



How I Became a Nun

César Aira , Chris Andrews (Translator)

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A sinisterly funny modern-day *Through the Looking Glass* that begins with cyanide poisoning and ends in strawberry ice cream.

"My story, the story of 'how I became a nun,' began very early in my life; I had just turned six. The beginning is marked by a vivid memory, which I can reconstruct down to the last detail. Before, there is nothing, and after, everything is an extension of the same vivid memory, continuous and unbroken, including the intervals of sleep, up to the point where I took the veil ." So starts Cesar Aira's astounding "autobiographical" novel. Intense and perfect, this invented narrative of childhood experience bristles with dramatic humor at each stage of growing up: a first ice cream, school, reading, games, friendship. The novel begins in Aira's hometown, Coronel Pringles. As self-awareness grows, the story rushes forward in a torrent of anecdotes which transform a world of uneventful happiness into something else: the anecdote becomes adventure, and adventure, fable, and then legend. Between memory and oblivion, reality and fiction, Cesar Aira's *How I Became a Nun* retains childhood's main treasures: the reality of fable and the delirium of invention.

A few days after his fiftieth birthday, Aira noticed the thin rim of the moon, visible despite the rising sun. When his wife explained the phenomenon to him he was shocked that for fifty years he had known nothing about "something so obvious, so visible." This epiphany led him to write *How I Became a Nun*. With a subtle and melancholic sense of humor he reflects on his failures, on the meaning of life, and the importance of literature.

How I Became a Nun Details

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From Reader Review How I Became a Nun for online ebook

Anthony Vacca says

César Aira writes a book about a mischievous boy (or girl) named César Aira that begins with terrorists poisoning strawberry ice cream with cyanide and ends a brisk 117 pages later with, well, a LOT of strawberry ice cream. Sandwiched between all the strawberry ice cream, César Aira relates César Aira's formative years as an androgynous imp, terrorizing superstitious nurses, his (or her) prison-bird father and long-suffering mother, a fragile school teacher and a schoolyard friend with an affinity for tacky suits and exaggerated decorum. César Aira's prose goes down savory and sweet as, say, ice cream, even if César Aira's narration disturbingly hints at the ease with which we can learn duplicity young, which, unseen, will poison our lives like, say, cyanide. Whether this is an offbeat riff on the kind of cautionary fables that made the Brothers Grimm famous or a sly treatise on the birth of the creative life, what I can promise you is that César Aira delivers a charming way to pass a thoughtful evening alone--so long as you weren't expecting any nuns to appear in the actual text.

Jeff Jackson says

Here's another case where ratings fail.

5 stars for the first half of the novel.

3 stars for the second half.

1 star for the ending.

Which equals...?

A lot of reader turbulence for such a short book.

Or:

I'm glad I read this but also glad I read "An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter" and "Ghosts" first.

Look forward to more Cesar Aira in the near future.

s.penkevich says

I was the sole keeper and mistress of the impossible.

Reality is the playground of the writer with memories and the artifacts of their past as the swings and slides for their games. César Aira's *How I Became a Nun* is a humorous jaunt through the life of a 6 year old boy—or girl—also named César Aira as s/he learns the magic of blending fact and fantasy to better understand the undercurrent of magic pulsing through plain reality. Through a lonely pilgrimage of childhood, César experiments with fiction in a preparation towards a life of being an author, a sacred undertaking of servitude to Stories much like entering the Sisterhood of Nuns.

'Fiction and reality were fused at this point; my simulation was becoming real, tinting all my lies with truth.'

