



# Ava

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Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1954

Accompanied by her assistant and her agent, the actress Maria Vargas travels to Rio de Janeiro at the start of a tour of South America to promote her new film "The Barefoot Contessa." It is early September 1954 and Brazil is in crisis: unable to put his policies into practice, the President has committed suicide by shooting himself in the chest. Amid the tense atmosphere, the people mourn as the military takes over.

Ignorant of political disturbances and social unrest, Maria just wants to have fun and enjoy her tour. She also has no idea that her compatriots regard her as a sex goddess of almost mythical stature, a cinematic legend, the Aphrodite of the 20th century—and therefore an object of immeasurable desire. On arrival at Rio's Galeão airport, Maria is shocked to see hundreds of people waiting for her on the tarmac. Recoiling in fear, she leaves the airplane by a door on the opposite side, only to be pursued and harassed by the crowd. Traumatized by the experience, she becomes unstable, unpredictable, and irritable, having to contend not only with a hostile press but also with her own demons. Two days later, Maria is forced by the authorities to leave the country.

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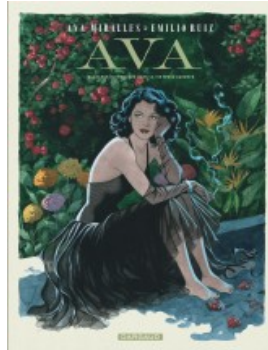
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