



Once Upon a Time in Rio: A Novel

Francisco Azevedo

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From well-known Brazilian playwright Francisco Azevedo, a heartwarming debut novel about three generations of a family whose kitchen contains the secret ingredient for happiness—sure to appeal to fans of *Like Water for Chocolate*.

Once upon a time there was some rice. Rice planted in the earth, fallen from the sky, and gathered up from the stone. Rice that doesn't spoil, it came from far away, by ship with three exuberant young people filled with dreams...

Once Upon a Time in Rio is a spellbinding family saga beginning with José Custódio and Maria Romana and their search for a prosperous future. As newlyweds, José and Maria immigrated to Brazil at the beginning of the twentieth century, accompanied by a special gift. During the dinner preparations to celebrate their centenary wedding anniversary, their eldest son Antonio, already a grandfather, looks back at the lives of his parents, his aunt, his brothers, their children and grandchildren, as well as his own.

Antonio knows that family is a difficult dish to get right and that happiness must be cooked up day by day; however, what separates his family from any other is its possession of a secret ingredient for happiness: the sack of magical rice given to his parents on their wedding day. With the help of the rice, whose magic is as old as fire and time, Antonio's family has been guided through the most trying of life's tribulations.

Lyricaly written, *Once Upon a Time in Rio* bares the fragile yet strong nature of the human spirit and with great insight captures the solace provided by loved ones in times of need. Already an international bestseller, this is a beautifully told tale about the wisdom of past generations and the inextricable ties of family.

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