As in Elizabeth Hardwick's exquisite *Sleepless Nights*, Aira blends biography (though very limited) with fiction to create a lush tale where the lines between reality and fantasy are not only blurred but become irrelevant. The narrator of this story is César Aira, but not necessarily the César Aira writing the story, who is also not necessarily the same César Aira when he is *not* writing the story. They share the same hometown of Coronel Pringles, Argentina and enough subtle similarities to trick the reader into stepping dangerously

toward an Intentional fallacy of assuming the author and narrator are one and the same, but this is all for sport and elevates the playfulness of his often meta-driven novels. César the narrator often identifies as a girl (though once as a boy in the opening chapter), despite all the outsider characters referring to César as a boy. This opens up an intrigue of gender identification, and it could be inferred that César experienced an emasculation of sorts after the tragedy of the opening scene with his father. However, such an interpretation seems too concrete for a book with such playful transparency. It does not matter which gender the narrator is, and the novel works equally well if César is a son or daughter; in the art of fiction an author must be able to identify as many characters, male or female, and must do so convincingly for the story to be accepted into the soul of the reader. César Aira presents both as a reminder that the author's own gender identification must be pushed aside to fully immerse into the realm of the character.

'The transformation could go either way, reality becoming delirium or dream, but the real dream turned dreamlike in turn, becoming the angel, or reality.'

César the narrator experiments with blending fact and fiction throughout the novel, preparing for a life as an author. An important lesson is learned early on when sitting on a ledge above a prison in which his father is interned.

All the prisoners were my dad, and I loved him...now I knew that love was more, much more than that. I had to become the guardian angel of all the desperate men to discover what love really was.

The author must watch their characters from an on-high vantage point, and truly love them all in order to understand them and make them work. Later, César spends hours in the bedroom imagining teaching a lesson to a classroom of student, students based on his/her own classmates. Students are imagined with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. However, *'I hadn't invented disorders so much as systems of difficulty. They weren't destined to be cured but developed.'* It is an act of creation, developing problems not to solve them but to bring them to fruition as a believable aspect of the fictitious classroom. Like a good author, César learns to create individuals that also must serve as a universal idea: *'they were nobody and they were everyone.'* And through creating and teaching, César also learns and watches ideas form as if on their own power. Like an author, César guides a story while simultaneously being *guided* by it.

How I Became a Nun is a wonderful little novel in which no Nuns are present. Instead, the nunhood is a vague metaphor for the calling of an author, in which they must devote their lives to the name of art. Like the *'voice of the radio within the radio'*, in which the fictitious voice of God delivers a moral message at the end of a religious radio program, the author must become the radio while also hearing *'the radio within the radio'* that is the natural growth of the story being transmitted through them. This is a fantastically humorous and brief book that manages to breathlessly juggle a wide-reaching allegory, many aspects of which I have left untouched here. Literature is one of the closest things to magic we have in our world, the sort of magic that dazzles the heart and imagination of a young child, and Aira is a masterful purveyor into this magical world.

3.5/5

My vision couldn't be satisfied with what was visible, it had to go rushing on, beyond, into the abyss...

Jim says

No such thing! The "I" of César Aira's **How I Became a Nun** does not, in the course of this short novel become a nun. All the more so, because the main character morphs incessantly from being a little girl (unnamed) and a little boy named César Aira, who, like the eponymous author, is from Coronel Pringles in the State of Buenos Aires.

But then we are in Aira country, where strange things happen and in turn morph into even stranger ones. The story begins with the narrator of indeterminate gender being taken by his/her father to an ice cream store to taste -- for the first time -- ice cream in the big city of Rosario to which the family had just moved. The strawberry ice cream cone does not have the desired effect, however, and the narrator finds it completely inedible. The father upbraids the hero/ine until, finally, he takes a taste himself and spits it out. He marches back into the store and demands that the clerk taste the cone, which he refuses to do. We learn from author Aira that:

I was a victim of the terrible cyanide contamination ... the great wave of lethal food poisoning that was sweeping Argentina and the neighboring countries that year ... The air was thick with fear, because it struck when least expected, any foodstuff could be contaminated, even the most natural ... potatoes, pumpkin, meat, rice oranges ... In my case it was ice cream.

The father pushes the clerk's head into the vat of strawberry ice cream until he dies. He is arrested and made to serve an eight-year term for his crime.

