The Miracle Girls
Author:
Sabina Urraca
Reader's name:
James Lyons

READER'S NAME:James Lyons

DATE:4/25/2018

ON A SCALE FROM 1 - 10 (10 being the highest score) how would you rate this book?9

Las Niñas Prodigio **[The Precocious Girls]**, written by Sabina Urraca, is a work that is part autobiography, part fantasy. By traveling back and forth through time, which spans from infancy to the present and vice versa, and through her mind, she shows the hidden corners of this magnificent organ which is an inexhaustible producer of the main characters thoughts. This book tells the story of women and girls in a constant search to be loved, accepted and in their own way, powerful.

Urraca's experience with her own anxiety and panic attacks at a given time is portrayed through the main character, whose insane thoughts are like an unstoppable snowball rolling down the hill which more often than not leads to a perception of reality which is often distorted. For example when she expresses fear of the darkness inside her own body. This compulsive obsession with her thoughts results in the protagonist exhibiting an expansive imagination for narrating strange incidents. Being a victim of her mindset, the protagonist at a certain point reacts by admitting that "I don't know how to take care of myself".

These women and girls are not prodigies if we consider the usually accepted definition of the term, but they are prodigies in terms of how they think about certain situations in which they are involved, which happen to them in a strange way. Las Niñas Prodigio, fits in well with what the writer likes to do, write about current topics but from an uncommon perspective. This writer's product, the title of which is already suggestive of its content: separation from one's family. In this book the topics are those of emotionally precocious girls and/or their sexuality, pederasty, as well as the drama that for many children results from living a directionless childhood. The constant presence of Nadia Comaneci, is not coincidental, when we remember how the young Nadia was exploited by the political system of her country, Rumania. At the same time the writer writes about all of this in an inconclusive way. Throughout the book, desires, hopes and everything having to do with the intellect of an open-minded main character are presented without subterfuge or considerations.

Her style is very creative and convincing when she presents her ideas and the writer provides an extensive list of curious ways to say or express ideas:

…with you my soul walks on tip toes, it peers out and sees what is outside of the body."

…the end of puberty produced a deafening sound.

…in the fights between Paula and her sister there were crocodiles baring their teeth, a boa constrictor swallowing a tapir whole…

That was my body, like a backpack that could not be opened.

Her humor in situations involving ColaCao and the song El Venao during her participation in the short film about the Holocaust, deserve highlighting which illustrate her style and ingenuity.

It is also interesting that she shows that she is up to date with the modern era by incorporating elements such as facebook and including actors who have been part of pop culture throughout the eighties and nineties.

The title of Las Niñas Prodigio could also be Las Niñas Peculiares **[The Peculiar Girls].** This aspect of "the weird" is presented in the book of the American writer Ramson Riggs- in whose biography one learns that "He was raised on a steady diet of ghost stories and British comedy"- Miss Peregrine and the Peculiar Children. In this novel for young people the children possess paranormal and unusual talents and as Miss Peregrine states "as our abilities do not fit in with the outside world, we live in places like this where no one can find us (the orphanage has been purposely hidden by Miss Peregrine, who has the talent to control time)". In Las Niñas Prodigio, the main character is fascinated when she hears her friend Chori sing in Galician, even though what he is singing about is cats stuffed in a bag and beaten. She also comments that "while other girls completely submerge themselves in their limited social lives, I had been cleaning a drunk's house". On the other hand, in this book like Henry David Thoreau's Walden, the writer goes to the forest and isolates herself to write and like in Lolita by Vladimir Nobokov, shines a light on child-adult sexual relationships.

The writer's topic and style could be attractive to the American reader. An excellent translation, though, would be necessary to allow English speaking readers to clearly appreciate the work through its author.

While reading Las Niñas Prodigio, there are no clues that indicate what will happen in the next chapter, but the reader does know that the ideas will be very creative. These elements of surprise and creativity are present from the first to the last chapter, which frequently keeps us asking: What's coming next? What will her mind keep producing?