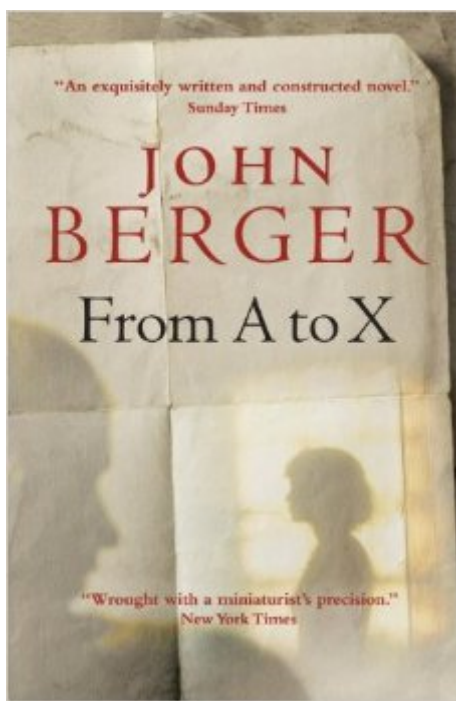


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From A To X: A Story In Letters



Synopsis

In the dusty, ramshackle town of Suse lives Aïda. Her insurgent husband Xavier has been imprisoned. Resolute, sensuous and tender, Aïda's letters to the man she loves tell of daily events in the town, and of its motley collection of inhabitants whose lives flow through hers. But the town is under threat, and as a faceless power inexorably encroaches from outside, so the smallest details and acts of humanity assume for Aïda a life-affirming significance, acts of resistance against the forces that might otherwise extinguish them.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a "novel" in the form of a discontinuous, out-of-order series of letters from Aïda, an activist, to her imprisoned lover Xavier. The letters are arranged, as the book's conceit is explained in a brief introduction by Berger (who has "found" or "been given" them), as they have been found in Xavier's cell after he departed, in a few bundles. They are interspersed with little fragments of writing by Xavier -- the only words of his we read, as his replies to Aïda are not printed -- which are mostly political reflections, sometimes quoted from figures like Eduardo Galeano and Subcomandante Marcos, and which in the main sound suspiciously like interjections from Berger himself, though this is not at all obtrusive or disruptive to the reader's experience. The letters from Aïda retell little incidents of life and political resistance, from a neighbor's jelly-making to her work at a pharmacy to a night of protest, ringed by occupiers' tanks. While the setting is deliberately fictionalized and the place names are drawn from ancient Assyria, there are still some details that make it seem likely the characters are Palestinians; but their experience is meant to be an allegory of activist life anywhere

rather than a depiction of a specific place or a single historical moment. (Xavier's situation clearly evokes that of Nazim Hikmet or Antonio Gramsci, for instance.

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