

The Love Parade

Sergio Pitol

George Henson, Translator

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A historian investigates a decades-old murder that involves his own family in Sergio Pitol's historical novel, *The Love Parade*.

While conducting research, Miguel, a historian, stumbles across information regarding the 1942 shooting of his aunt's stepson. He returns to Mexico to investigate the murder, and with each resource he consults—archival documents, aging relatives and acquaintances—a new version of the story emerges. Through every variation stalks the same ominous shadows: grief, shame, hatred, and secrets so terrible that someone—or multiple someones—was willing to kill to keep them hidden.

Set in Mexico City in 1973, the story follows Miguel's quest to discover the truth about the murder that occurred outside of the very building he once lived in. The narrative he uncovers is driven by feuds between larger-than-life personalities and a world war that generated an influx of refugees and other newcomers—not all of them welcome among the elite and aspiring elite, whose stories intersect with the dead man's.

As he investigates, Miguel encounters disputing versions of what happened that fateful night. One day, Miguel listens to a self-deprecating woman extol her dead mother's virtues; the next, the dead woman is transformed into a pretentious hack by the vicious tongue of a reclusive yet lonely bookseller. As Miguel collects stories, themes emerge: the same rivalries with different angles, the same unlikable henchman who terrorizes and threatens his way through everyone's tale, the same secrets boiling just beneath the surface. By the end, Miguel has gathered all the puzzle pieces, but is unsure what they mean or what to do about them. He only knows that this journey has affected him in ways that he never could have expected.

The Love Parade is a twisted, multilayered mystery that delves into the sordid side of Mexican history.

EILEEN GONZALEZ (January / February 2022)

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