Compartiendo con Lorida Maritza Pérez

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Compartiendo con Loida Maritza Pérez

From time to time, a writer bursts on the scene with a compelling novel of such extraordinary power, maturity and insight that it leaves an indelible mark. Such is the case with Loida Maritza Pérez, whose luminous storytelling is both captivating and heartbreaking.

Iliana believed that by attending a college more than five hours from New York City, she could gain independence and escape the watchful eyes of her overprotective, religiously conservative parents. She soon realizes, however, that familial bonds are impossible to break, and that barriers created by time and distance can easily be collapsed. A disembodied voice that Iliana believes is her mother’s haunts her nights with disturbing news about her sisters: Marina is careening toward a mental breakdown; Beatriz has disappeared; Rebecca continues in a marriage that has her and her children trapped in a brownstone also populated by hundreds of hens. Convinced she might be of help, Iliana reluctantly returns to New York City. In this dislocating urban environment, far from her native country, the Dominican Republic, she confronts all the contradictions, superstitions, joys, and pains of someone who is caught between two cultures but intent on finding “home.”

Narrated in electrifying prose and inhabited by characters who are as boldly imaginative as they are completely believable, Geographies of Home is a stunningly original debut from a major new literary talent.

"Geographies of Home is a powerful, haunting novel, Loida Maritza Pérez is a fierce and talented storyteller who does not flinch when addressing the heart of darkness at the center of the American dream."
- Julia Alvarez, author of How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents and In the Time of the Butterflies

"Geographies of Home plunges the reader into the nightmare of migration where the story of the Caribbean family is told in every gut-wrenching detail, and where the odds of surviving in America take a toll on the human heart."
- Maryse Condé, author of Segu and Crossing the Mangrove

"Loida Maritza Pérez is a bold and graceful novelist. She uses her magnificent narrative powers to shed light on the darkest and most glorious aspects of family, migration, kinship, passion, death, and the human heart. Geographies of Home will leave you feeling both amazingly breathless and wonderfully redeemed."
- Edwidge Danticat, author of Breath, Eyes, Memory and The Farming of Bones
ON EARLY INFLUENCES:

I think first and foremost, James Baldwin, not in terms of becoming a writer, but because for a lifetime I did not know that was what I was heading towards. Reading him I realized that he craved things that I had been feeling or perceiving for so long and had no language for. I don't think he is given enough credit in certain departments, maybe because he's gay or whatever. The man had such fire to his prose and insight. But the first person of color that I ever read was Ntozake Shange. When I was in junior high school, I used to be in the library all the time. I never read such things. It really changed my work because I knew women like that. We all know people like that, but to have it written in a book!

Prior to that, I had been reading whatever I got my hands on. There were never people who looked like me, or sounded like me, or lived like me, or anything. Gabriel García Márquez, the first time I read him was when I was in college. I was driving my roommate crazy. I couldn't sleep and she said, "You know what, this will put you to sleep in a minute Rita," and it kept me up all night. He is another one and so, it's gradual in terms of influences and the process of becoming a writer. This man was crazy. I say crazy because prior to that I had considered writing short stories but thought maybe people won't be interested in what I write because I knew women like that. We all know people like that, but to have it written in a book!

ON FUTURE WORKS:

I am not writing a novel about the Trujillo dictatorship, I am writing a novel about a family that happens to live during the Trujillo government. And through their perspective and conflicting perspectives, because they will see it in different ways. I will explore what I call the supernatural or to the miraculous or to the mythological events to the collaborators of the dictatorship. He [Trujillo] ruled by black magic, you know that has been said. Since day one, yes, it is believed. Everything is attributed to the supernatural; everything is beyond politics, because it is rooted in something bigger. What interests me is the powerful need people feel to attribute things to the supernatural.

The interview with Loida Martiza Pérez was conducted with permission from Susan Bergholz Literary Services, New York. All Rights Reserved.