



News of a Kidnapping

Gabriel García Márquez, Edith Grossman (Translator)

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THIS ASTONISHING BOOK by the Nobel laureate Gabriel García Márquez chronicles the 1990 kidnappings of ten Colombian man and women--all journalists but one--by the Medellín drug boss Pablo Escobar. The carefully orchestrated abductions were Escobar's attempt to extort from the government its assurance that he, and other narcotics traffickers, would not be extradited to the United States if they were to surrender.

From the highest corridors of government to the domain of the ruthless drug cartels, we watch the unfolding of a bizarre drama replete with fascinating characters Cesar Gaviria, the nation's cool and secretive president; Diana Turbay, a famous television journalist and magazine editor; three indomitable women who are imprisoned for miserable months in a small room with a light perpetually on; an eighty-two-year-old priest with a mission to bring the regime and the cartel to the negotiating table; and Escobar himself, the legendary drug baron who changes his bodyguards daily and maintains a private zoo with giraffes and hippos from Africa.

All of this takes place in a country where presidential candidates and cabinet officers are routinely assassinated; where police go into the Medellín slums to murder boys they think may be working for Escobar; but where brave and honest citizens are trying desperately to make democracy survive.

An international best-seller, News of a Kidnapping combines journalistic tenacity with the breathtaking language and perception that distinguish the writings of Gabriel García Márquez. It draws us unto into a world that, like some phantasmagorical setting in a great García Márquez novel, we can scarcely believe exists--but that continually shocks us with its cold, hard reality.

News of a Kidnapping Details

Date : Published July 30th 1998 by Penguin (first published 1996)

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Author : Gabriel García Márquez , Edith Grossman (Translator)

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From Reader Review News of a Kidnapping for online ebook

Laleh says

Marquez is one of my favorite authors. Although, the actual reason I read this particular book was that the Iranian opposition leader currently under house arrest -Mir Hossein Mousavi-, managed to send a message to his family, recommending this book in case people wanted to have a feel of what he is going through. He has been under house arrest for more than seven month now.

This book is different from other books by Marquez: It is not a work of magic realism fiction, it is a report by a true journalist who is also the master of story telling and suspense. I found the book hard to read mostly because of its heartbreaking and hopeless moments. The events in the story are very well illustrated and the characters are well portrayed. There are traces of humor where Marquez shows us contradicting facets of the characters: kidnappers who won't think twice before killing a human, and yet ask a priest to give them his blessing.

I recommend this book, but beware of the sadness and naked human cruelty that it contains.

Hamidreza Hosseini says

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Ahmed says

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Está basada en la historia real del secuestro de varias figuras prominentes de Colombia ocurrido durante la época del narcoterrorismo a inicios de los años noventa con la autoría de Los Extraditables.

האמת היא שיש הרבה דברים שאנחנו לא יודעים עליהם. אבל אנחנו יכולים ללמוד מהדברים האלה ומהדברים האחרים. אנחנו יכולים ללמוד מהדברים האלה ומהדברים האחרים. אנחנו יכולים ללמוד מהדברים האלה ומהדברים האחרים.

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[illegible]

Nancy Oakes says

4.5 rounded up

In a nutshell, the central focus of *News of a Kidnapping* is the story of ten abductions, the victims' experiences in captivity, and the families' efforts to get these people released, but to tell that story, the author places these kidnappings in the wider context of Colombia's troubled history of politics, narco trafficking and terrorism. It also follows how Pablo Escobar went from being host to "Politicians, industrialists, businesspeople, journalists..." at his Hacienda Nápoles to becoming "the biggest prey in our history." Of Escobar, Marquez writes that "The most unsettling and dangerous aspect of his personality was his total inability to distinguish between good and evil," which is shown here in terms of the wave of violence aimed at presidential candidates and other political officials, cops murdered for the bounty on their heads, and explosions in the streets that killed innocent victims.

For me, this book is anything but boring, as some people have said it is, and I read it perched on the proverbial edge of my chair as the victims' stories were recounted. It's downright harrowing to try to even imagine what these people went through, not knowing whether they're going to live or die at any given moment, and the author doesn't spare any pain or fear in the recounting. Also - if you're expecting the same type of magical realism and writing as in his *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, forget it -- it's not that kind of book.

highly recommended.

