



The Last Will and Testament of Senhor da Silva Araujo

Germano Almeida, Sylvia Glaser

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Everyone in Cape Verde knows Senor da Silva. Successful entrepreneur, owner of the island's first automobile, a most serious, upright, and self-made businessman, Senor da Silva is the local success story. Born an orphan, he never married, he never splurged--one good suit was good enough for him--and he never wandered from the straight and narrow. Or so everyone thought. But when Senor da Silva's 387-page Last Will and Testament is read aloud--a marathon task on a hot afternoon which exhausts reader after reader--there's eye-opening news, and not just for the smug nephew so certain of inheriting all Senor da Silva's property. With his will, Senor da Silva leaves a memoir that is a touching web of elaborate self-deceptions. He desired so ardently to prosper, to be taken seriously, to join (perhaps, if they'll have him) the exclusive Gremio country club, and, most of all, to be a good man. And yet, shady deals, twists of fate, an illegitimate child: such is the lot of poor, self-critical Senor da Silva. A bit like Calvino's Mr. Palomar in his attention to protocol and in his terror of life's passions; a bit like Calvino's Mr. Palomar in his attention to protocol and in his terror of life's passions; a bit like Svevo's Zeno (a little pompous, a little old-fashioned, and often hapless), Senor da Silva moves along a deliciously blurry line between farce and tragedy: a self-important buffoon becomes a fully human, even tragic, figure in the arc of this hilarious and touching novel - translated into Spanish, German, French, Italian, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish, and now, at last, English.

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