

The Hummingbird's Daughter

By Luis Alberto Urrea



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The prizewinning writer Luis Alberto Urrea's long-awaited novel is an epic mystical drama of a young woman's sudden sainthood in late 19th-century Mexico. It is 1889, and civil war is brewing in Mexico. A 16-year-old girl, Teresita, illegitimate but beloved daughter of the wealthy and powerful rancher Don Tomas Urrea, wakes from the strangest dream--a dream that she has died. Only it was not a dream. This passionate and rebellious young woman has arisen from death with a power to heal--but it will take all her faith to endure the trials that await her and her family now that she has become the Saint of Cabora. THE HUMMINGBIRD?S DAUGHTER is a vast, hugely satisfying novel of love and loss, joy and pain. Two decades in the writing, this is the masterpiece that Luis Alberto Urrea has been building up to.



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The Hummingbird's Daughter By Luis Alberto Urrea Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. "Her powers were growing now, like her body. No one knew where the strange things came from. Some said they sprang up in her after the desert sojourn with Huila. Some said they came from somewhere else, some deep inner landscape no one could touch. That they had been there all along." Teresita, the real-life "Saint of Cabora," was born in 1873 to a 14-year-old Indian girl impregnated by a prosperous rancher near the Mexico-Arizona border. Raised in dire poverty by an abusive aunt, the little girl still learned music and horsemanship and even to read: she was a "chosen child," showing such remarkable healing powers that the ranch's medicine woman took her as an apprentice, and the rancher, Don Tomás Urrea, took her—barefoot and dirty—into his own household. At 16, Teresita was raped, lapsed into a coma and apparently died. At her wake, though, she sat up in her coffin and declared that it was not for her. Pilgrims came to her by the thousands, even as the Catholic Church denounced her as a heretic; she was also accused of fomenting an Indian uprising against Mexico and, at 19, sentenced to be shot. From this already tumultuous tale of his great-aunt Teresa, American Book Award-winner Urrea (*The Devil's Highway*) fashions an astonishing novel set against the guerrilla violence of post-Civil War southwestern border disputes and incipient revolution. His brilliant prose is saturated with the cadences and insights of Latin-American magical realism and tempered by his exacting reporter's eye and extensive historical investigation. The book is wildly romantic, sweeping in its effect, employing the techniques of Catholic hagiography, Western fairy tale, Indian legend and everyday family folklore against the gritty historical realities of war, poverty, prejudice, lawlessness, torture and genocide. Urrea effortlessly links Teresita's supernatural calling to the turmoil of the times, concealing substantial intellectual content behind effervescent storytelling and considerable humor.

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From The New Yorker

Twenty years in the making, Urrea's epic novel recounts the true story of his great-aunt Teresita. In 1873, amid the political turbulence of General Porfirio Díaz's Mexican republic, Teresita is born to a fourteen-year-old Indian girl, "mounted and forgotten" by her white master. Don Tomàs Urrea later takes his illegitimate daughter into his home, where she learns to bathe every week and read "Las Hermanas Brontë." But Teresita also continues a folk education as a curandera, discovering healing powers and a mystical relationship with God. Indian pilgrims swarm to the Urrea ranch, where "St. Teresita," a mestiza Joan of Arc, kindles in them a powerful faith in God and a perilous hunger for revolution. The novel brings to life not only the deeply pious figure whom Díaz himself dubbed "the Most Dangerous Girl in Mexico" but also the blood-soaked landscape of pre-revolutionary Mexico.

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From Bookmarks Magazine

Everyone raves about the grand, exquisitely detailed storytelling of the first-time novelist, though Urrea has written 10 previous books of nonfiction (see *The Devil's Highway*, HHHH July/Aug 2004). *The Hummingbird's Daughter* is a history lesson that follows the brewing rebellion in 1889 against a longtime Mexican dictator. Urrea meticulously captures day-to-day life among the poor farmers and their populist beliefs in their saint. Of course there's also humor, heartbreak, torture, and perhaps a few too many descriptions. To sum up, we'll leave it to *The New York Times*: "These 500 pages—though they could have been fewer—slip past effortlessly."

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Elizabeth Frizzell:

In this 21st hundred years, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive at this point, people have do something to make these survives, being in the middle of the crowded place and notice by means of surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated the item for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a book your ability to survive raise then having chance to endure than other is high. In your case who want to start reading some sort of book, we give you this kind of The Hummingbird's Daughter book as beginning and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Jessica Ball:

Information is provisions for anyone to get better life, information nowadays can get by anyone from everywhere. The information can be a information or any news even an issue. What people must be consider while those information which is inside former life are hard to be find than now's taking seriously which one works to believe or which one the resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you buy it as your main information we will see huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen inside you if you take The Hummingbird's Daughter as your daily resource information.

Angela Harris:

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Anita Rhodes:

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