



Historical

Yankee Invasion: A Novel of Mexico City

Ignacio Solares

Timothy G. Compton, translator

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Yankee Invasion is a new novel from Ignacio Solares, an essayist, playwright, and author of *There is No Such Place* and *Columbus*. Solares has written a dialogue between his protagonist, the writer Abelardo, and his intellectual wife Magdalena that unlocks a door to understanding Mexico's perspective on the United States. Abelardo and his "sickness" are metaphors for Mexico's self-loathing, confusion, and ambivalence towards the US's invasion of their great city. Magdalena paraphrases William Blake to describe her husband and a section of his manuscript that chronicles his life. Magdalena says, "I suppose I hadn't fully grasped how sick you really were at that point. Blake said it well: he who desired much but does not act engenders disaster."

The mysticism of Blake and his verse well describes Abelardo's emotional sickness. Clairvoyance and prophetic visions, the consequences of his definition of "man" and "Mexican"—all of these mingle in a festering born of Abelardo's political, romantic, and militant actions or inactions in the Petri dish of the Mexican American War. Solares shows us that Blake's verse is also an excellent description of Mexico's people. They were torn between allowing themselves to be governed by corrupt and self-serving generals or to be conquered by the United States to bring some kind of stability to their government and economy. Many fought for their freedom to maintain an ancient, proud culture.