



Imperial Yellow: A Novel

Douglas Atwill

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An unexpected death in Donovan Merrill's family makes it necessary that his grandmother, Anna, and he leave the rectory in San Miguel. They move into her summer cottage in the midst of the artist colony in the Laguna Beach of 1938, starting life over. It will be difficult with their diminished resources, but Donovan and Anna prove up to the task. They find friends and mentors among the painters and bohemians, Donovan early on deciding that he will become a painter himself. After the war years, Anna encourages him to study in Paris; he paints for a summer in Provence and survives a difficult winter in Rome. On his return to the states, he finds a place in Santa Fe, starting his painting career in a rented adobe. When he meets Tomas de la Pena, a young Mexican writer, his life begins to tumble. Tomas's efforts at writing are unformed, not so flourishing as Donovan's career, so competitive troubles ensue. After building a house together, they must face Tomas's continuing disquiet. Time in Laguna is good to Anna, happy in her growing circle of artist friends. A love affair and a later marriage to a German expatriate make a striking contrast to her old life as a minister's wife in San Miguel. She worries as Donovan finds his way, and supports him emotionally and financially. But Donovan proves he can succeed on his own. This is the author's fourth book for Sunstone Press, after "Why I Won't Be Going to Lunch Anymore" in 2004, "The Galisteo Escarpment in 2008," and "Creep Around the Corner" in 2009. DOUGLAS ATWILL grew up in California and Texas, lived in Europe and on the East Coast before moving to Santa Fe to paint. His canvases are shown in galleries throughout the nation and his avocation is the design and construction of vernacular Santa Fe residences.

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