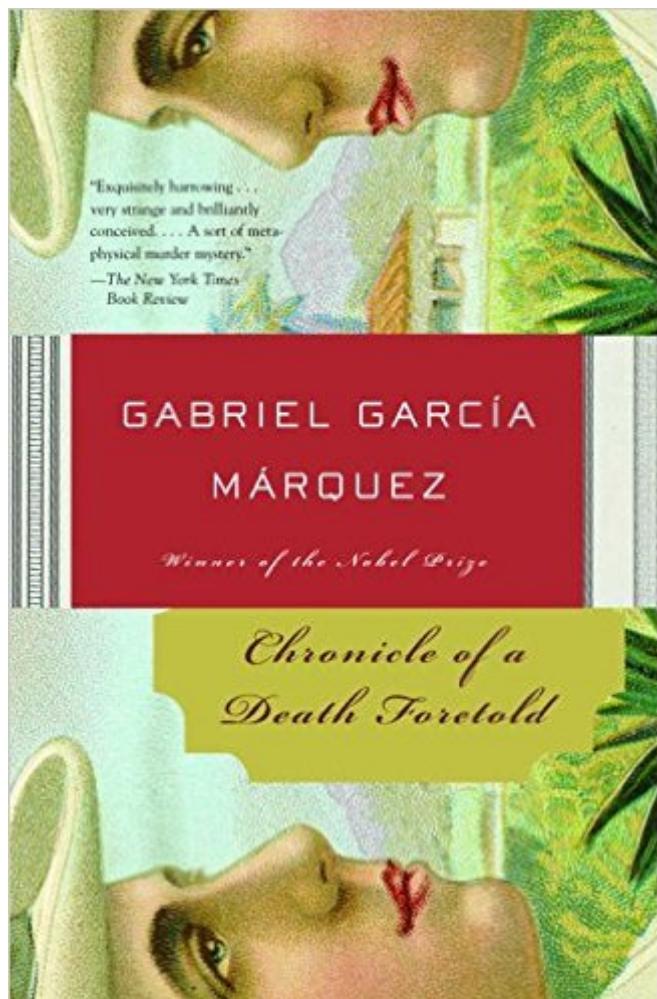


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Chronicle Of A Death Foretold



Synopsis

A man returns to the town where a baffling murder took place 27 years earlier, determined to get to the bottom of the story. Just hours after marrying the beautiful Angela Vicario, everyone agrees, Bayardo San Roman returned his bride in disgrace to her parents. Her distraught family forced her to name her first lover; and her twin brothers announced their intention to murder Santiago Nasar for dishonoring their sister. Yet if everyone knew the murder was going to happen, why did no one intervene to stop it? The more that is learned, the less is understood, and as the story races to its inexplicable conclusion, an entire society--not just a pair of murderersâ "is put on trial.

Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: Vintage; Reprint edition (October 7, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 140003471X

ISBN-13: 978-1400034710

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

Gabriel Garcia Marquez is one of the most genuinely artistic of 20th century authors. "One Hundred Years of Solitude" was the first of his books that I read and while I loved the story there were times when the sheer size, scope and density of that work was very intimidating. It wasn't until my second reading that I was able to fully digest the power of the book and appreciate the consummate artistry it embodied. For those who want a little bit of a lighter introduction to Marquez, "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" is a good place to look. The story is deceptively simple: A young girl in a South American village (a setting almost all Marquez's works share) is married and it is found that she has already lost her virginity. Her brothers are then bound by honor to kill the man responsible, an act they have no interest in doing but do nonetheless because no one will stop them. I am giving nothing away here, all the details of the story are revealed in the first few pages. What elevates this simple story to the grand level of all Marquez works is the brilliant structure and execution. Marquez succeeds,

as always, in putting a fresh spin on a timeless plot. Marquez gives us the events leading up to the murder from several different angles and with each different angle a new wrinkle in the fabric of the story unfolds. What we learn is that there scarcely a person in the whole town who could not have helped rescue the victim from his early end. The killers did not hide their mission, on the contrary they announced it to whoever crossed their path and delayed the doing of the deed until they could not wait any longer.

The first sentence of this harrowing, surrealistic novella concerns itself with the murder of the wealthy, twenty-one year old Santiago Nasar and every page that follows only serves to broaden and enlarge this action. The novella, a narrative written twenty-seven years after the murder by Nasar's journalist friend, serves as a detailed history of the hours leading up to the crime. The entire population of a fictional Latin American village comprise the cast of characters and as we become privy to their actions and memories, the one certainty we learn is that everyone had a part to play in this crime. The night before the murder, Angela Vicario had married Bayardo San Roman in a lavish and costly ceremony. However, when San Roman learns that Angela is not a virgin he returns her to her mother immediately. When pressed to name the man who stole her virginity and disgraced the family name, Angela answers, "Santiago Nasar." Nothing points to the truthfulness of Angela's assertion, but her twin brothers, Pablo and Pedro, who are pig butchers by profession, sharpen their knives and begin their search for Nasar. Although "there had never been a death more foretold," every one of the town's citizens has some reason, valid or not, for doing little or nothing to prevent the death of Nasar. Even Nasar, himself, until the final moments, seems oblivious to what every other person in the town is well aware of. Amazingly, he seems to either feel himself above death or simply resigned to his fate. The narrator of Chronicle of a Death Foretold presents many instances and situations that could have saved the life of Nasar yet failed to do so, underscoring one of Garcia Marquez's signature themes--irony.

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