



Eccentric Neighborhoods

Rosario Ferré

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National Book Award finalist Rosario Ferre tells a tale of two families whose histories, tangled love affairs, and dreams of power and glory are inextricably linked to the fortunes and fate of Puerto Rico. Cuban immigrants, the Vernets emigrated to Puerto Rico in the early twentieth century and created a series of commercial enterprises destined to place them at the forefront of the Island's struggle for independence. Practical Elvira Vernet is a fiercely independent spirit, much to the chagrin of her beautiful mother Clarissa, a descendant of the aristocratic Rivas de Santillana clan, whose colorful aunts and uncles glide through Elvira's childhood like mythical story book creatures. But even the Vernet's great wealth and power cannot insulate them from the violent conflicts, infidelity, and suicide that threaten to tear their family apart.

Eccentric Neighborhoods Details

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Author : Rosario Ferré

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From Reader Review *Eccentric Neighborhoods* for online ebook

Laura Planton says

This is the story of two Puerto Rican families. While there is no plot in the book we learn about these families through a series of stories about the members of each family. The families are involved in the sugar industry and later concrete. The role of women is also a part of the book. Both matriarchs emphasized the education of woman, one for the purpose of finding a good husband and the other for self sufficiency.

Al says

This book was fascinating to me. And I am not sure why. I loved the homey feel of it. It was the kind of book you want to curl up with on a wintry day; it was whimsical and exotic. It made you feel warm. I want to draw lines of comparison to *Like Water for Chocolate*, but this was WAY better. I like the personal, political and working struggles of these families.

I did really like it, although I felt that the character transition was a little maddening at times. Tia this, and Tio that... it was sometimes harrowing to follow. I wish I spent more time studying the family tree in the beginning of the book.

I truly did love the old photos at the beginning of each chapter. I developed a habit of studying the pictures before and after each of them. It was one of the most endearing parts of the book.

Mirian says

This book transported me to my childhood, even if it's from a culture different from mine. There was that cozy family feeling, even if sometimes I lost track of who was who among the characters. Afterwords, I've learned that it was the author's family she was writing about, people that have been part of the country's politics. Very interesting!

The author's way of writing is fantastic. Very well written.

Meg says

novel, 1st Edition

T says

It was pretty good. I liked how Ferre went back and forth weaving different aspects of both of her families to tell their story. The ending seemed thrown together to me, but it could also be that I was anxious to finish

and read it a little faster without "savoring" it.

Deb says

A true sweeping account of a family's history, in Puerto Rico. Charming at times, plodding other times.

Angela says

one of those amazing books that let's you forget about your own life for awhile. Put yourself in someone else's shoes walk around the island. Live in their joy and heartbreak but doesn't make you wallow in drama. Facts are facts. Life isn't perfect and whether it be the turn of the century or 2013 I definitely appreciate a survivor. Whiners need not apply, people need to live.

Auro019 says

Disfruté la narración de la novela y su forma de llevar al lector a través de diferentes momentos históricos, desde el punto de vista de las familias poderosas y ricas de la época. Sin embargo, no puedo superar el hecho de que el editor de la obra no haya realizado bien su trabajo, ya que hay una cantidad exorbitante de errores ortográficos y de confusión de nombres, que no fueron corregidos. Además, me parece un poco perturbador que se note cuán privilegiada es la voz narrativa, y se refiera a posiciones de menor rango con cierto desprecio, es algo que comienza a notarse luego de haber leído la obra varias veces.

Myron Lezak says

A glimpse into a Puerto Rican past

An eccentric but believable Puerto Rican family. The history of Puerto Rico recounted through honest but loving family stories is a very entertaining and compassionate read.

Meg says

Interesting story told from the point of view of the granddaughter of two important families living in Puerto Rico. Some of the names were the same, or very close, that it took my a little while to figure out who was who. Interesting look at the history of Puerto Rico, really, and what life is like there. Nicely written.

*Read for the PopSugar Reading Challenge:

#29: Book set where you've always wanted to visit. Clearly need to go to Puerto Rico now.

Joann Dietch says

This is my favorite Ferre novel. While House on the Lagoon is the author's literary acclaimed novel I enjoy the following the the family and the insights into Puerto Rican and Cuban political/economic histories. I also enjoyed The Flight of the Swan. To me the author's strenght is her understanding that our families and environments bind us to almost predetermined outcomes.

Cathy says

Such a tangle of family threads in this book that following it was often a challenge. Four generations on both sides of this narrator's life in Puerto Rico formed the basis of dozens of intertwined tales handed down from parent to child and over again.. Hard to know whose voice was before me on the page at times as sometimes the narrator's mother or grandfather would take over the story for paragraphs at a time. Full of the island's history beginning in the mid-1800s and carrying through to the 1970s.

Amanda says

A really enjoyable look at the history of Puerto Rico through stories about a single family. Ferre draws intriguing characters, and illustrates without judgment the issues and difficulties often found in families, whether successful or not. The seeming lack of conclusion was a little jarring for me. I could have used a bit more denouement. I also would have liked a little bit more plot; at times, the chapters felt more like anecdotes than like related parts of one story. Still, a lovely read.

Jennifer says

One of the amazing books I read while travelling. Just loved all the details about life in Puerto Rico during the sugar years. Looking for more from this author.

Karen Levine says

Rosario Ferre

Charming novel with similarities in style to Gabriel Garcia Marquez, with references to Puerto Rico's 20th-century history incorporated.