In any case, once she gets released from the hospital, the narrator gets on with his/her life, being called alternately a boy or a girl -- sometimes even within the same scene. As I read the book, I kept noting the gender with the male or female symbol as appropriate. (There were approximately forty such switches.)

There are two quotes in the novel that give you an idea of how the crafty Aira the author was leading us on. On page 68: "Because reality, the only sphere in which I could have acted, kept withdrawing at the speed of my desire to enter it ..." Then, on page 106: "I was incorrigible. The game was my freedom."

I will not divulge the odd surprise ending, but do note that any number of endings were possible by the time the narrator has lived a full year after the ice cream incident. It just happened to be the one that Aira the author pulled out of his capacious top hat.

Asl?han Çelik Tufan says

Böyle k?sac?k bir yaz?m?n içinde bu kadar güzel bir sarmal ve böylesi ba? döndürücü bir labirent!

Takdire ?ayan!

Tavsiyemdir!

Garima says

We lost ourselves in a labyrinth that I can reconstruct step by step.

'How I became a Nun' introduces us to an exceptional and somewhat intimidating architect who generously makes use of imagination for constructing a unique narrative. Something keeps on happening here; if not in the form of reality then in the infinite space of fiction. Our belief or disbelief in the strange lives this book depicts is our own business only and whether we derive from it a healthy dose of entertainment or an inedible diet of perturbation hardly matters. What really matters is that nobody and nothing remains homeless in this world.

That was the tragedy of my childhood and my whole life...My vision couldn't be satisfied with what was visible, it had to go rushing on, beyond, into the abyss, dragging me along behind...

Here's another knock on the door of childhood with twists and turns galore. With *W* or the *Memory of Childhood* and *The Notebook* *The Proof* *The Third Lie* *Three Novels*, I already had my fair share of unexpected journeys into the erratic minds of children but guess every childhood is different irrespective of the happiness or unhappiness it experiences. The same holds true for this book also. This is the story of Argentina, relocation, parents, kids, ice-cream, hating the ice-cream, school, hating the teachers, deconstructing the reality and inventing a fiction which in turn befuddles the life of our protagonist, who is a 6 year old, César Aira. Although with that name enters the spirit of metafiction in this story but rest assured, whatever is in store for a reader is anything but clichéd tricks.

This is my second Aira read after *An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter* where I did realize that he was an 'almost' great writer and wholeheartedly wanted to believe in Bolano's enthusiastic recommendation too but a small link between *really liked it* and *it was amazing* was missing for me. So I was vigilant with this book and kept looking for that 'almostness' but all I got was a unique blend of perfection and perfectly acceptable flaws chapter by chapter. There's only so much one can demand from a novella and Aira, with his compelling ingenuity and spirited writing has delivered a lot here.

That space, that happiness had a color: rose-pink. The pink of the sky at sunset, a vast, transparent, faraway pink whose absurd apparition represented my life. I was vast, transparent and faraway, and my absurd life represented the sky. Living was painting: coloring myself with the pink of the inexplicably suspended light...

Cheryl says

A boy no a girl no a boy child.

Written as if the grown up self is remembering the events of his life at age 6, and trying not to filter it through the lens of reality.

A child's reality is different. Dreams may be real. Reality may seem dream-like. Dreams and reality may be the same. The experience is the reality, whether it is felt in conventional consciousness or altered states. Memories are distorted, incomplete and fleeting. They are warped by dreams, and dreams are warped by memories.

All culminating in a Grimm-like ending.

Lee says

A generous three stars for this intentionally confounded, maybe too readable story about the confusions of early youth. It starts promisingly, with a vivid, clear, clever, simple scene, but soon after devolves into Celinesque delirium (lots of ellipses, I mean), and thereafter rarely accelerates. Representative thematic (not stylistic) sentence is probably: "It was a transformation of reality . . . The transformation could go either way, reality becoming delirium or dream, but the real dream turned dreamlike in turn, becoming the angel, or reality." At best, the varyingly male or female narrator's story makes sense in terms of the forward-flowing, rationally irrational spirit of childhood, but I probably would've abandoned this if it were much longer than 117 pages. Typos on page 100 ("though" instead of "thought") and page 111 ("that" instead of "than") suggest that even the copyeditor/proofreader wasn't so engaged. Awarded an extra star because sometimes

the sensibility and talent of the same writer who wrote *Episodes in the Life of a Landscape Painter* seemed to seep through . . . An OK little book, a forgettable entertainment with a bit of an edge, like a one-peso cone of strawberry-cyanide ice cream.

