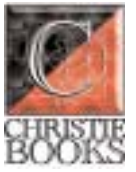




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WORDS IN THE SNOW

[A *FILANDÓN*]

Juan Pedro Aparicio

Luis Mateo Díez

José María Merino

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THE AUTHORS: Juan Pedro Aparicio (León, 1941). Winner of the Gernika Prize for Novel; Nadal Prize for Novel; Setenil Prize for the best Short Stories Book published in 2006. His travel book entitled *El Transcantábrico* inspired the establishment and running of a tourist train route of the same name. Luis Mateo Díez (Villablino, León, 1942). Poet. Novelist and Short Story Writer. Essayist. Twice winner of the National Prize for Literature; Twice winner of the Critics Choice Prize. Member of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language. José María Merino (La Coruña, 1941). Poet. Novelist and Short Story Writer. Essayist. Winner of the National Prize for Children's Literature; Miguel Delibes & Gonzalo Torrente Ballester Prize for Novel. Editorial Board Member for *Revista de Libros* journal. All three authors' tales are included in the best anthologies of contemporary Spanish Short Stories, and their works have been translated into many languages.

THESE short stories, sometimes only a sentence long, have an audacity and skill in their brevity, using the ancient techniques of the fable to explore themes of science fiction and also to undertake some unsettling experiments with time and death. They show what can be done in a short space of time with stories honed down to the minimum so that the economy itself becomes a delight. The scale is big even if the narratives are small. And let us not forget humour. There is dark mordant humour throughout. Surrealism is made to seem a normal state of affairs. There are echos of Borges, Calvino and even the short stories of Gogol but this does not preclude tales of everyday humanity. Exhilarating and disturbing, there is always a refreshing sense of playfulness as well as some unexpected twists in the tales. The authors show no inhibitions about juggling with time and with physical scale so that we can be suddenly thrown into an Alice-in-Wonderland world. And best of all, in this day and age, when we rush from task to task, the stories are short enough to be read at a bus-stop, waiting at a check-out counter or even while the bath is running.

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