The fat man at the fair
Author:
Esther García Llovet

READER'S NAME: Annette Vázquez Sánchez

The Spanish book, Gordo de Feria, is Esther Garcia Llovet's latest work deemed by the critics as a type of dark fiction. It is a narrative with an odd blend of horror, suspense, thriller, and dark comedy. Odd, because it begins with an anaphora that has a purpose and incites suspicion. Why the redundancy in this piece? Is there something amiss? The only way to decipher the enigma is to plow through the minutia to understand the story. That said, we return to the setting in Madrid in the first chapter that introduces the protagonist, Luis, a self-centered man who goes by the name of Castor. This man loathes social activities that are associated with his career as a celebrity. He tries to escape these situations by becoming drunk or performing some other antic to stay antisocial. Strangely, by chance, he crosses paths with another guy, Julio, who happens to look like his twin. Castor decides to take advantage of the situation and convert this so-called twin into his alter ego for his selfish reasons: to escape the "stalker" fans and awkward social functions. However, when the bizarre series of events unravel, the foreshadowing of the connection between these two is evident. For Castor, himself, unwittingly stumbles into a trap of mistaken identity or, did he? Now, who is playing whom?

Overall, the complexity of the storyline takes the reader on a journey to experience a host of undescriptive emotions that include shock, horror, and other things I cannot say here. The key is to pay attention to the facts and to continue turning the pages.

In regards to translation, the only issue I foresee is maintaining the style in the target language. Additionally, some of the characters may require changes to their names. If those changes are implemented, I think the book may fare well in the United States. The book already has mixed ratings.