

<<(两河之间)BETWEEN TWO R>>

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作者：Nicholas Rinaldi

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内容概要

Farro Fescu is the proud and observant concierge of Echo Terrace, a condominium in New York City. Passing through his lobby at all hours of the night and day is an exotic cross-section of the world's population: an Egyptian-born plastic surgeon who lives on the fifth floor and specializes in gender reassignment; a fighter pilot, on the eighth floor, who flew for Nazi Germany during World War II; an Iraqi spice merchant and the world-famous crazy-patch quilter with whom he's having an affair; the adulterer's son, dreaming of becoming an undertaker; and the widow whose apartment is a jungle Eden filled with a menagerie of specimens - finches, canaries, a defanged cobra, a monkey named Joe - that had been the subject of her dead husband's research.

Farro Fescu knows them all, knows all their secrets. He knows what happened to Yesenia Rivera, the nineteen-year-old staff housekeeper from Queens, when she took a fateful ride one evening on the Staten Island Ferry. He alone knows the truth behind the mysterious mishap that befell the fashion designer Ira Klempf, a resident of the twelfth floor. And he knows - and would like to know much more - about the alluring Maria Gracia Mono, sometime lover of Harry Falcon, the brilliant captain of industry who lives in the penthouse and is dying of cancer.

He is keenly attuned to the building and the people in it, yet he does not know what is in his own heart - why, after a long, hard life, he is still alive, and still alone. Nor does he know what he will be capable of in the face of sudden, overwhelming tragedy.

From Publishers Weekly

Intertwining stories by the author of *The Jukebox Queen* of Malta offer subtle portraits of the residents of Echo Terrace, a fictitious Battery Park building in which the condominiums are named after the likes of Mae West, Susan B. Anthony and Grandma Moses. At the book's center is the inimitable Romanian concierge, Farro Fescu, who watches with keen eyes the comings and goings of the intriguing inhabitants, including Karl Vogel, a Luftwaffe pilot engaged in an affair with a journalist whose grandfather was killed by a Nazi fighter pilot ("She is making peace with the enemy," Karl thinks); Yesenia, a captivating 19-year-old housemaid who is brutally raped on the way home to her Queens apartment; and Theo, a plastic surgeon who falls for a widow whose husband admitted to an affair and shortly thereafter died of a heart attack. Devastated, the woman, Nora, poisons her exotic pets ("Whatever I love, I make it die") and then walks into traffic. With Nora in a coma, her young actress niece, Angela, moves into her apartment and enters into an unlikely affair with a poem-quoting undertaker who is convinced that love can conquer all. Among a few bizarre twists, a young designer falls (or is pushed) from a window, and Theo is drafted by the FBI to perform a sex-change operation on one of Augusto Pinochet's collaborators. These are complex, moving stories without straightforward resolutions-as one character remarks, "Life is heavy, it weighs"-and if they feel a bit overwritten sometimes, Rinaldi compensates for this with multifaceted and memorable characters.

From Booklist

Starred Review Through the microcosm of a large cast of international characters residing in a condo building in lower Manhattan during the years 1992-2001, Rinaldi summons no less than the pageant of the human tragicomedy. Each of them, at times, lonely and isolated, harbors an incredibly rich interior life in which the past is fully alive and readily accessible. Karl Vogel, a highly decorated WWII German fighter pilot, recalls his hatred for Hitler, while Farro Fescu, the proud Romanian concierge, still misses his uncles, who may have been killed in one of Vogel's bombing raids; nevertheless, the two men share a cordial relationship. Egyptian-born plastic surgeon Theo Tattafruge, who specializes in transgender operations, obsessively researches Teddy Roosevelt's adventurous life, finding in it an intoxicating mix of decisiveness and optimism that is so lacking in his patients' lives. Artist Maggie Sowle is commissioned by the UN to make a memorial quilt and puts her long-dead, much-loved husband's handprints at the center. In this way, Rinaldi effortlessly intertwines the political and the personal. With lavish and loving detail, he invokes the human experience--weddings and wars, art and commerce, births and funerals. A beautiful, emotionally uplifting tribute to the human spirit.

---Joanne Wilkinson

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Publisher Comments:

Within the walls of
Echo Terrace, the world ...

A beautifully resonant novel with a dazzling array of characters whose life stories are woven together into a breathtaking braid of love and memory.

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As the narrative eye of *Between Two Rivers* floats from one apartment to another, revealing the characters' private histories and tracing the dramatic intersections of their daily lives, a lush tapestry of experience emerges. The story, in beautifully textured prose, is laced with wit and humor, subtle ironies and haunting echoes, and everywhere a profound sense of the resilience of the human spirit.

Book Dimension

Height (mm) 236

Width (mm) 169

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