



## A House Full of Windsor

**Kristin Contino**

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A hoarding matriarch throws a family into disarray in the endearing novel *A House Full of Windsor*.

Sarah delivers advice as the host of a beloved morning show segment in New York. When the ratings drop, she begins to have doubts about her future. Then, a family secret comes to light: Debbie, Sarah's mom, is a compulsive hoarder of British royal memorabilia, and her house becomes more of a hazard every day.

When Sarah's brother lands a job working for a reality show centered on helping hoarders, he suggests Debbie as the subject of an upcoming episode. But despite enduring injuries from moving about her home, Debbie refuses help. Each piece that she hoards is a memory, beginning from the time when Princess Diana captured her imagination.

Later, Debbie used collecting as a way to distract herself from her failed marriage, and from being forced to move from a haughty English estate to an unassuming Pennsylvania home to raise her three children alone. Each addition to her collection became a brick in the wall she built around herself, which also pushed her family away. And, because of their focus on the perception of perfection, the emotional distance between Sarah and Debbie grew.

While the show's attention offers an unexpected source of relief for Debbie, it also leads to upheavals. Debbie, Sarah, and their family confront what they've repressed, and family and romantic secrets bubble to the surface. And then a surprise romance suggests a potential future full of warmth, love, and the freedom to make mistakes.

As Sarah and Debbie sort out their pasts, their family drama becomes a lovely story of self-discovery. *A House Full of Windsor* is a life-affirming novel in which an epic collection of royal memorabilia and a reality show lead a family back toward love.

JOHN M. MURRAY (July / August 2021)

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