



Imagining Argentina

By Lawrence Thornton

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Imagining Argentina is set in the dark days of the late 1970's, when thousands of Argentineans disappeared without a trace into the general's prison cells and torture chambers. When Carlos Ruweda's wife is suddenly taken from him, he discovers a magical gift: In waking dreams, he had clear visions of the fates of "the disappeared." But he cannot "imagine" what has happened to his own wife. Driven to near madness, his mind cannot be taken away: imagination, stories, and the mystical secrets of the human spirit.

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Imagining Argentina By Lawrence Thornton Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This astonishingly proficient and gripping first novel should be required reading for anyone who calls him or herself a responsible citizen. Not only is it masterfully written, with images as sharp as shards of broken glass, but it also carries a message so potent it burns into the conscience. Set in Buenos Aires during the rule of the generals and their brutal policy of abducting and obliterating those who opposed them, the narrative tells of playwright Carlos Rueda, who suddenly finds himself with the power to "see" the disappeared ones and their fates. In the tradition of magical realism, by rendering almost palpable the sense of unreality that bizarre events evoke, Thornton makes Carlos's gift entirely convincing. Carlos's power announces itself when his journalist wife Cecilia is abducted; he uses it to bring news of their loved ones to the courageous mothers who march in the Plaza de Mayo in an effort to make the generals acknowledge their missing kin. Thornton conveys the fates of the disappeared in hauntingly credible scenes, at the same time providing a mesmerizing portrait of the xenophobic ideology that allows the generals to commit any brutality in the name of patriotism. In spite of his personal tragedy, which is compounded by two additional bitter blows, Carlos's faith in the power of reason remains strong. "There are two Argentinas," he says, "the regime's travesty of it, and the one we have in our hearts." Eventually the pure power of his imagination wins out over the obscene power of the ruling junta; the generals flee and some of the "disappeareds" come home. "It is not often that you see life and fiction take each other by the hand and dance," says this novel's narrator. The judge at the trial of the generals cries out: "Nunca mas!" Thornton's achievement is to make us see the power inherent in books such as this one, books that carry a message of hope to those who will read, believe, act and survive.

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From Library Journal

During the recent military rule in Argentina, outspoken journalist Cecilia Rueda is among the "disappeared," one of the thousands of prisoners tortured and frequently murdered by a regime that then denies their existence. After her disappearance, Cecilia's playwright husband Carlos discovers that he has a gift: when someone recounts the last known details of a disappeared, Carlos sees that person's present situation in a vision that released prisoners verify as accurate. Narrated by the Ruedas' friend, Martin Benn, in whose terse style both atrocities and surreal tales are effectively conveyed, this work has valid moral grounds/faith in the imagination's ability to sustain life/that nevertheless cannot undermine the horrors of material reality that Benn describes. Mollie Brodsky, English Dept., Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, N.J.

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Review

"A harrowing, brilliant novel."--*The New Yorker*.

"A powerful new novel... Thornton seems to have wedged his study of such writers as Borges and Marquez with his own instinctive gift for metaphor, and in doing so, created his own brand of magical realism"--*The New York Times*.

"Remarkable... Deeply inventive... Thornton has imagined Argentina truly; his inspired fable troubles and feeds our own intriguing imagining."--*Los Angeles Times*.

"Imagining Argentina is a slim volume filled with beautiful writing. It is an exciting adventure story. It is a haunting love story. And it is a story for all time."--*Detroit Free Press*.

"The writing is crystalline, the metaphors compelling... Its central theme is universal."--*The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

"In a time when much North American fiction is contained by crabbed realism, Thorton takes for his material one of the bleaker recent instances of human cruelty, sees in it the enduring nobility of the human spirit and imagines a book that celebrates that spirit."--*The Washington Post Book World*.

"A powerful first novel and a manifesto for the memorializing power of literature."--*The New York Times Book Review*.

"A profoundly hopeful book."--*The Cleveland Plain Dealer*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Josephine Lowe:

The book Imagining Argentina give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You can utilize to make your capable far more increase. Book can being your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem using your subject. If you can make examining a book Imagining Argentina to become your habit, you can get more advantages, like add your own personal capable, increase your knowledge about several or all subjects. It is possible to know everything if you like available and read a e-book Imagining Argentina. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this guide?

John Lee:

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