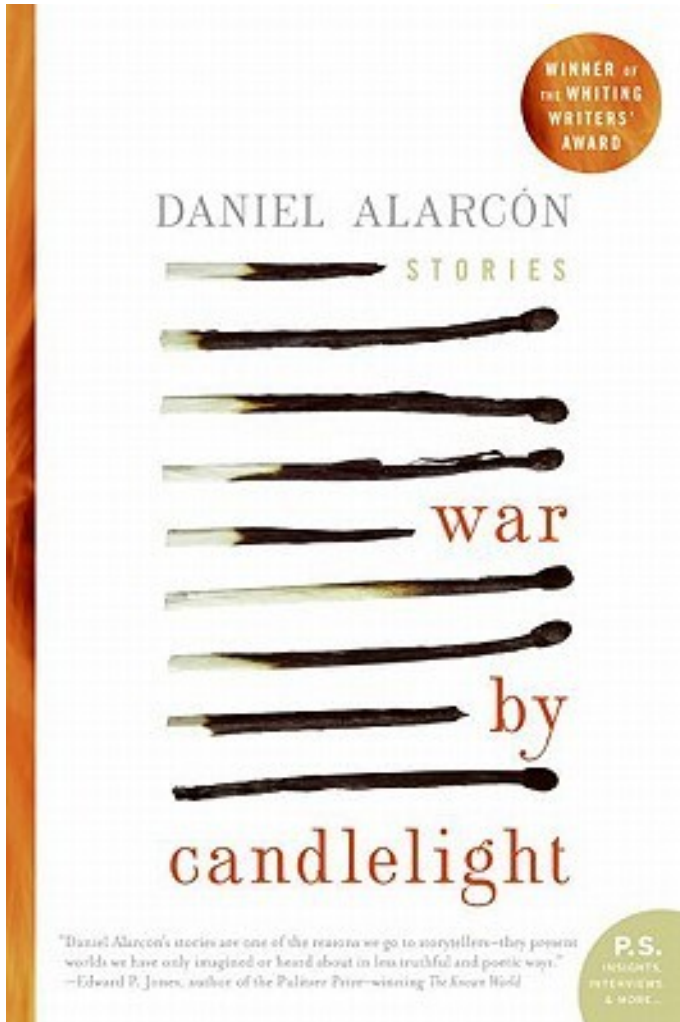

Daniel Alarcón

War by Candlelight



Title: War by Candlelight

Author: Daniel Alarcón

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Description

Something is happening around the globe: mass movements of peoples, dislocations of language and culture in the wake of war and economic crises -- simply put, our world is changing.

In this exquisite collection, Daniel Alarcon takes the reader from Third World urban centers to the fault lines that divide nations and people. Wars, both national and internal, are waged in jungles, across borders, in the streets of Lima, in the intimacy of New York apartments. These are lives at the margins of the globalized and not-yet-globalized worlds, the stories of those who shuttle between them and never quite feel at home in the cities where they were born: an unrepentant terrorist remembers where it all began, a would-be emigrant contemplates the ramifications of leaving and never coming back, a reporter turns in his pad and pencil for the inglorious costume of a street clown.

"War by Candlelight" is a devastating portrait of a world in flux, and Daniel Alarcon is an extraordinary new voice in literary fiction, one you will not soon forget.

Insightful reviews

Betsy: I'm not sure I'd recommend this book to a parent who wants to learn more about Peru because her kid is living there (which is why I picked it up) - not because it doesn't give you a window into that world but because it does and it's kind of disturbing. There's stories with poverty, violence, terrorism, bus crashes that make for interesting reading but not exactly comforting (even though I tried to remind myself that the stories often are set decades ago and in neighborhoods unlike the one my son is living in right now.) The author is a young guy born in Lima, raised in Alabama, who returned to Lima for awhile and studied writing at the Iowa Writers Workshop - and the stories are set in both Latin America (primarily Peru) and the states (NY City in particular.) Well-written and a fresh perspective.

