

ABSTRACT

FRIDAY 10:03 (TWO-THIRDS OF A NOVEL)

The following thesis represents two-thirds of a yet-to-be completed novel. During September, 1966, California is preparing to execute Eusebio Viramontes, condemned under a “Little Lindberg” law for kidnap, robbery, and sexual assault. He has authored two books and become a *cause célèbre* during eleven years on Death Row. His sister Felicia, a film student at UCLA and weekend participant in the Delano Grape Pickers’ Strike, hopes to gain public sympathy for a reprieve, but she is hampered by pregnancy and a strained relationship with her boyfriend, Albert Brofield. In a separate thread, Philip Tseng was prosecutor at Eusebio’s trial. Now he is a superior court judge and husband of a candidate for state superintendent of schools. French-born and half-Chinese, he is facing mid-life self doubt. In his spiritual questioning, he is drawn to Tom Garcia, pacifist and a leader of the capital punishment abolition movement. Just as Felicia sets in motion a UFW-style march from San Quentin to Sacramento, both Felicia and Judge Tseng are visited by Anna Sorenson, once Eusebio’s kindergarten-aged victim. Though emotionally fragile, she claims forgiveness for Eusebio. The novel contains a cameo appearance by Episcopal Bishop James Pike and historical references to Cesar Chavez, Chinese expatriates in France, Charles De Gaulle, and Capital Punishment as it was practiced in mid-20th-century America.

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