



## The Tattooed Soldier

By Hector Tobar

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Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter **Héctor Tobar**'s debut novel is a tragic tale of destiny and consequence set in downtown Los Angeles on the eve of the 1992 riots. Antonio Bernal is a Guatemalan refugee haunted by memories of his wife and child murdered at the hands of a man marked with a yellow tattoo. Not far from Antonio's apartment, Guillermo Longoria extends his arm and reveals a tattoo--yellow pelt, black spots, red mouth. It is the mark of the death squad, the Jaguar Battalion of the Guatemalan army. A chance encounter ignites a psychological showdown between these two men who discover that the war in Central America has followed them to the quemazones, the "great burning" of the Los Angeles riots.

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## **The Tattooed Soldier By Hector Tobar Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

The first novel from L.A. Times reporter Tobar is a gripping tale of revenge set on the lowest rung of L.A.'s social ladder, amidst the hardscrabble lives of illegal immigrants and the homeless. The fates of Guatemalan death-squad veteran Guillermo Longoria and traumatized, homeless refugee Antonio Bernal have been entwined since the day Longoria killed Antonio's wife and son in Guatemala. Obsessed by memories of his family and also by the mental picture of the assassin with a yellow jaguar tattooed on his forearm, Antonio ends up as one of L.A.'s drifting dispossessed. By chance he sees Longoria in MacArthur Park and is electrified by the possibility of avenging his loved ones. Meanwhile, in alternating chapters, we meet Longoria, a peasant who was forced to join the army but eventually grew to love the power it gave him. He absorbed the twisted logic that justified the massacre of an entire village to drive out the "infection" of communism, but he too is now haunted by memories. The novel's denouement occurs during the 1992 L.A. riots, a colossal day of reckoning when the powerless underclass of L.A. erupts in fury and when both men move toward their fates. Tobar's prose is clear and crisp, authentically colored by the liberal use of Spanish phrases. He never sentimentalizes Antonio's tragic story, and even the hateful Longoria is depicted with understanding of the social forces that molded him. The complexities of these two characters give this novel power and weight. 7500 first printing.

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From Kirkus Reviews

California journalist Tobar's disturbing debut neatly and credibly brings two Guatemalan adversaries together by chance on the streets of Los Angeles, where they play out the endgame of a deadly struggle begun in their homeland. Antonio, once a middle-class government worker in his native land, is now homeless in L.A., having seven years ago just missed the death squad that came for him but instead killed his wife and young son. His despair and shame at having fled have never left him, but when one day he glimpses a Jaguar tattoo on the arm of a chess player in MacArthur Park, recognizing one of his family's killers, Antonio knows a new feeling: vengeance. The ex-soldier Longoria, as yet unaware that he's being stalked, goes about his highly regimented routine, striving to better himself at chess while holding down a security job at a crooked Guatemalan parcel service and keeping his small apartment--where he has a collection of photos of his victims--spotless. Antonio, all but invisible as a homeless man, studies his enemy carefully, then decides to act. But his plan to attack the sergeant at the chess tables with a length of pipe, in broad daylight, is ill-conceived and goes awry. Only wounded, Longoria is now wary, but Antonio doesn't give up. He buys a gun with the help of a homeless friend, and, in the chaos of the South Central riots that erupt soon after, the hunter and his prey meet again in a confrontation that is protracted but decisive and through it Antonio is finally able to put his shame to rest. Tobar's characters are thin, but his tale not only vividly reenacts the horror of death-squad victims everywhere, but also sheds an honest and even light on the stark realities facing the homeless and many immigrants in America. -- *Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Review

Tobar, a *Los Angeles Times* reporter who came from Guatemala as a small child, has a fine storyteller's instinct. -- *The Los Angeles Times, Tom Hayden*

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Todd Jacobs:**

The book with title The Tattooed Soldier includes a lot of information that you can study it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. That book exist new expertise the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world now. That is important to yo7u to know how the improvement of the world. This specific book will bring you in new era of the syndication. You can read the e-book on the smart phone, so you can read this anywhere you want.

**Timothy Payne:**

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or perhaps go to the outside with them household or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent all day long to reading a e-book. The book The Tattooed Soldier it is very good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not very costly but this book possesses high quality.

**Lloyd Schuler:**

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**Marilyn Calhoun:**

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