

The

SECRET ROOM

NINO FAMÀ

Translated by
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A NOVEL



Nino Famà (Barcellona P.G. - Italy) has published the novel *La stanza segreta* (Salvatore Sciascia Editore, 2004), later translated in English by Leonard Sbrocchi and Douglas Campbell and published by LEGAS Publishing (2008). A collection of short stories, *Don Gaudenzio e altre storie* appeared in 1996. He is also the author of two books on literary criticism *Realismo magico en la narrativa de Aguilera* Malta, Madrid: Playor, 1977. *Las últimas obras de Alejo Carpentier*, Caracas: La Casa de Bello, 1995, and numerous research articles which have appeared in many specialized journals in various countries. He is Professor Emeritus, University of Waterloo

This is the story of Nicky, a university student and a third generation Italian-Canadian. The divorce of his parents in his adolescent years and the resulting lack of family affection have left him with a precarious sense of identity, which, together with his distaste for the callous, consumer-driven society he lives in, fosters doubts and anxieties that lead to neurosis. At the end of the novel he visits the land of his ancestors to connect with his own roots and find a way to deal with his existential illness.

The life of the young man is interwoven with that of his grandfather in a fluid and life like narrative in which the vicissitudes of the modern world alternate with those of a world that is ancient and primordial. Nicky's transcription of his grandfather diary after the old man's death brings into the narrative the story of four generations of his ancestors, the Nicoterras, as they worked, fought, suffered, and hoped. We soon become aware that good intentions and strength of will are often not enough. One always has to deal with destiny, the eternal adversary, which leads these human beings toward unforeseen and unimagined ends. The stories of these two worlds are played out in different times, but they are bound together in an arcane way. The narrative is driven forward by the characters' unremitting desire to free themselves from the defeats of the past, but the future into which they venture offers them only vague promises.