his misstep, Harry returns briefly to Washington before eventual assignments in Africa, Scandinavia, and the Mediterranean. He marries the captivating May, who is fleeing her own family disappointments in worn-out upper New England and looking for an escape into Harry’s diplomatic life. On the surface, they are a handsome, successful couple—but the memory of Sieglinde persists in Harry’s thoughts, and May has her own secrets too. As Harry navigates the increasingly treacherous waters of diplomacy in an age of interminable conflict, he also tries to narrow the distance between himself and the two alluring women who have chosen to love him.

“Wise and elegiac recognition of the fading of American confidence and competence in ordering an unruly world . . . a sly parable of loss.”—*Wall Street Journal*

“An introspective novel . . . Wide-ranging and well-written, it may be Just’s finest work to date.”—*Christian Science Monitor*

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