<http://www.nonfictionrealstuff.com/20...>

Neal Adolph says

This book joined me as I crossed cities and borders and, as books do, became an essential part of my cross-continental journey to my new home in Colombia. It tells of a dark hour in one of the darkest periods in Colombian history, and does so with the grace of an expert novelists. The characters breathe with the rapid rhythm of anxiety, and the tension grows as though these events, as real as could possibly be, were imagined by some God of suspense. I wasn't thrilled with the last section, only because the main figures - those who were kidnapped - were displaced from their central position by some of the figures who either kidnapped or liberated them. It is hard to criticise, of course, but what interested me, as each character returned to their home, was exactly how they found life afterwards. But perhaps that is because I thought in the end that the novelist got in the way of the reality, morphing this truly human tragedy to a political wrestling match and, in the process, forgot about some of the victims as everything acquired the weight of "institutions". Perhaps in the end I wanted a book written by Svetlana Alexievitch rather than a mere journalist. Still, though, I appreciate the insights Garcia Marquez provided into the lives and country of Colombia - truly, the resilience of this land is astonishing.

Issa Deerbany says

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Cris says

La historia narrada en este libro está basada en los hechos que tuvieron lugar en Colombia en torno a la figura del narcotraficante Pablo Escobar durante la década de los noventa. Por este motivo, se trata de una experiencia completamente diferente a la de leer ‘Cien años de soledad’ o ‘Crónica de una muerte anunciada’. Nos encontramos ante una novela periodística muy bien documentada con una gran carga política y social. A pesar de ello, en ningún momento se pierde de vista el estilo cuidado y detallista de García Márquez, llegando a veces a rozar el realismo mágico que caracteriza muchas de sus obras.

Reseña completa y diseño de portada en <http://sidumbledorefueralibrero.com/2...>

Magrat Ajostiernos says

Impresionante crónica periodística que con sinceridad y supuesta simpleza logra helarte la sangre.
Un relato que sin ser una de esas historias en las que García Marquez mostraba todo su talento e imaginación, tiene una poesía muy especial.
Me ha impresionado en muchos aspectos y sobretodo me ha sobrecogido gracias a la pluma de García Márquez, siempre incisiva, clara y maravillosa.

Vanessa says

Snoooooooooze.

Maybe it's in the wake of my trip to Colombia, where I thought I would be carried away by all things evoking Marquez, but I am honestly kind of questioning my slavish devotion to his greatness, lately. When I first read them, I was totally enthralled by A Hundred Years of Solitude, Chronicle of a Death Foretold, and The Very Old Man With Enormous Wings, and at least liked Love In The Time of Cholera pretty well. I was entirely annoyed by Memories of My Melancholy Whores for predictable reasons, and was non-plussed by Love and Other Demons, but he still had a lot of capital to burn with me.

Maybe this is an odd critique of a non-fiction book about other people getting kidnapped, but somehow this

book just oozed with an annoying sense of self-importance that I realize I get from a lot of his books. The cover quote said something like "A story only this master could tell!" and he clearly agrees. He is Just So Canonical at this point, and he knows it, and it's annoying. (It's enough to make me want to give Robert Bolaño more of a break for being so aggressively eager to stick it to the literary establishment in Latin America).

Anyway, none of this is really about the book, exactly. The book was kind of boring and meandering and tedious and did a lot of telling not showing (I don't have it with me, but things like "President Turbay was a decisive, calculating man with an iron will"). It was also kind of shockingly cavalier about the fates of "regular" people v. the famous and important people. Drivers getting shot in the head get one sentence. Kidnapped politicians' wives get 50 pages about filing their nails and smoking cigarettes.

I was glad to learn a history lesson about Colombia and wished there were more about Pablo Escobar himself, who seems really interesting, but on balance this was not good. My occasional forays into non-fiction continue to be unsuccessful, people.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Noticia de un secuestro = News of a Kidnapping, Gabriel García Márquez

News of a Kidnapping (original Spanish title: Noticia de un secuestro) is a non-fiction book by Gabriel García Márquez. It was first published in Spanish in 1996, with an English translation released in 1997.

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Negin says

I don't generally watch much TV. My husband watches more than me and knows which shows I'll like. We recently finished watching the first season of "Narcos" about Pablo Escobar. This book was a nice addition to the TV series, although I prefer the latter. The book moved more slowly than I had hoped, yet it was a compelling look at that dark period in Colombia. There's no doubt that Pablo Escobar was an absolute monster. One of my favorite quotes: "The most unsettling and dangerous aspect of his personality was his total inability to distinguish between good and evil."