Jacob: July/August 2009

All dead men don't fall from the sky. They don't all float down the Hudson and come to rest against smooth moss-covered rocks at the water's edge. Some of them are your fathers, your uncles. Some of them lose the battle slowly. Some die hating the world. ("A Strong Dead Man," p. 184)

A man proposes to his former girlfriend once a year on their daughter's birthday. A reporter for the newspaper mourns his father as he writes a story on the city's clowns. Children go to war on enemy streets and boast about the fighting to older brothers in prison ("We called it the University because it's where you went when you finished high school"), a handful of earthquake survivors collect aid packages for their buried village, wannabe revolutionaries murder dogs at night. These are powerful stories, strong stories, about war, violence, disasters,

poverty, and death, in the streets of Lima, the jungles of Peru, and the far-away jungle of New York. Unlike some collections full of strong stories that clash with each other and drag the rest of the book down ([Rust and Bone](#) by Craig Davidson comes to mind), the strength of each story in [War by Candlelight](#) only adds to the collection. Highly recommended, especially for "Flood" and "City of Clowns."

Kirsten: Really, wow. I am a bit impressed. I did not really enjoy *Lost City Radio*, but I gave the stories a chance, because I really liked what I read in *Granta*. I'm glad I gave it that chance.

From *Absence*:

"Leaving is no problem. It's exciting actually; in fact, it's drug. It's the staying gone that will kill you. This is the handed-down wisdom of the immigrant. You hear it from people who wander home, after a decade away. You hear about the euphoria that passes quickly; the new things that lose their newness and, soon after, their capacity to amuse you. Language is bewildering. You tire of exploring. Then the list of things you miss multiplies beyond all reason, nostalgia clouding everything: in memory, your country is clean and uncorrupt, the streets are safe, the people universally warm, and the food consistently delicious. The sacred details of your former life appear and reappear in strange iterations, in a hundred waking dreams. Your pockets fill with money, but your heart feels sick and empty."

Leila: i purchased this e-book for a piece journey to Peru and began examining it after spending an afternoon in Lima, the place the various tales take place. That, and the truth that one tale happens in NYC a block from my adolescence apartment, can have better my experience of connection to the book. yet i feel a person studying it's going to suppose an identical feel of immediacy and intensity. Alarcon's writing is sincere and clear, like a latest Latin Hemmingway. An interview within the again finds that he left Lima as a baby and wrote some of the tales instantly after returning as an grownup to run a adolescence images undertaking in a single of the slums. That freshness shines via within the loving descriptions of the gritty urban and the race, category and political concerns that complicate the lives of its inhabitants.

Patrick McCoy: warfare through *Candlelight* (2005) is the second one publication i have learn by means of Daniel Alarcon, however, this a suite of brief tales and leads me to think that brief fiction can be his forte. in truth i found Alarcon via his brief tales that have been incorporated in a couple of versions of the easiest American Nonrequired Reading. Perhaps, the article that i feel separates his tales from his novel, misplaced urban Radio, is that those tales are grounded in fact and particular locations like Lima and ny City. i feel misplaced Radio urban suffers in that it's a nonspecific Latin American country. Alarcon is Peruvian-American and his wisdom and adventure is coursing via his paintings and that i imagine you will need to undergo witness to the struggles of Peru within the 80s and 90s, in order that it isn't forgotten or repeated. Alarcon does an outstanding task of constructing the ambience of a areas specially the towns of latest York and Lima. he's additionally adept at growing real looking plausible characters in his stories. i do not believe there has been a vulnerable tale within the bunch, yet i believe a number of the tales close to the top have been between my favorites: "The Visitor," "The technological know-how for Being Alone," and "A robust useless Man." i believe his inclusion within the New

Yorker's most sensible 20 Writers below forty is well-earned. My purely grievance with the Kindle model of the e-book is that it did not contain the playstation extras that the print model has (which I consistently locate enlightening and inspiring), so sooner or later I will simply purchase the print model of playstation editions.

jeremy: a lot as with misplaced urban radio, the radical that this debut number of brief stories, i locate anything missing in daniel alarcón's writing. the 9 tales that make up warfare through candlelight are attention-grabbing enough, many with compelling plots even, but his form of prose, probably most sensible characterised as passionless, sterile, or overly restrained, detracts significantly from his storytelling. his writing approximately turns out clinical, as though too many writing workshops have eroded his traditional voice. that alarcón is a skilled author makes this lacking section of his fiction all of the extra frustrating. the power and end result of what may still rather be a disarming assortment is decreased via the absence of power in his characters and infrequently even the tales themselves. this disparity is all of the extra suggested provided that his flair for writing is so apparent. have been alarcón a lesser author struggle by means of candlelight will be little greater than a mediocre work, yet given his present for resourceful tales, this assortment easily suffers from a deficiency of feeling. "lima, peru, july 28, 1979" and "a technology for being alone" are the book's most powerful efforts.

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