



The Sound of Things Falling

By Juan Gabriel Vásquez

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An intimate portrayal of the drug wars in Colombia, from international fiction star Juan Gabriel Vasquez.

Juan Gabriel Vásquez has been hailed not only as one of South America's greatest literary stars, but also as one of the most acclaimed writers of his generation. In this New York Times-bestselling, award-winning, gorgeously wrought novel, Vásquez confronts the history of his home country, Colombia.

In the city of Bogotá, Antonio Yammara reads an article about a hippo that had escaped from a derelict zoo once owned by legendary Colombian drug kingpin Pablo Escobar. The article transports Antonio back to when the war between Escobar's Medellín cartel and government forces played out violently in Colombia's streets and in the skies above. Back then, Antonio witnessed a friend's murder, an event that haunts him still. As he investigates, he discovers the many ways in which his own life and his friend's family have been shaped by his country's recent violent past. His journey leads him all the way back to the 1960s and a world on the brink of change: a time before narco-trafficking trapped a whole generation in a living nightmare.

Vásquez is "one of the most original new voices of Latin American literature," according to Nobel Prize winner Mario Vargas Llosa, and *The Sound of Things Falling* is his most personal, most contemporary novel to date, a masterpiece that takes his writing—and his literary star—even higher.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of the Month, August 2013: Juan Gabriel Vasquez will draw comparisons to other major Latin American icons. But while the influence of Roberto Bolaño, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Gabriel García Márquez are present throughout his second novel, *The Sound of Things Falling*, he is a unique literary talent. Translated from Spanish (and exceptionally well, at that), Vasquez moves swiftly and subtly, opening in Bogota, Colombia, reflecting on the mid-'70s when the country was being taken over by drug lords and cartels (fueled by the U.S.'s hunger for cocaine). Law professor Antonio Yammara finds his fate intertwined with that of a shady ex-pilot named Laverde. But *Things Falling* is so much more than a drug story. This is a sensory novel. Antonio wrestles with the way he interprets by his surroundings, by how the external world affects the internal. "[I]t's always disconcerting to discover, when it's another person who brings us the revelation, the slight or complete lack of control we have over our own experience." *The Sound of Things Falling* does so much at once: it's a novel about how the U.S. dangerously influences Latin America, how the present never escapes the past, and how fragile our relationships--romantic and familial--can be. --Kevin Nguyen

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. That story is to blame, declares a character in Colombian author Vasquez's latest novel (after *The Secret History of Costaguana*). Indeed, this book is an exploration of the ways in which stories profoundly impact lives. Around 1996, when murder and bloody mayhem fueled by the drug trade were commonplace in Bogotá, the young law professor Antonio Yammara befriends enigmatic stranger Ricardo Laverde. One night, assassins on motorbikes open fire on the two, killing Laverde and seriously wounding Yammara. Conflicted and at a loss to understand the damage Laverde has wrought, Yammara looks into his life story. Yammara suffers from crippling psychic and physical wounds as a result of the shooting, and his investigation takes him to Laverde's shabby Bogotá apartment, where he receives a gruesome clue from the grieving landlady. Yammara eventually finds Laverde's daughter Maya, a beekeeper who lives in the Colombian countryside. She shows Yammara photos and letters she's collected about the father she never knew. Together they lose themselves in stories of Laverde's childhood; of Maya's American mother, Elaine Fritts; and of Elaine and Laverde's love affair. Vasquez allows the story to become Elaine's, and as the puzzle of Laverde is pieced together, Yammara comes to realize just how thoroughly the stories of these other people are part of his own. Agent: Casanovas & Lynch Agencia Literaria (Spain). (Aug.)

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Ricardo Laverde does the one thing he must do—"A person doesn't have to do anything but die"—cut down in the streets of Bogotá by the same drug lords he once served as a pilot. But in dying, Ricardo leaves behind a billiards-room acquaintance, Antonio Yammara, who lives with an ugly scar from a bullet fired by Ricardo's assassins and with the daunting task of deciphering the hidden meaning of Ricardo's life. Through the literary magic of one of Latin America's most talented novelists, readers share that task with Antonio, probing the violence and fear spawned by the cruelly protracted drug war in which Ricardo perishes. Insistently pressing Antonio for the story behind Ricardo's death is Maya Fitts, daughter of Ricardo and Elena Fitts, an American Peace Corps volunteer who long hides from her daughter the very existence of her criminal father and who herself dies aboard a plane taking her back to Colombia. As readers join Antonio and Maya in listening intently to the black-box recording from that plane, they will marvel at how Vásquez fuses past and present, hope and despair, in one unforgettable moment. A deft translation delivers the searing trauma and the tender intimations of a masterpiece. --Bryce Christensen

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Raymond Custer:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to prepare your time to do the important work, like looking for your favorite guide and reading a e-book. Beside you can solve your trouble; you can add your knowledge by the book entitled The Sound of Things Falling. Try to the actual book The Sound of Things Falling as your good friend. It means that it can being your friend when you really feel alone and beside that of course make you smarter than ever before. Yeah, it is very fortunated for yourself. The book makes you far more confidence because you can know every little thing by the book. So , we need to make new experience in addition to knowledge with this book.

Adria Jenkins:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic inside park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your current free time/ holiday? Could be reading a book may be option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the guide untitled The Sound of Things Falling can be great book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Margaret Gentile:

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Daniel Gutierrez:

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