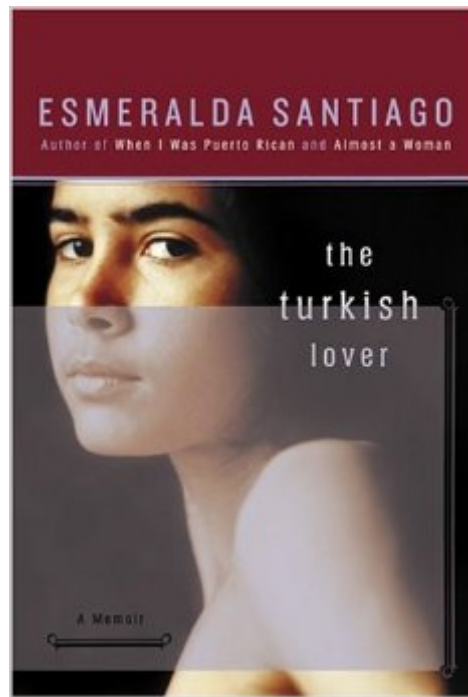


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The Turkish Lover



Synopsis

Along with Sandra Cisneros and Julia Alvarez, Esmeralda Santiago has emerged as one of today's preeminent Latina authors. Legions of fans have waited five long years for the next chapter of the story begun in her memoirs *When I Was Puerto Rican* and *Almost a Woman*. And now the wait is over. In *The Turkish Lover*, Esmeralda finally breaks out of a monumental struggle with her powerful mother-only to come under the thrall of "the Turk" and discover that romantic passion, too, can become a prison. Esmeralda's journey of self-liberation and self-discovery is a daring one, candidly and zestfully recounted, and leads, most surprisingly, to her graduation from Harvard. (Her view of that venerable institution is an eye opener, told as only a brilliant writer totally outside the mold can tell it.) The expansive humanity, earthy humor, and psychological courage that made Esmeralda's first two books so successful are on full display again in *The Turkish Lover*, which will both reward the author's faithful readership and extend it. Hers is a fresh, exciting, and necessary voice. A

Merloyd Lawrence Book

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

ISBN 0738208205 - I often wondered, as I read this book, whether it was among the most self-serving blather I'd read in ages or one of the best books I'd read in years. Really, what's more self-serving than immortalizing your own existence in a book? And how much better when that book makes a former lover, who treated you poorly, look like a fool - repeatedly? In the end, though, the answer is - one of the best books I've read in years! If the periodic Spanish phrase intimidates the

English-reading-only, don't let that stop you - almost every phrase is smoothly translated in the text. Esmeralda Santiago, oldest of eleven children, runs away from home. At age 21, "runs away" sounds strange, but it is what she does. To be with her probably-Armenian-insists-he's-Turkish lover, Ulvi Dogan, she leaves her mother's home and begins to find herself by first leaving behind "Negi", the name she was called at home. Ulvi likes her just the way she is - naive, innocent, rather obedient and not at all a "spoiled American girl" - and calls her Chiquita. He treats her almost like property, looks on her family with disdain and works hard to keep her from growing, changing, and making friends. What Ulvi likes about her, and the way she honestly writes about it, makes the reader actually understand a little why she stays with this man, who is seventeen years older than she and would obviously not be able to have a relationship with a strong-willed, independent woman of his own age with opinions of her own - one who would certainly not let him call her "Chiquita". Without her honesty, the sentence "I was nothing Ulvi had told me many times." on page 23 would leave the reader wondering what could possibly be worth reading for the next 300 pages.

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