Mike Puma says

One likely to piss off some readers. It needn't. It will, it has, but it needn't.

A precocious little girl (boy), César Aira—not the author, César Aira, or the César Aira who narrates *The Literary Conference*, but a fictional César Aira who will likely narrate other books by César Aira—recounts the traumatic event which begins her life in a new city before she (he) becomes increasingly distanced from the reality that others participate in. A little mind-fuck of a book given that she (he) narrates the final scene which cannot be discussed without spoiling. Not for everyone; definitely for me. Ponderous.

If it's any consolation to those who may have attended Catholic schools (and are not quite over it yet), or the religious (the understanding of whom requires more patience than I generally have), or the anti-religious (in the margins of whom I reside), no nuns were harmed in the making of this novel. ~~In fact, no nuns are to be seen anywhere.~~ That might be a spoiler; forget I mentioned it.

jeremy says

one of the more striking characteristics of césar aira's fiction is how much fun it seems he must be having while writing his stories. not limited by the constraint of genre, aira's novellas often move effortlessly between them, without ever an inkling of it seeming forced or contrived. despite their relative brevity, aira's works (though i am unable as yet to determine just how) have an enduring effect far greater than books i thought i enjoyed more than his. this lasting mark may well be testament to aira's unrestrained storytelling style, as well as his allegiance to originality.

how i became a nun is the tale of an aberrant, somewhat precocious six-year old boy named césar aira (whom refers to himself as a girl). after a tainted ice cream cone leads to illness and hospitalization, young césar's reality begins to blend with fantasy. as compulsion and curiosity take over, césar must learn to navigate the hardships of both the first grade and the world around him (her).

aira's works are neither linear, narrative fiction nor surrealism simply for the sake of it. he instead crafts works of great imagination that seem to have been written, above all, for the love of a good story itself. the variety and creativity of his short works is simply bewildering. as his dozens of books slowly make their way into translation, i imagine the immense talent of this prodigious argentinean will become more widely recognized.

translated from the spanish by chris andrews (aira's *ghosts* and *an episode in the life of a landscape painter*, as well as most of roberto bolaño's works to appear in english).

Ellie says

How I Became a Nun by César Aira is a short, hallucinatory novel. It seemed to me it's about becoming a writer. The convent Aira enters is that of fiction, where the rules of reality are suspended and the possession of an individual reality is renounced ("So I gave up the idea of imitating him and having a personality dimly intuiting that my only hope of being someone lay in this renunciation").

Despite the brevity of the book, it felt packed, although I'm not sure with what. I found myself highlighting constantly.

The central character is, like the author, is named Aira and switches gender frequently. Aira is six years old. S/he is compulsive game player-like every child but also like every writer. S/he creates the rules but is also created by them. The rules are complicated but have their own fascination and failure provides a greater impetus to growth than success. The game-also reality-is determined by the shifting nature of the subject, reality springs from the subject rather than the usual reverse order. Like any good writer, Aira follows the development of the fiction by following its own inherent nature wherever it goes.

Reality, like the narrator, is a constantly shifting construct, the nature of which is both fluid and determined (by the "rules" of the narration). There is a theme of "going too far" not only the narrator, but his/her father (in the opening episode of the book), the mother (who goes to Aira's school to "protect" him/her but becomes hysterical), Aira's friend who wears bizarre clothes that underpin the construction of his personality/reality, and others.

