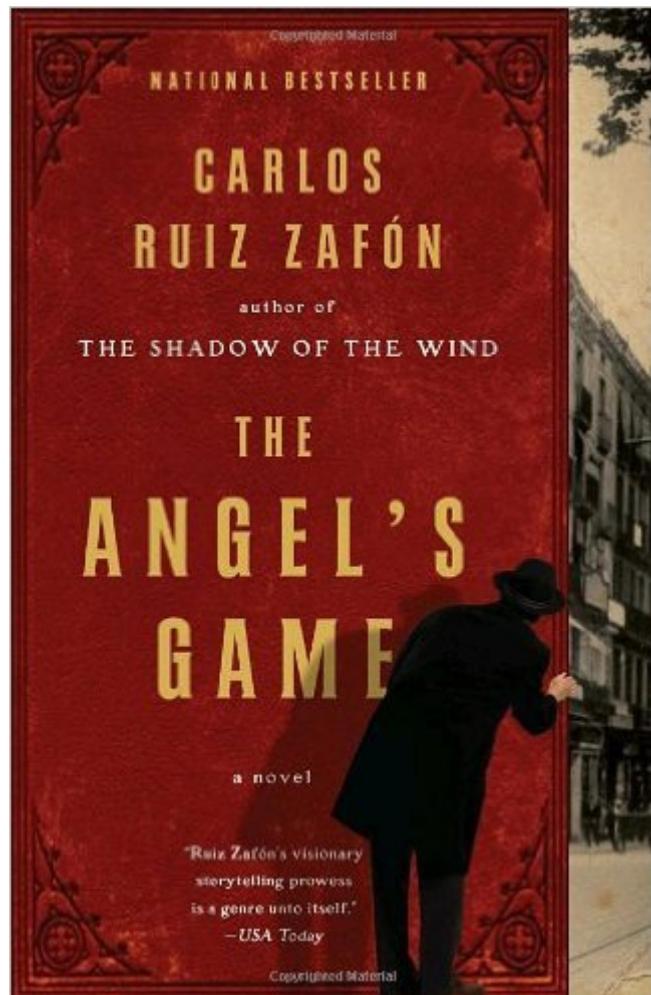


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The Angel's Game



Synopsis

From the author of the international phenomenon *The Shadow of the Wind*, comes a riveting new masterpiece about love, literature, and betrayal. In this powerful, labyrinthian thriller, David MartÃ-n is a pulp fiction writer struggling to stay afloat. Holed up in a haunting abandoned mansion in the heart of Barcelona, he furiously taps out story after story, becoming increasingly desperate and frustrated. Thus, when he is approached by a mysterious publisher offering a book deal that seems almost too good to be real, David leaps at the chance. But as he begins the work, and after a visit to the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, he realizes that there is a connection between his book and the shadows that surround his dilapidated home and that the publisher may be hiding a few troubling secrets of his own. Once again, Ruiz ZafÃ-n takes us into a dark, gothic Barcelona and creates a breathtaking tale of intrigue, romance, and tragedy

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Customer Reviews

When I first opened my copy of "The Angel's Game", I could barely wait to read it. I'd enjoyed "The Shadow of the Wind" so much that the idea of another book about books, and forbidden loves and obsession (with just the gentlest seasoning of snarky social commentary) - seemed a gift beyond measure. And when the first page offered up the following sentence, "Don Basilo was a forbidden-looking man with a bushy moustache who did not suffer fools and who subscribed to the theory that the liberal use of adverbs and adjectives was the mark of a pervert or someone with a vitamin deficiency," my enthusiasm grew. Which is, of course, my way of easing into my

disappointment in this book. True, my expectations were too great, but while I enjoyed "The Angels' Game", I felt it took on a bit too much and lost some of the main threads that "Shadow of the Wind" wove so masterfully. The first 2/3 of the book contained everything I was looking for. The lush descriptions of Barcelona, of the characters that inhabit her, the rising crescendo of the plot. All kept me turning the pages. Here, too, I found the most insightful comments...the ones that are spoken in a fictional 1920's Spain but seem just as fitting in today's world. "...like all wars, was fought in the name of God and country to make a few men who were already far too powerful when they started it, even more powerful." And even truer, "What a mess the world is in," cried the man, reading the news in his paper. "It seems that in the advanced stages of stupidity, a lack of ideas is compensated for by an excess of ideologies." I am realizing as I go through my notes that I enjoyed these side notes almost more than the main story of the book.

Anyone who has never read Zafon really should. It's rare for an author to have a way with words as he does and what makes his ability all the more amazing is the knowledge that these are works in translation. I can only imagine what a wonder his books must be in their original Spanish and his writing is so beautiful that it makes me want to learn the language simply so I can read his works in the original. I read and loved "The Shadow of the Wind" and when my husband asked me if this book was better, I thought for a moment and told him I thought it was as good. It's hard to really judge which is better as this work is quite different from "The Shadow of the Wind". Part of what really drew me into this work were its uncanny similarities to the works of Poe. Zafon imbues the very city of Barcelona with such menace that it seems like a beast, hulking over its inhabitants. So many of the pages are suffused with a sense of dread and there are scenes in the book that made the hair on the back of my neck stand up. There are definitely more elements of the supernatural in this work than I remember there being in "The Shadow of the Wind", but that's not to say that this is a ghost story. At its heart, this book is about obsession. Zafon delves into some pretty heavy questions about the nature of human obsessions with everything from faith and religion to literature to love. In reading about David's obsessions, it is easy for the reader to reflect on his or her own forms of obsession. Zafon has created a deeply psychological work that leaves the reader wondering just how reliable David Martin's narrative really is. How many of the horrors that he experiences are the product of his own imagination?

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