

La luz difícil

Difficult Light



UK panel's choice AUTUMN 2012

Author: [Tomás González](#) [1]

Publisher: [Alfaguara](#) [2]

Language: Spanish

Year of Publication: 2012

Pages: 144

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Spanish Retail price: 17.00€

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Genre: Literature

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2012

Season: AUTUMN 2012

Jacob has decided to die. A car accident has left him paraplegic and in such pain that his life is unbearable. His father David faces the hardest of tests: witnessing the event. While Jacob travels to a place in the US where it will be possible for him to die, David spends the awful hours in New York, clinging to the hope of an inevitable question: will his son change his mind at the last minute? Nearly twenty years later, his sight failing but his spirit still alert, David reconstructs his life in New York, his days as a prolific painter, Jacob's accident. The stupor of grief does not prevent him from paying infinite attention to beauty, and his story becomes a testament to life itself.

UK panellists opinion:

La luz difícil was a firm candidate to make the short list from the very first moment the panel got hold of it. It has been highly acclaimed in Spain, and the fact that it is "profound and moving, but also a celebration of life" struck a chord with the panellists.

The novel opens with David, Sara, Arturo, his and Jacobo's girlfriends, plus family friends, James and Debrah, waiting to hear from Pablo and Jacobo, who have travelled to Portland, Oregon, where euthanasia is available. They went alone so that they would not arouse too much suspicion, since, as residents in another state, where euthanasia is not permitted, they may be acting illegally.

This is an extraordinarily grim premise for a novel, and yet the book itself becomes a deeply moving celebration of life.[...]

What could have been either a distressingly grim or even sentimental book turns into a fascinating exploration of the imperfections of human relationships and the nature of happiness and unhappiness. The long wait through the night for news from Jacobo provides a tight thread that keeps you reading and keeps you involved. With its dual setting of New York and Colombia, it would, I think, translate very well for English-speaking readers."

(From the reader report by [Margaret Jull Costa](#) [3])

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Additional information Prizes and reviews:

"Tomás González has the potential to become a classic of Latin American literature. Reading him, I had the sensation that he is a very pure writer." Elfirde Jelinek, Nobel Prize for Literature 2004

"If García Márquez is Wagner, Tomás González is Bob Dylan." Arcadia magazine, Colombia

"Tomás González' new novel looks set to be the definitive success for an author considered the best kept secret of Colombian literature." Semana magazine, Colombia

"I shall never forget the satisfaction I felt on finishing Difficult Light. I could wish for no more from literature." Luis Fernando Afanador, critic for Semana magazine.

"Horror living alongside beauty" Babelia

"Tomás González is a story teller of universal range." Die Zeit

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