Aira writes of the "free wheeling complications of reality" and moments of "sheer permutation," that are indeed reflections of the story and, perhaps, the nature of writing. Similarly, Aira writes "contradictory" nature of reality (such as the lead character being both male and female).

To write more is to risk giving away the "surprise" ending, although there are hints of this ending beforehand (or at least to the nature of the ending if not the actual facts of it).

The style of my review seems to me to strongly reflect my reading of this book, which was a strange and delightful experience. I will be reading more of this author.

Algernon says

Meet the most precocious and contrarian six years old in all Argentina. He (or she) has a story to tell, and it's a real whopper! When the family moves from small town Pringles (not the one that grows chips, the other one) to bustling Rosario, our undersized and unreliable narrator feels threatened, even when taken out by her (his?) father for a treat : the very first taste of strawberry ice cream.

My anxiety was mounting exponentially. Ice cream seemed the cruelest instrument of torture ever invented.

I can fully sympathize with the little egghead, constantly told what to do by big people who assured him (or her?) that they know better what's good for a child. I don't remember much from my pre-school days, but I have a clear picture of being told to do something and doing the exact opposite just to annoy my parents and then bursting into tears of outrage when they tried to use logic on me. The more they pushed me in one direction, the more I moved in the opposite corner, and when else failed, lying through my teeth and not budging an inch from my contrarian stance. (in my case this competition about who is most mulish usually ended with a belt strap and more howling)

The ice cream scene that opens this short novel / long novella is emblematic of this relationship between the two worlds : the child and the adult, and the way language breaks down in trying to translate feelings from one age to another, especially when precocious children are involved.

I was fastened to a pain that towered over my childhood, my smallness, and my extreme vulnerability, indicating the scale of the universe.

Ambiguity and dissimulation drive the narrative, creating a story that is alternatively extremely hilarious then in the next moment heavy with tragedy. Underneath the buffoonery is a real drama, as a young mind is trying to cope with traumatic experiences by refusing reality and taking shelter inside its own imagination.

Everybody tells little Cesar Aira he is a boy, but he knows better: she is a girl and she is persecuted by the grown-ups who conspire to make her normal, like everybody else : *Why didn't I have any dolls? Why was I the only girl in the whole world who didn't have a single doll? (view spoiler) ... and I didn't have a doll to keep me company. I never had one and I didn't know why. It wasn't because my parents were poor or stingy. There was some other mysterious reason ...* . The adults are devious and clueless about what goes on inside this sensitive and imaginative mind. Why should everybody be so fond of strawberry ice cream?

Entrapment and the quest to escape abusive authority start with the fateful ice cream cone and move, chapter by chapter, through being a prisoner in a hospital bed, playing hide and seek in a real prison, becoming a pariah in the classroom and finally, (view spoiler) . The only weapon little Cesar has is inside his (or her?) own mind, creating endless stories to replace the hostile reality, making scenes in public places in order to get noticed : *"Where's my dad?" (Poor Mom. Who could blame her for thinking I was doing it on purpose?)* , or endlessly listening to the fictional lives of people from radio soap operas.

The grown-ups are of little help throughout the few months that cover the narrative. Father is too obtuse to listen to a child's complaint, mother too tired and worried about the future, the other children too cruel or self-absorbed. My favorite scene is a meltdown of the primary school teacher when faced with our narrator subversive attitude:

That Aira boy ... He's here among you, and he doesn't seem any different. Maybe you haven't noticed him, he's so insignificant. But he's here. Don't be fooled. I always tell you the true, the theck, the trove. You are good, clever, sweet children. Even the ones who are naughty, or have to repeat, or get into fights all the time. You're normal, you're all the same, because you have a second mother. Aira is a moron. He might seem the same to you, but he's a moron all the same. He's a monster.

