

Stranger: A Novel

David Bergen

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By the Giller Prize-winning author of *The Time in Between*, a stirring novel that lays bare the bonds of motherhood, revealing just how far a mother will go to reclaim her stolen child

The profound intelligence and political resonance readers have come to expect from David Bergen are on rich display in his "inventive and electrifying" (*Globe and Mail*) new novel, *Stranger*.

Íso Perdido, a young Guatemalan woman, works at a fertility clinic at Ixchel, named for the Mayan goddess of creation and destruction. Íso tends to the rich women who visit the clinic for the supposed conceptionenhancing properties of the local lake. She is also the lover of Dr. Mann, the American doctor in residence. When an accident forces the doctor to leave Guatemala, Íso is left behind, pregnant. After the birth, the baby disappears?the doctor's infertile wife Susan has coolly staked a claim.

Determined to reclaim her stolen daughter, Íso makes her way north through Mexico, eventually crossing illegally into a United States where the rich life in safe zones, walled away from the indigent masses. Travelling without documentation, and with little money, Íso must penetrate this world, and in this place of menace and shifting boundaries, she must determine who she can trust and how much, aware that she might lose her daughter forever.

An ageless story, with its uncanny lake, human monsters, and a stolen child, is freshly recast in a modern setting where themes of dislocation and disruption, exploitation and vulnerability, rich and poor collide to make David Bergen's *Stranger* a powerful and affecting novel for our times.



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