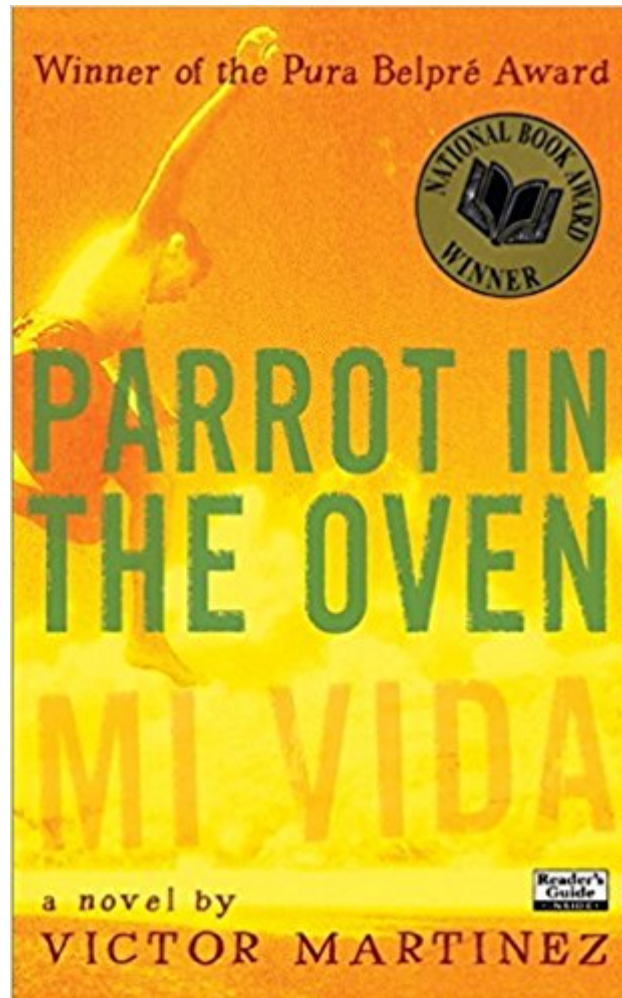




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Parrot In The Oven: Mi Vida



Synopsis

Dad believed people were like money. You could be a thousand-dollar person or a hundred-dollar person -- even a ten-, five-, or one-dollar person. Below that, everybody was just nickels and dimes. To my dad, we were pennies. Fourteen-year-old Manny Hernandez wants to be more than just a penny. He wants to be a *vato firme*, the kind of guy people respect. But that's not easy when your father is abusive, your brother can't hold a job, and your mother scrubs the house as if she can wash her troubles away. In Manny's neighborhood, the way to get respect is to be in a gang. But Manny's not sure that joining a gang is the solution. Because, after all, it's his life -- and he wants to be the one to decide what happens to it.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It's no wonder that *Parrot in the Oven* won the 1996 National Book Award for Young People's Fiction. Victor Martinez's lush, evocative prose leaps from the page, grabbing the reader by the throat right from the start. Not only do we witness Manuel Hernandez's coming of age, we feel every juicy moment of it: his ache for something just out of reach, the confusion of seeing his family with new eyes, the tickle and flood of awakening passion. It's difficult to portray transformation from the inside, but Martinez does so with grace and power. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In his debut novel, set in a dusty California town, Martinez employs a series of compelling, frequently troubling vignettes to illuminate a Mexican American boy's coming of age. It's not easy for

Manuel Hernandez to discover his place in the world, especially when he is constantly bombarded with the hardships of his poor and woefully dysfunctional family. Their tiny sheetrock house in the projects is the scene of angry arguments-even of threats at rifle point. Manny steps onto a battlefield at every turn, whether he is collecting his alcoholic and violent father from the local pool hall, withstanding the ethnic slurs of white school mates, or seeking initiation into a neighborhood gang. But as the months pass and some of his wounds heal, Manny slowly begins to understand the sense of self that he can derive from his role within this difficult household. The tense prose and often biting dialogue bring into razor-sharp focus the frustration and bitterness of a struggling family; at the same time, Manny's first-person narrative is tinged with compassion and, indeed, love for the unstable people around him. Martinez's honest voice, and descriptions sprinkled with elegant imagery, offer a rare and consummately believable portrait of barrio life. Ages 12-up. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm sorry but I really do not see what was special in Martinez' *Parrot in the Oven* that reaped him some awards. I did not see anything special about the story. However, I do agree that Martinez does have a way with words. They were eye-catching and made you wonder.*Parrot in the Oven* is divided into chapters that each one focuses on one particular topic. While there is a subtle storyline throughout, the overall picture is blurred. There's that "missing link" that prevents you from knowing each characters in the book. Simply, there's no depth other than with Manny. The book is told from Manny's perspectives. His dad has lost his job. He simply goes to the local pool hall and spends whatever money he can find and gets drunk. The mother is constantly cleaning the house. His older brother is never home and constantly has a new job. His older sister is secretive. His baby sister is simply a brat. Manny tells his experiences with school, White people, boxing, and the gang. Most of all, he tells how these experiences impact his family and their world-view.*Parrot in the Oven* is an alright book. It's nothing that you'd go around and recommend this book to friends. Just simply ok. The only best thing is Martinez' ways with words.

Martinez's writing is delightful and I was impressed by his ability to describe visceral sensations associated with typical emotions, like fear feeling like shards of ice or embarrassment like things sliding loose inside. His writing is poetic and visual and I would love to read more.

read this for a class on adolescent literature and was really impressed with the author's poetic use

of metaphor. reminded me of a lot of southern lit.

I did not like the end ...

Good book. My 9th graders like it."

Great condition!

Its a good book but it came in with scratches, idk if this happened to anyone else but by far it's good

Excellent

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