

Shades of Resistance

A Novel

Joseph Matthews

Set in 1973 Greece during the military dictatorship, *Shades of Resistance* follows thirty-year-old American Jonas Korda as he stumbles blindly into the islands of the Aegean. Attempting to physically escape from a life—a disillusioned engagement with 1960s politics and an ill-fated sort-of-marriage—that he has long since emotionally fled, Jonas is instead faced with the question of his capacity for true human connections.

Unwittingly he becomes involved with two expatriate Greek musicians who had self-exiled from their homeland six years before, when the military junta took power, but are now returning to create oppositional energy through the form they know best: traditional Greek poetry set to the music of a composer who's been banned by the brutal and surreal junta. Through the force of their commitment and sacrifice, Jonas is reacquainted with the relation between the heart and the larger world.

Jonas is also confronted, sequentially, by two women who in very different ways bring his emotional struggles into focus. One—a Greek-Canadian searching for her father lost somewhere to the depredations of the dictatorship—who seeks to draw him in. The other—an alienated Belgian painter turning her back on a life of artistic and gender frustrations—who holds him away.

The novel's lyrically evoked Greek islands are counterpoint to political terror captured with both shuddering intensity and mordant black humor. *Shades of Resistance* is that rare work of fiction that explores the relationship between the personal and the political, the heightened responses of a man trapped in a moment of history.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joseph Matthews is the author of the novels *The Blast* and *Everyone Has Their Reasons*, the story collection *The Lawyer Who Blew Up His Desk*, and the post-9/11 political analysis *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War* (with Iain Boal, T.J. Clark, Michael Watts). He lives in San Francisco.

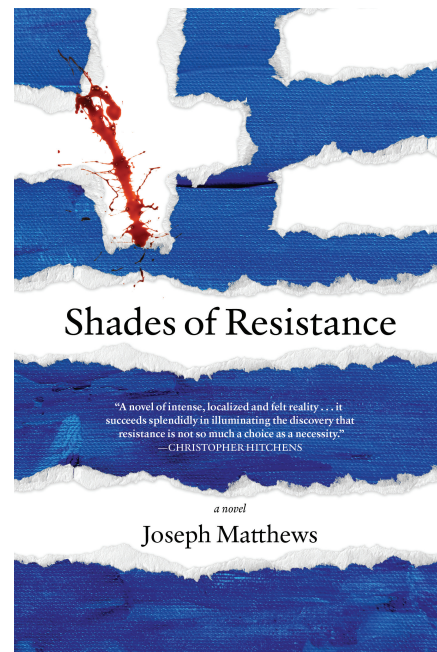
ACCOLADES

"*Shades of Resistance* is neither wholly about Greece nor entirely about despotism. But it draws very finely on the intense, localized and felt reality of both. In its treatment of those unexceptional humans who make the exceptional decision to risk and resist, it succeeds splendidly in illuminating the discovery that resistance is not so much a choice as a necessity."

—Christopher Hitchens, author of *Cyprus*

"*Shades of Resistance* is beautiful and richly evocative, but underneath the surface is an inventive and skilled use of metaphor and careful control of meaning. Jonas Korda is a complex character in self-exile among a varied line-up of strange and colorful characters. In an almost Kafkaesque labyrinth of politics, power and alienation, the reassembling of his perceptions is a rich and complicated metaphor for all human struggle to connect, and to know the truth about the self."

—Ian MacMillan, author of *Village of a Million Spirits*



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