



La Gringa

Pedro Martinez

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La Gringa is a strangely different narrative of the American dream. It is told in new voices, and it crosses forbidden lines. The narrative revolves around Jade Stewart, the first woman elected President of the U.S and, at thirty-five, the youngest. Narrated mostly by Joe Garcia, a Marine Colonel and childhood friend devoted to the President, La Gringa is also told from multiple points of view that push at the edges of literary tradition. The deciphering of the Da Vinci Code discovered Jade Stewart as the descendent of the Davidic Dynasty. Her existence threatens the legitimacy of Christian orthodoxy, and she is anathema to the Christian fundamentalists. Beautiful, brilliant and single, she is a controversial and charismatic President at a time of great change in America, including a schism between the American Catholic Church and the Vatican, the admission of English speaking Canada into the United States, and the political emergence of the Mexican-American community. Her election to the Presidency in 2008 is carried on the brown backs of Chicanos in Texas and California. By the age of fifteen Jade Stewart was uncontrollable, and her wealthy, widowed father, David Stewart, takes her from the family estate in New York to his ranch in South Texas. In Laredo Jade Stewart becomes involved with Beto Guerra, a Chicano mix of Elvis and James Dean. At the age of seventeen, Jade Stewart has a child out of wedlock by Beto Guerra who had enlisted in the Marines and not returned from the wars of the Middle East. The day after the child's birth, David Stewart tells Jade that her baby boy had died. After her election eighteen years later, President Stewart's enemies, the terrorist Christian Militias, steal the records of her child's birth and presumed death. Threatening to charge that the President had had an abortion, they attempt to blackmail her. The President sends Joe Garcia to Laredo to recover the evidence that her child had died the day after birth. Embedded with compelling characters from across the spectrum of the American narrative, La Gringa is an imaginative and disturbing vision of what the future may bring. Sprung tightly by metaphor at the beginning, the plot springs to a violent conclusion, as Joe Garcia follows a trail that skirts taboo, tests his loyalty to the Anglo America of Jade Stewart, and careens towards Monarchy.

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