I would laugh if it weren't for those long faded memories of early childhood when I seemed all alone in the world. Why go out and risk getting laughed at, knocked down and rejected when you can live safely inside your own mind, fed by fantasies from books, radio, television? Cesar may be borderline autistic, I don't know – I haven't really studied the condition in detail, but some of the feelings on display here don't go away when we grow up, we just get better at hiding them and at lying to others and to ourselves:

The experienced liar knows that the secret of success is to pretend convincingly not to know certain

things. For example the consequences of what one is saying, so that others will seem to discover them first. [...] The governor was bound to fall for my ploy. He would think: It's too complicated not to be true. That's what they always think; it's the golden rule of fiction. He would believe me completely.

I used earlier the most abused literary term of unreliable narrator. I would like to go back to it and issue a retraction : Cesar is not an unreliable narrator, just a confused one, and in this here confession she (or he) makes an honest attempt at describing the experiences of alienation and despair that come into our lives much earlier than acknowledged.

But the panic that I was exhibiting was all too real. As usual, I had managed to confuse her. It was easy: all I had to do was confuse myself.

These layers of meaning and these so relatable emotions are what make the present novella much more than a funny, post-modernist fable. Even the title is ambiguous and subversive: my take on it is that it is a metaphor describing the rejection of reality and taking refuge in a fictional story(religion). I plan to check out other offerings from this intriguing and engaging author.

Cosimo says

La bambina che non ero

“Ebbene: la mia memoria si confonde con la radio. O, per meglio dire, io sono la radio. In virtù della perfezione senza difetti della mia memoria, sono la radio di quell'inverno. Non l'apparecchio, il meccanismo, bensì ciò che ne veniva fuori, la trasmissione, il continuum, quello che si trasmetteva sempre, anche quando la spegnevamo, o quando dormivo o ero a scuola. La mia memoria contiene tutto, ma la radio è una memoria che contiene se stessa, e io sono la radio”.

Non sono molti gli scrittori che riescono a esprimersi in una prosa imprevedibile e mutevole, che in una logica rovesciata comunica con insistenza la presenza nelle nostre vite di un aspetto di comico orrore, fondandosi su creatività e molteplicità di linguaggio e idee. L'incredibile Cèsar Aira è tra questi autori dalla vocazione antiletteraria e originale. Complessa e inspiegabile la sua trama, fino alla dislessia, come un sistema di difficoltà verbale, come forma dell'infinito possibile e inconscio, tanto vertiginose e carnevalesche risultano a tratti le costruzioni surreali e fantastiche di questo prolifico e visionario narratore. Egli stesso descrive il suo humour nella penna come un terribile fallimento. *Como me hice monja* è la storia di come un bambino-problema adotta un punto di vista adulto e diviene un bambino-comune: un bambino di nome César Aira che è tanto sensibile da parlare di sé al femminile e con concreta iperbole esce dall'infanzia, trasformando se stesso con un percorso allucinatorio, in una storia di allegra assurdità e disgustoso umorismo, conclusa da una fantasia tanto nera e surreale, quanto tragicamente coerente. Cèsar Aira non si stanca di rintracciare dentro il reale, dietro l'apparire, rivelazioni, sorprese, nascite, metamorfosi, epifenomeni, cambiamenti, scoperte, ossessioni: in una consapevole finitezza c'è sempre spazio per diversità, mostruosità, errore e maledizione. I suoi caratteri: ideali e virtuali nella mente, difettosi congegni linguistici e biologici nella pratica, compulsivamente bugiardi e ingenui. Aira ha un'idea inimitabile e irripetibile di lieto fine, che è enigmatico e ha a che fare con la categoria del bizzarro, dello strano (*raro*, in spagnolo) che proviene dalla sua attività di traduttore, dalla familiarità con la pratica del tradimento, delle attese e degli equivoci del senso, del gioco con il lettore e con se stesso come ecologia di significato, mentre ricercano entrambi l'altro dentro di sé (o in un luogo immaginario e ingannevole come la scrittura). Questo testo è un contenitore atipico, come una scatola magica senza fondo, dentro si trovano magnetiche corrispondenze, metafore sovversive, cecità gestuali, attraversamenti, negoziazioni con il reale che ne scoprono il lato

