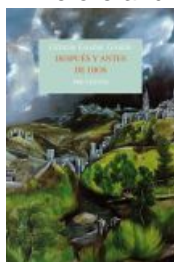


DESPUÉS Y ANTES DE DIOS

Before and After God



UK panel's choice Year 2015

Author: [OCTAVIO ESCOBAR GIRALDO](#) [1]

Publisher: [EDITORIAL PRE-TEXTOS](#) [2]

Language: Spanish

Year of Publication: 2014

Pages: 216

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Genre: Literature

SPRING

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Season: Year 2015

Topography, the circumstances of its foundation and prejudices determine every provincial city, as well as its piously hidden sins. Manizales is situated at over 2000 m above sea level, among Colombia's coffee growing mountains. Daughter of migrations and the civil wars of the 19th century, an old saying states that its 450,000 inhabitants are wedded to tradition, particularly the women. Sometimes, one of them imagines, out of frustration, shame, even out of faith, shattering her world, or herself, committing murder. And she does.

UK panellists opinion:

Después y Antes de Dios begins in noirish style, as a woman reverently lays out the body of her mother whom she has murdered, and plans her flight from justice. The story she goes on to relate reveals the casual brutality beneath the outwardly civilised society she lives in, and the distorted morality of her wealthy and pious peers.

Octavio Escobar Giraldo's inspiration for the novel came from two news reports in his native Colombian city of Manizales: the apparently senseless murder of an old woman by her respectable, professional daughter, and the priest who conned well-to-do female churchgoers into providing aid to 'good' families fallen on hard times (...)

Escobar Giraldo writes in a spare, prosaic style that allows the prejudices and contradictions of his narrator to show through in a way that is sometimes almost painful to read. The novel is beautifully structured to allow for shifts tone and pace, with drama and tragedy interspersed with flashes of dark humour. No description or dialogue is wasted, and the story's whole essence is perfectly distilled into just over 200 pages. Although there is a strong sense of place, and of the history that has formed the characters, the idea that unthinking brutalities are routinely perpetrated by those with wealth and status will resonate with readers everywhere, making the novel an excellent candidate for translation.

From the reader's report by [Lise Jones](#) [3]

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Additional information **Prizes and reviews:**

City of Barbastro Short Novel Prize 2014

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