Chapín classes
Author:
Eduardo Halfon

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This short stories collection deals with characters subjected to displacement, uprootedness and cross cultural experiences, which also bring to the center of the patriarchal society voices pervasively left on the margins. Women, children, elderly people, indigenous and mestizo individuals take central stage, along with ethnic and deprived social groups, historically oppressed by supremacists and ultranationalists factions.

With an incisive and direct language, the author immerses the reader in a world where the uncanny transforms the common into the unusual; and an open, or most often, latent violence shakes the protagonists' lives. The autobiographical, present in his previous books, conveys a sense of dislocation, positioning the narrator as chronicler of the unfolding drama witnessed by the reader. Such strategy builds a close identification between them, allowing for an open ending where the last word is never said but is always understood.

The book's themes will appeal to an American reader interested in the relations between the United States and Latin America, as well as in how American culture is perceived within Hispanic society and vice versa, especially by the oppressed. In fact, the word *chapín* is used as a derogative term, for Guatemalans of poor background, in large parts of the American continent.

Guatemalan author Eduardo Halfon is a well-known writer of Jewish descent who has lived all his life between the USA and his native country. Three of his novels have been published in English by Bellevue Literary Press. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and has won the José María de Pereda Prize for Short Novel with *La pirueta* (2010), among other awards.