

Damnificados

JJ Amaworo Wilson

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Drawing inspiration from the true story of a skyscraper turned safe haven, JJ Amaworo Wilson's *Damnificados* is a timeless reminder of the strength and character found in those struggling to eke out an existence at the bottom rungs of society. Here, they are known as the "damnificados," the "nonpeople," or even those that simply "don't exist." Seeking refuge in the Torres Building, built and abandoned on a foundation of trash, Nacho Morales finds himself the reluctant leader of an ever fluctuating melting pot of exiles.

When floods and plagues of biblical proportion threaten the sanctity of their home, the damnificados look to Nacho for deliverance. So begins a David and Goliath battle rife with fantastical creatures. Brujas, two headed wolves, and übermosquitos are all mixed into what becomes a veritable chronicle of the "trash wars," fought over generations by a colorful mix of characters including German twins Hans and Dieter, a Japanese warrior known as the Chinaman, a fiery former beauty queen, and Nacho himself. Thoughtful and intense, but with a core of humility and self-awareness, *Damnificados* is an extraordinary, magical, inspiring tale of community and conscience.

PALLAS GATES MCCORQUODALE (Spring 2016)

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