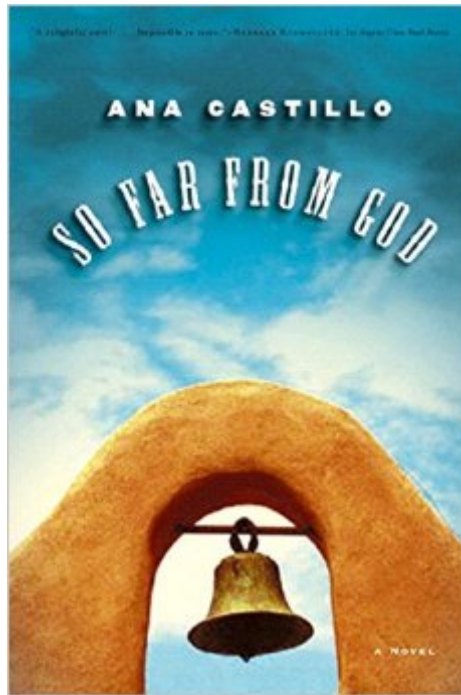


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So Far From God: A Novel



Synopsis

"A delightful novel...impossible to resist." •Barbara Kingsolver, Los Angeles Times Book Review
Sofia and her fated daughters, Fe, Esperanza, Caridad, and la Loca, endure hardship and enjoy love in the sleepy New Mexico hamlet of Tome, a town teeming with marvels where the comic and the horrific, the real and the supernatural, reside.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

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Shipping Weight: 0.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (63 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Hispanic writing today seems to fall within three distinct categories, i.e., contemporary fiction (mostly urban in context), historical fiction and mystical fiction. This novel is most emphatically a work of mystical fiction. Set in Chicana country the story is both down-to-earth and full of unearthly happenings. Its matter-of-fact delivery serves to make the magical believable. When one character is dying of AIDS, a Doctor Tolentino and his wife come to help her. His ministrations involve prayers and cotton wool soaked in holy oil. But then he reaches into La Loca's stomach `maintaining his left "material" hand in the opening, while the right "spirit" hand sought out the maladies' and `pulled out some cystic fibroids and finally a tumour...' The lines between the surgical and the miraculous are blurred and anything seems possible. Castillo uses a direct colloquial style with little regard for punctuation, almost as if the writer is confiding her thoughts directly to the reader. Each chapter is prefaced with a description of what is going to happen next but phrased in such a way as to make the book impossible to put down. For instance: `Of the Hideous Crime of Francisco el Penitente, and his Pathetic Calls Heard Throughout the Countryside as His Body Dangled from a Pinnion like a Crow-Picked Pear; and of the End of Caridad and Her Beloved Emerald Which We Nevertheless

Will Refrain from Calling Tragic.' So Far from God is a tale both tragic and funny; a hymn to women's endurance and to the harshness of their lives. It is a heavily allegorical tale. The novel has Sofia, the embodiment of "wisdom," at its core, a mother who survives the death of her four daughters: Esperanza, Fe, Caridad, and La Loca. The names of the first three daughters denote the three major Christian ideals.

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