



A Brief Life

Juan Carlos Onetti

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First published in 1950, this is a brilliant novel by one of the greats of Latin American literature

“Onetti's novels are the corner stones of our modernity.”—Carlos Fuentes

“The Graham Greene of Uruguay...foreshadowing the work of Beckett and Camus.”—*Sunday Telegraph*

“When you see that someone can write so well, it makes you want to believe that things can't be so bad in this world.”—**Mario Vargas Llosa**

“Latin American literature has few secrets to divulge to the English-speaking world; but one of them is the Uruguayan novelist Juan Carlos Onetti.”—*The Guardian* (UK)

In **A Brief Life**, Juan Carlos Onetti's protagonist, Brausen, is caring for his wife after a long illness. To compensate for the physical void which temporarily stalls their caresses, Brausen eavesdrops on the conversation of his neighbors, a husband and wife, imagining their gestures and their expressions.

But he not only wishes to imagine himself as someone else, he also seeks release from the world he knows. He leads many lives, some real and some fantastic, in order to experience a moment of psychic weightlessness—a “brief life.”

Juan Carlos Onetti is acknowledged as one of the great Latin American writers of the twentieth century. His best-known work is *The Shipyard*. He died in 1994.

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