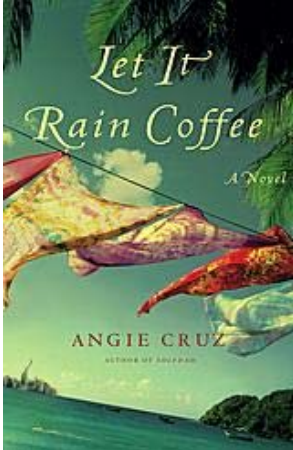


## Book Reviews



Let it Rain Coffee, Author Angie Cruz  
Review by Ana Trejos

First of all, I am not a writer, in relation to technical aspect of writing, but my background as an avid reader and that I work as a Librarian, my educational background is B.S. Elem. Educ. Science Biology, Commercial Art Degree and a A.S. in Biology.

First I love reading, I beam when one our own especially a woman writer is out there doing what she does best and what she loves. I always hit it on the nail when I have to give my personal opinion on music, books.... My way of analyzing anything is by constructive criticism.

"Let It Rain Coffee" is well written technically and the story theme is a common situation that occurs with Hispanics or anyone foreign that have come from countries that have been oppressed or from countries like mine which was under dictatorship since 1968 just recently 1999 when the Canal was given back to Panama.

People still want to live the American Dream? Sure, so Angie Cruz's theme is not new. What I found was everyone of there characters were competing to be the main Character. There were too many flashbacks which left me as a reader; wondering why kill one of the main characters so quickly, while others took center stage. It left me at the end unraveled not knowing what happened to everyone. My best analogy of this book is like a cable; it starts unraveling into several wires. She needs to create cohesive main cable and follow through.

Writers and storytellers have the responsibilities to pull the readers away throughout the book without leaving the reader stranded halfway or totally lost wondering, "Why all these loose ends?" But overall, if she can tidy it up with her characters; she can have the confidence that she will hookup her readers and she can be sure to pull them through her book safe and sound and want more stories about her characters in her book.

## Posesas de la Habana, Author Teresa Dovalpage



Review by Margarita Montalvo

In this, her first novel in Spanish, Teresa Dovalpage (also known by the pious name of Teresa de la Caridad Doval, under which she signed her other novel, A Girl Like Che Guevara) manages to entrance the reader into the level of duplicity and passive complicity of her four characters of this presumably apolitical work.

While delighting in the obscenities, in the colorful language and hilarious expressions that extract from soft chuckles to roaring laughter, the reader believes to be simply reading an account of the outrageous interactions of four generations of women. In short, the novel is easily swallowed as common "*cerelec*" (that toasted corn meal and powder milk concoction made available in Cuba to children and the aged), only to discover that it is indeed whole milk from well-nourished cows.

During one of the frequent blackouts in Havana, the grandmother (*abuelonga*), the daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter employ the darkness to search inside their souls, and to recount their hurts and grievances, revealing them to themselves, while blaming each other for their misfortune. Tightly squeezed, aware that they have no choice but to get used to the situation or go to hell, the four women spend their life getting angry and hating each other, but even in the darkness of their resentment, like a dim ray of light, the love they feel for each shines through. Without realizing it, they disclose how their own limitations, their confinement, their selfishness, and their past errors have affected the youngest generation to the point of derangement.

In the micro-world of their tiny apartment these women are paradoxically in charge, though they dwell on the fact that they are not "well-equipped", for they lack the essential endowments to achieve success: broad hips, protruding behinds, and big tits. Men are well depicted but remain as background figures: a constipated eyeglass salesman who fails in his trade ( probably resulting in the blindness of the population), a gay young man who profits from homosexual tourists to help his financial shortage, a son-of-a-bitch who poses as a saintly husband, but dies while providing "sexual maintenance" to his mistress, a professor of Marxist philosophy who is swallowed either by the sea or by sharks during a desperate effort to escape from a duplicitous society.

At the end of the novel, when the blackout is over, the reader stops laughing, sees the light, and is shaken by the truth of that world. Hell, this novel is a powerful work of art.