



## Dreaming in Cuban

*By Cristina Garcia*

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Three generations of women in the del Pino family, divided over conflicting political loyalties after the Cuban revolution, are reunited in Havana by a devoted granddaughter who has refused to sacrifice her family ideals. A first novel. 10,000 first printing.

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
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## **Dreaming in Cuban** By Cristina Garcia Bibliography

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- Brand: Brand: Ballantine Books (P)
- Published on: 1999-05
- Number of items: 1
- Binding: Paperback

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## Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Garcia's first novel is about Cuba, her native country, and three generations of del Pino women who are seeking spiritual homes for their passionate, often troubled souls. Celia del Pino and her descendants also share clairvoyant and visionary powers that somehow remain undiminished, despite the Cuban revolution and its profound effect upon their lives. This dichotomy suffuses their lives with a potent mixture of superstition, politics, and surrealistic charm that gives the novel an otherworldly atmosphere. Garcia juggles these opposing life forces like a skilled magician accustomed to tossing into the air fiery objects that would explode if they came into contact. Writing experimentally in a variety of forms, she combines narratives, love letters, and monologs to portray the del Pinos as they move back and forth through time. Garcia tells their story with an economy of words and a rich, tropical imagery, setting a brisk but comfortable pace.

Highly recommended.

- Janet W. Reit, *Univ. of Vermont Lib., Burlington*

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From Kirkus Reviews

A patchwork of incident, memory, letters, dreams and visions provides glimpses of a Cuban family at home and in exile in the '70's and '80's, but Garcia's debut suffers from its fragmented style. From disparate times, places, and (mostly female) points-of-view, Garcia reveals the circumstances and inner lives of various members of the del Pino family. Widowed matriarch Celia--who loved and lost a Spaniard, then married and went crazy--still lives near Havana, fulfilled at last by her active participation in Communist activities and quasi-erotic loyalty to El Líder, Fidel Castro. Daughter Felicia--who talks like a García Lorca poem--suffers episodes of violent insanity and amnesia, then seeks healing through the African-derived religion Santería. Meanwhile, Felicia's twin daughters repudiate her while her son Ivanito becomes a mama's boy. Celia's son Javier works in Czechoslovakia. Daughter Lourdes fled Cuba with her husband, opened the Yankee Doodle Bakery in Brooklyn, and thrives on American life, quickly embracing cold weather, capitalism, and prejudice. Her father, Jorge (Celia's husband), who died in New York following cancer treatment, continues to manifest himself to her. Lourdes's artistic daughter Pilar paints a scandalous punk Statue of Liberty and has psychic conversations with Celia. After a Santería-inspired vision, Pilar convinces Lourdes to return to Cuba for a reunion. Garcia explores Cuban culture and illustrates the dislocations of a family, but the novel--told through interior visions rather than action--lacks sufficient freshness of insight to be consistently compelling. -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Review

"Dazzling . . . Remarkable."

—MICHIO KAKUTANI

*The New York Times*

"MARVELOUS . . . A JEWEL OF A NOVEL . . .

*Dreaming in Cuban* is beautifully written in language that is by turns languid and sensual, curt and surprising. Like Louise Erdrich, whose crystalline language is distilled of images new to our American literature but old to this land, Ms. García has distilled a new tongue from scraps salvaged through upheaval. . . It is [the] ordinary magic in Ms. García's novel and her characters' sense of their own lyricism that make her work welcome as the latest sign that American literature has its own hybrid offspring of the Latin American school."

—THULANI DAVIS

*The New York Times Book Review*

“Poignant and perceptive . . . It tells of a family divided politically and geographically by the Cuban revolution . . . [and] of the generational fissures that open on each side: In Cuba, between a grandmother who is a fervent Castro supporter and a daughter who retreats into an Afro-Cuban *santeria* cult; in America, between another daughter, who mocks her obsession . . . The realism is exquisite.”

—RICHARD EDER

*Los Angeles Times*

“Remarkable . . . A rich and haunting narrative . . . An intricate weaving of dramatic events with the supernatural and the cosmic . . . Evocative and lush.”

—JACKIE JONES

*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Impressive . . . Her story is about three generations of Cuban women and their separate responses to the revolution. Her special feat is to tell it in a style as warm and gentle as the ‘sustaining aromas of vanilla and almond,’ as rhythmic as the music of Beny Moré.”

—AMELIA WEISS

*Time*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Gloria Smith:**

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#### **Pamela Rhodes:**

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**Timothy Holeman:**

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