El invierno que tomamos cartas en el asunto
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'El invierno que tomamos cartas en el asunto' is set in Porvenir, a small town in the mountains, over the course of a winter. At the beginning of November Sara, the town postwoman, who has lived in Porvenir her entire life has received an email from the postal service informing her that due to the decline in the number of letters sent and received in the town, the post office is likely to close and she would then be transferred to Madrid. When she hears this news, Sara's elderly friend Rosa, who helped deliver Sara and is like a surrogate aunt to her, is determined to take action to keep Sara in Porvenir.

Rosa begins a chain of letters by writing a letter of apology and reconciliation to Luisa, her best friend from childhood, who left the town without a trace after Rosa married the man with whom she was in love. Although she is unsure whether Luisa is still alive, she sends it to her family home explaining that she does not expect a reply and only asks that she write a letter about whatever she wants to another woman in the town in order to increase demand for the local postal service and show the bosses in Madrid that the town needs Sara and the service she provides.

'El invierno que tomamos cartas en el asunto' is an engaging, heart-warming and enjoyable story and a smooth and easy read.

Doñate's style is light, informal and easy to read and this, combined with the small town and community setting, and the lively, connected but varied characters has echoes of Maeve Binchey. While the overall story is one of hope, positivity, agency, friendship and love, the characters and their lives are by no means perfect and the difficulties and challenges they face in a changing world - potential unemployment, loneliness, the demand of expectations from parents and society - make the story realistic and relevant.

The dialogue is authentic and natural and the characters all have their own voices.

'El invierno que tomamos cartas en el asunto' is a highly enjoyable read, likely to appeal to a British audience who enjoy commercial and literary fiction.

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