Vinod says

I loved this book because I knew what to expect. I didn't expect the magical realism that I love Marquez for. I didn't expect depiction of feelings in any direct way.

This is a journalistic account of a series of kidnappings happened in Colombia during the drug trafficking war days. I was surprised by how he was able to put the pieces together without sensationalizing.

The narration was compelling and I finished the whole book in my record time! :)

Recommend anyone this book, but make sure they read the preface and what this book is all about.

Louise says

Before his novels came to define magical realism, Gabriel Garcia Marquez was a reporter and journalist. This work is from 1996 - after his greatest novels. It was also a time when the perpetrators of the crimes he writes of were still free and able to do harm.

The modest title belies the stunning narrative. While the focus is on the hostages, it is also the story of how the wily Pablo Escobar negotiated surrender to the Colombian government to include a prison of his own design and staffing so that he could be safe from his enemies. All the while he worked the PR and political systems to get legislation precluding his extradition to the US.

You see how the Escobar's money bought him power. He was able to buy a "Robin Hood" image, paying slum children to kill policemen for bounty. He was able to buy elections.

What stood out for me were the descriptions of those who did the dirty work for the cartel. Each of the captives was housed in a different location with different "landlords" who seemed to be just trying to pay bills or stay alive. A host of "professionals" such as drivers, lawyers, doctors and even carpet installers served the cartel and kept its secrets.

The changing group of guards ranged from naïve teens who watched American movies and played video games to seasoned crooks. All wore masks and lifted them slightly to eat cake or have a drink on special occasions. These criminals and their enablers show religious devotion and few see a conflict with church teachings and their actions. The hostages had strained relations with their guards, but show no evidence of Stockholm syndrome.

Also profiled are the brave people who stood up to Escobar, notably President Gaviria, who held out for a long time in the face of a large PR campaign and 4 previous presidential candidate assassinations and the hostages and their families. Not profiled, but mentioned, are the police officers (I lost track of how many), notables and ordinary citizens who died in the Colombian drug wars.

This is a very dramatic story. It shows the range of GGM's writing skills. Another journalistic book, *Clandestine in Chile: The Adventures of Miguel Littín*, has a different writing style. In it, he adopts the voice of the Miguel Littén, who entered Chile under false pretenses, to film Pinochet's Chile.

This is a gripping story with many "can't put down" parts. Even those with little interest in Colombia and the drug wars will be pulled in to the story.

Hopefully, all of GGM's reporting and journalism will be anthologized and translated to English.

Connie says

Gabriel García Márquez is usually associated with his novels containing elements of magical realism, but he was a reporter in his younger days. In "News of a Kidnapping" he returns to nonfiction to tell the story of ten hostages who were kidnapped by the wealthy Medellín drug cartel in Colombia. Pablo Escobar used the hostages to bargain with the Colombian government when he feared he would be extradited to the United States in 1990 for drug crimes. The city of Medellín, where the drug cartel was based, was full of violence with hundreds of policemen and members of the drug cartel killed each month.

In addition to the harrowing accounts of the captives, the book shows how the families, government officials, and an elderly saintly priest worked out a solution with Escobar. It was especially moving to read how a husband acted as one of the chief intermediaries between Escobar and the government, hoping for the release of his kidnapped wife and putting his own life at risk. After the first captive was killed, I was on edge wondering what the fate of the others would be. This well written book shows how Escobar kept the country of Colombia emotionally and politically hostage in his efforts to avoid extradition.

Araz Goran says

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Eliza Rapsodia says

"Preferimos una tumba en Colombia que una celda en Estados Unidos"

Reseñas de libros de no ficción son mi aporte singular para dar a conocer buenos libros periodísticos (la carrera que estudio oigan) y que de vez en cuando me recuerda lo poderosa y valiosa que es la figura del periodista en un país como el mío. Creo que cualquier persona aunque no le interese el periodismo puede leer esta narración. Esta historia, sucedida en 1990 y 1991 nos cuenta el drama de diez secuestrados en la época de máxima violencia en Colombia: la época del narcoterrorismo.

Reseña completa aqui: <http://rapsodia-literaria.blogspot.co...>