beffardo. E' una fuga formale dalla combinazione del caso lo scrivere di Aira, Aira bambino o bambina di sei anni che fugge dall'abbraccio materno, e poi lo insegue, e infine ne è definitivamente defraudato, smarrito e catturato in un abbraccio ben più inquietante e sinistro. Il trionfo della morte sulla vita in questo breve racconto metafisico è semplice e radicale nella sua negatività, tanto da apparire grottesco, ma così essenzialmente difficile da non poter non essere vero. Aira in una modalità irrealistica ci racconta la sua infanzia, ne traveste il ricordo in un limbo, per una straordinaria inclinazione a nascondere, tramite la magia della letteratura (*"io non so leggere"*, confessa tra disarmonia e vergogna il piccolo César). Roberto Bolaño scrisse che Aira è uno dei migliori scrittori in lingua spagnola: accostandolo visceralmente a Fernández, Gombrowicz e Roussel, annotava queste parole sul suo talento: "argentino di Coronel Pringles, città della provincia di Buenos Aires che non posso fare a meno di accettare come reale, anche se sembra inventata da lui, il suo figlio più illustre, l'uomo che ha scritto le parole più lucide sulla madre (mistero verbale) e sul padre (una certezza geometrica)". Tutto questo con una breve novella che sembra una fiaba, una biografia emotiva dove un padre accoppa un gelataio, completamente aperta ad ogni genere di interpretazione: anche questa, come una prova di realismo eccentrico, sarà del tutto inventata.

"In questo caso, e forse anche in tutti gli altri, ebbi la meravigliosa consolazione di sapere che ero un angelo. Questo fatto trasformava la situazione, la rendeva un sogno, ma come realtà. Era una trasformazione della realtà. Anche i crudeli deliri patiti quando avevo la febbre erano una trasformazione, ma di segno opposto. Il sogno reale era la forma della realtà come felicità, come paradiso. Nello stesso movimento la realtà diventava delirio o sogno, ma anche il sogno diventava sogno, e quello era l'angelo, o la realtà".

Schenardi intervista Aira

Sotto il Vulcano Aira e Traduzione

Lukáš Palán says

Jelikož César Aira nevyšel český, musel jsem jej opřít v elektronické hospodě, tedy v epubu. Škoda, že se takhle nedá přist i Becherovka, to bych byl tak zelektronickovaněj, že by mi kámoši říkali Palivo Žárovka. Již teď si velmi dobře uvědomuji, co za hovadiny píšu, ale nesmažuje, i přesto, že mám rád smažený vajíčko. Třeba smažák. Nebo hranolky. A nebo zmrzlinu!

A tahle knížka je mimochodem o zmrzlině! Já bych snad architekt - nikdo jiný neumí dělat takovýchle naturálních oslí mosty a přechody jako já. Jak jsem již napsal, všechno se uvede do pohybu, když šestiletý César odmítne zmrzlinu. Ta je totiž otrávená kyanidem, což rozřídí fotra Cézara a zmrzlináře v ní zamorduje. No a pak sledujeme šestiletý děcko, jak začne chodit do školy, přičemž Aira rozebírá vajíčko, který s dětem moc společného nemají, ale spíš se všim okolo - je tedy pravděpodobné, že knihu napsal na kole, když jezdil okolo stolu. Když už jsem pomalu přestal oceňovat, že umí psát a trochu se drbal na hlavě, k čemu to jako má být, Aira navalil takovej závěr, že mi spadla brada. Naštěstí jsem výjimečně nespadol na záchod, takže mi nespadlo do mísy.

Já dávám 8/10 a s Airou si dám ještě minimálně jedno rande.

Shawn Mooney says

Without a doubt the worst most unsatisfying book I've read this millenium. I hated everything about it, with every fibre of my being. A boy/girl and his dad eat cyanide-tainted strawberry ice cream: the enraged dad

kills the ice cream man and goes to jail. The kid recovers. Nothing else in this horrible little book made sense or was funny or the slightest bit interesting. Did I mention that I hated it?
