



Three Horses: A Novel

By Erri De Luca, Michael F. Moore

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From Argentina to Italy, the intense, metaphysical and poetic story of a gardener in love, by Italy's most prominent writer.

"A man's life lasts as long as three horses. You have already buried the first."

Somewhere along the coastline of Italy, a man passes his days in solitude and silence, tending a garden and reading books of travel and adventure. Through these simple routines he seeks to quiet the painful memories of the past: a life on the run from Argentina's Dirty War; a young bride 'disappeared' by the military; a terrifying escape through the wilds of Patagonia.

Yet everywhere he turns, new life is pulsing, ready to awaken his senses, like the force that drives his fruit trees into bloom. People and events from the past and present migrate into patterns assigned by a metaphysical geometry. A woman of the world re-introduces him to love. An African day laborer teaches him the meaning of gratitude.

In this intense narrative, every acute observation, every nuance, becomes a means of salvation. Using a language that is both gripping and contemplative, *Three Horses* is an unforgettable tale.

Praise for *The Sea of Memory*:

"Poetic . . . charged with anger and desire."

-The New York Times Book Review

"Alluring . . . shimmeringly lyrical."

-Publishers Weekly

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

"I have to stop losing people," resolves the unnamed narrator of De Luca's slender novel. As a young man, he was drawn into Argentina's Dirty War, which robbed him of his wife and compatriots and forced him to become a soldier, then a fugitive. At the outset of the novel, he has finally found tranquility as a gardener in Italy. Throughout the novel, the reader can see glimpses of Neruda in the narrator's descriptions; one type of soil is "lean, thievish" and love is "bees in my blood, a bear in my heart." His simple words reveal complex thoughts and deep sympathy for the other characters, especially Laila, his much younger lover, which raises issues of truthfulness and self-representation: what should he share with his lover when his past is an entirely different life? This question becomes critical when Laila's past and present threaten her future with her lover. The prose, translated by Moore, who also translated De Luca's *God's Mountain*, is deliberate and sparse, though the characters' voices too closely resemble the narrator's, infringing on his distinctive locution. However, the elegance of the prose and the mischievous and startling imagery compensate for the book's flaws, making this tale a surreal puzzle to be savored.

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Review

A keenly romantic tale of loss and solace from Italian novelist de Luca...Delicious. -- *Kirkus Reviews*

Intricate, engaging. -- *Richard Wakefield, Seattle Times*

This gem of a novel...is a parable about how the world can heal us after we suffer a great loss. -- *Margo Hammond, St. Petersburg Times*

About the Author

Erri De Luca, born in Naples (Italy), 1950, is a novelist, story-teller, essayist, translator and poet. He has published more than 60 books - many of them best-sellers, widely praised by critics - and numerous collections of short stories and poems. After years of living "all over the world", De Luca has settled in the countryside of Rome. He is considered by many literary experts "a master of the Italian language of the past two decades." He is the author of *God's Mountain* (2003) and *The Sea of Memory* (1999). **Michael F. Moore** is a New York-based translator and scholar whose previous translations include *God's Mountain*, also by de Luca, and *The Silence of the Body*, by Guido Ceronetti.

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