

The Storyteller

[music: *Gnossienne No. 5* by *Eric Satie*]

Hello and welcome to the *nomadamin* English podcast. I'm Amin Bahmani Yeganeh, an English teacher and the founder of *nomadamin*. Every episode, a fascinating subject is chosen to help you improve your English, and gain new perspectives on the world. I, the storyteller, will be using intermediate English with a **pinch of** higher-level language for you to learn. If you miss something, you can always skip back and listen again. Full transcripts are also offered at <http://nomadamin.com/podcast>.

[Introduction]

Today, we're **diving into** the award-winning novel, one of my favorite books ever, *The Storyteller*, by *Mario Vargas Llosa*. We'll talk about the author, the plot of the story, the notions and ideas, **what have you**. But, don't worry. I'm not **gonna** spoil the book for you.

[Author]

Before anything else, let me tell you a bit about the author, *Mario Vargas Llosa*. *Mario Vargas Llosa* is a Peruvian writer and journalist who is considered one of the most important writers of **contemporary** literature in Latin America. He has received numerous **accolades** throughout his career, including *the Nobel Prize in Literature* in 2010.

[Plot]

The Storyteller is a novel set in a small town in Peru, which focuses on the life of an elderly storyteller named *Saúl Zuratas*. *Saúl* is **revered** by the town's people for his exceptional storytelling abilities. However, this all changes when a young boy named *Mascarita* comes to study in the town. *Saúl's* **tales** are **captivating**, but also disturbing, and they force *Mascarita* to **confront** his own past. As the two men become closer, they **delve deeper into** the stories that *Saúl* tells, ultimately leading to a shocking **revelation**.

[Concepts]

[music: *Song of Sadhana* by *Jesse Gallagher*]

Through the stories of *Saúl Zuratas*, readers learn about the connection between storytelling and identity, the power of storytelling, and how stories can **preserve** culture and tradition. We see how storytelling can be used to both **heal** and harm, and how it can be a **means** of both escape and connection. Also, the novel explores the tension between tradition and modernity, as the town and its **inhabitants** struggle to balance their **heritage** with the need to embrace a modern world. Besides, the reader gets to know about some customs, beliefs, and the **exotic** lifestyle of *the Machiguenga* who are **indigenous** to the jungles of

Southeastern Peru. This aspect of the book is my favorite. I was amazed, **stunned**, by these people and their perspective towards life, which in some cases is much more humane compared to the **so-called** modern people.

[Quotes]

Here are a few quotes from the book that give a taste of *Llosa's* writing style:

- *“Each story is a path that opens up for us, each is subject to the same options as we are in life: we can choose to follow it or **abandon** it... When I began to tell stories, my life changed, just as my life changed when I started to be a farmer, or a **shepherd**. I don't know if you can understand it, Mascarita, but for every storyteller, his stories are his life, and each one marks a step forward or backward, a **stride** to the right or one to the left, in the search for his own destiny and identity.”*
- *“The truth is that every storyteller is a bit of a liar. But it's not just about lying, it's about creating something new, something that never existed before.”*

[Reviews]

The novel has received great critical **acclaim**, with many reviewers **praising** *Llosa's* ability to **weave together** different stories and themes in a **compelling** and **thought-provoking** read. *The New York Times* called it “a brilliantly **intricate** exploration of the nature of storytelling itself”, while *The Guardian* described it as “a **masterful** work that blends the personal and the political with great skill.”

[Other Books]

If you've already read and enjoyed *The Storyteller*, or would like to know about the rest of *Llosa's* work, don't worry. **I've got you covered**. One of his most famous novels is *The **Feast** of the Goat*, which tells the story of the **assassination** of Dominican Republic dictator *Rafael Trujillo*. Another great read is *Aunt Julia and the **Scriptwriter***, which is a partially **autobiographical** novel about a young writer's relationship with an older, **eccentric** radio scriptwriter.

[Closing]

And **that's it** for now. *The Storyteller* is a captivating and **insightful** read that explores the power of storytelling and its impact on society. It is a must-read for anyone interested in Latin American literature or simply looking for a great story. I invite you to continue to **turn the page** with *nomadamin*, of course while improving your English, and **tune in** for another exciting episode. Until then, keep writing your own story!

Words List

a pinch of: a small amount of something
to dive into/in: to start doing something energetically
what have you: things like that
gonna: going to
contemporary: modern, present
accolade: award, prize
revered: admired, respected
tale: story
captivating: attractive
to confront: to face
to delve into: to try hard to find out more information about something
revelation: revealing a secret or the truth
to preserve: to protect, to conserve
to heal: to cure
means: method, or instrument used to obtain a result
inhabitant: resident
heritage: valuable objects that have been passed down from previous generations
exotic: unusual and exciting because of coming from far away
indigenous: native, local
stunned: very shocked or surprised, astonished
so-called: used to show a word that is used to describe something is not suitable
to abandon: to leave
shepherd: a person whose job is to take care of sheep
stride: a long step when walking or running
acclaim: admiration, praise
to praise: to admire, to praise, to acclaim
to weave together: to put together
compelling: convincing, persuasive
thought-provoking: making you think a lot about a subject
intricate: complex, complicated
masterful: skillful
to have (got) someone covered: to take care of everything
feast: a large meal
assassination: murder, killing
scriptwriter: a person who writes a script for a play, film, or broadcast
autobiographical: relating to events in the life of the person who has written it
eccentric: unusual and slightly strange
that's it: used when something has ended
insightful: perceptive, thoughtful
to turn the page: to continue to the next page in a book
to tune in: to listen to a radio program or watch a television program