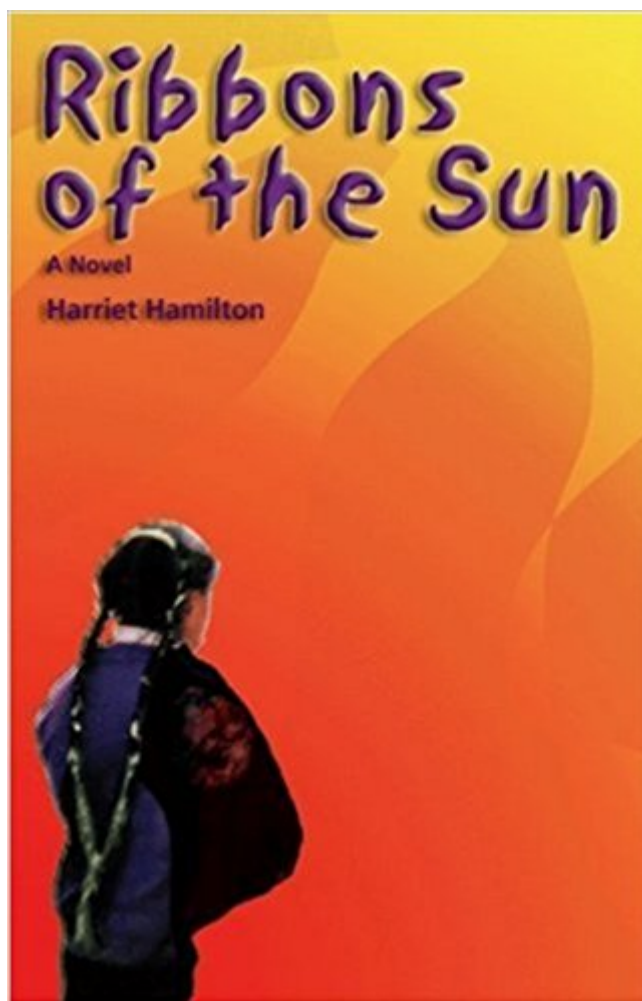


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Ribbons Of The Sun: A Novel



Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Rosa begs to go with her father to the city to sell the flowers her family grows, and when the great day finally comes, she can barely contain her excitement. But her joy turns to despair when she realizes the real reason for her trip to the city--her impoverished family has been forced to sell her into service as a maid. Assaulted and humiliated by the patron, she is thrown out on the hostile city streets to fend for herself and the baby she expects. Alone and without hope, her beliefs shattered, Rosa learns to survive and triumph in this emotionally violent but deeply spiritual coming of age story.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Up
Rosa, 12, lives with her family in a small Indian village in Mexico. She wants desperately to visit the city and prays to her gods that she might travel there with her father. After the crops fail, he takes her to Santa Marfa, but her dreams are shattered when he sells her into service as a servant. When the patron sexually abuses Rosa, she believes she has dishonored her family. She soon becomes pregnant and is turned out onto the street. Struggling with spiritual as well as physical survival, she decides to end her life, but must first find a safe place for her baby. She arrives at a mission where she remains. With the staff's help, she searches for identity, learns to solve her own problems and care for Flor, gains self-confidence, and develops the skills needed to make a future for herself and her daughter. Hamilton does not flinch from describing the harsh realities of Rosa's life. She is a fully realized character who experiences despair over the conflict

between her people's traditional ways and city life. Cultural details are smoothly woven into the story. At times lyrical, the writing depicts social problems frankly, without sensationalizing or oversimplifying. Based on fact, this compelling story brings attention to issues of child exploitation and abuse and fosters a deeper understanding of the dilemmas faced by many young people across the globe. ã ª Margaret R. Tassia, Millersville University, PA Copyright ã ª © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Like Patricia McCormick's *Sold* (2006), this novel dramatizes the brutal facts of child trafficking through the story of one young girl. At 12, Rosa is excited to leave her traditional Indian village in Mexico and visit the city with her father, but when they arrive, he sells her to a white family, where she works as a servant. She is brutally raped many times, then thrown out on the street, where she gives birth to a baby she can barely care for. She finds shelter in a mission, falls in love with a young man, and eventually returns home. The happy love story is contrived, but Rosa's painful sense of betrayal and shame is powerfully drawn, as are the cruel abuse and racism she encounters. The kindness in the shelter is just as well handled, and the story brings close the cultural ties Rosa draws on as she confronts her father and finds the strength to forgive him. Hazel Rochman Copyright ã ª © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Child trafficking is a brutal fact of life in some parts of the world, and Rosa is a victim of this practice. She and her parents live in a small Indian village in Mexico where their life is one of grinding poverty. The crops fail yet again. Rosa hopes against hope that her father will take her to the city with him when he goes there to sell flowers to the tourists. Her dreams are answered, and with great excitement; Rosa and her father travel to Santa Maria, but instead of selling flowers, Rosa is sold to a household where she will be employed as a servant. Rosa can't understand this betrayal, and waits impatiently for the weekend when she is sure that her father will come back for her--but she waits in vain. Her life of servitude is punctuated by the brutal rape by the man of the house on a weekly basis. When Rosa's pregnancy is discovered by the lady of the house, she is turned out into the street to survive by her wits. Alone and friendless, Rosa believes that she has dishonored her family, and after the baby is born, she decides to end her life as soon as she finds a home for her child. Based on fact, this heartbreaking story brings attention to issues we only hear about; child abuse and exploitation. Hamilton clearly describes the harsh realities of being a child slave in an impoverished country. Rosa is a fully realized character who experiences despair over the conflict between her people's traditional ways and city life. Details of rural historical Mexico's culture and

religions are integrated into the story smoothly. However, life takes a turn for the better when Rosa's suicide is prevented, and she finds sanctuary in a mission that helps young girls in her predicament. Will she ever see her family again? This book is impossible to put down, and one that you will never forget. Reviewed by: Grandma Bev

Reviewed by Kelli Glesige for Reader Views (1/07) "Ribbons of the Sun" is the story of twelve year old Rosa who lives with her family near Santa Maria del Sol. Her father earns a living by working the fields and selling flowers in the village. Even though her abuelita, or grandmother, tells her the village is not the place for a young girl, Rosa always dreams of going to the village with her father to sell flowers. One day Papa tells Rosa it is now time for her to go to the city with him. Rosa is so excited and can hardly contain herself, for a trip to the village has been her lifelong dream. Excitement turns to sheer terror when Rosa finally realizes why Papa has brought Rosa along. Money is tight for the family, and Papa sells twelve year old Rosa to a cruel patron who mentally and physically abuses the innocent child. She is assaulted and humiliated time and again and then blamed for her actions, and her spiritual strength abandons her. Sadly enough, Rosa has no idea what is actually happening to her, as she is just beginning to grow into womanhood and has never had anything explained to her. Now with child, Rosa is thrown out of the house and must find a way to stay alive, living on the unsafe streets. No one needs or wants a worker with a baby in tow. "Ribbons of the Sun" is a story meant to open our eyes to the problem of child exploitation that exists throughout the world. Author Harriet Hamilton spent fifteen years in Mexico and considered herself as a messenger to bring this problem to the attention of as many people as possible. "Ribbons of the Sun" delivers her message. "Ribbons of the Sun" is an eye opener. It is about a problem I do not enjoy talking about or thinking about. It is sad and cruel. However, Harriet Hamilton has done a good job of getting her message across so others might be able to help the innocent children. This book is for older teens and adults only. "Ribbons of the Sun" was published posthumously. Book Received at No Charge

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