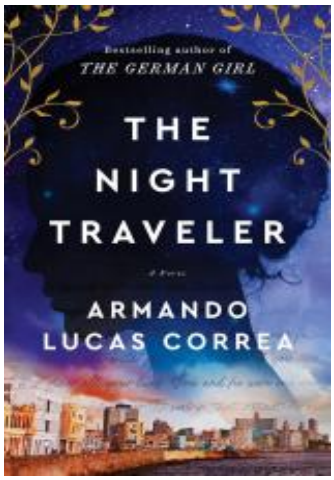
The Night Traveler

by Armando Lucas Correa



About the Book

Four generations of women experience love, loss, war and hope from the rise of Nazism to the Cuban Revolution and, finally, the fall of the Berlin Wall in this sweeping novel from the bestselling author of the ?timely must-read? (*People*) THE GERMAN GIRL.

Berlin, 1931: Ally Keller, a talented young poet, is alone and scared when she gives birth to a mixed-race daughter she names Lilith. As the Nazis rise to power, Ally knows she must keep her baby in the shadows to protect her against Hitler?s deadly ideology of Aryan purity. But as she grows, it becomes more and more difficult to keep Lilith hidden, so Ally sets in motion a dangerous and desperate plan to send her daughter across the ocean to safety.

Havana, 1958: Now an adult, Lilith has few memories of her mother or her childhood in Germany. Besides, she?s too excited for her future with her beloved Martin, a Cuban pilot with strong ties to the Batista government. But as the flames of revolution ignite, Lilith and her newborn daughter, Nadine, find themselves at a terrifying crossroads.

Berlin, 1988: As a scientist in Berlin, Nadine is dedicated to ensuring the dignity of the remains of all those who were murdered by the Nazis. Yet she has spent her entire lifetime avoiding the truth about her own family?s history. It takes her daughter, Luna, to encourage Nadine to uncover the truth about the choices her mother and grandmother made to ensure the survival of their children. And it will fall to Luna to come to terms with a shocking betrayal that changes everything she thought she knew about her family?s past.

Separated by time but united by sacrifice, four women embark on journeys of self-discovery and find themselves to be living testaments to the power of motherly love.

Discussion Guide

1. Images of light and dark permeate THE NIGHT TRAVELERS. How does this imagery inform the novel?s larger themes, characters and even plot?

2. Consider the epigraph, a line from the poet Rumi: ?Night travelers are full of light.? Who would you consider a ?night traveler? in this novel? What does it mean to be a night traveler in the various circumstances and eras in which these characters live?

3. As much as THE NIGHT TRAVELERS is a sweeping historical novel, it is also an intimate look at one family?s generations of mothers and daughters. Compare and contrast the mother/daughter relationships in this novel. How is each generation different from the previous?

4. There is much intergenerational trauma passed from mother to daughter. How, in her own way, does each woman try to make a better life for her own daughter?

5. When Lilith is still young, her mother, Ally, remarks, ?Lilith learns whatever she sets her mind to? (49). How do you see this throughout the course of Lilith?s life?

6. How does history --- on both a personal and geopolitical level --- repeat itself in these three different eras?

7. Are there ways in which you see the historical events and attitudes from the novel repeating themselves in our own present day? Give examples.

8. Nadine, who spent much of her young life not wanting to know anything about her past, finally comes to the realization that ?[a] person can?t spend their whole life forgetting? (249). What does it take for Nadine to change her mind about remembering the past?

9. Before she sends Lilith away, Ally reflects on the Herzog family?s son, who was taken to a concentration camp by the Nazis. The Herzogs? grief kept them from being able to even mention their son?s name after his brutal death. Ally ?promised herself that Lilith would always be known by her name, no matter where they sent her. She would always be Lilith, to herself and everyone else? (74). How does Lilith remain herself, both in her own heart and to others?

10. As an adult, in sun-filled Havana, Lilith still trusts the dark more than the light. In the library of the President, she thinks to herself, ?*The sun isn?t allowed in here.* The thought made Lilith feel safe? (115). What does it mean that Lilith feels safer in the dark? How does this affect her actions as the Cuban revolution intensifies?

11. When Nadine meets Elizabeth, she reasons that ?Lilith and Elizabeth shared the same mother, they must have something in common. But only one was the traitor?s child? (295). Compare and contrast Elizabeth and Lilith?s upbringings and consider whether they would have been able to forge a relationship had they had the chance to meet.

12. Why do you think the author chose to end the novel with so many jumps in time? What effect did this have on your reading experience?

13. Were you surprised by Lilith and Nadine?s reunion? What does this opportunity to meet in person mean for Nadine? For Luna?

14. At the very end of the novel, Luna begins to write what is, perhaps, the very novel you just read. Before she begins to write, she realizes that ?One of her many lives had begun? (337). How do you interpret this? How might she live many lives?

Author Bio

Armando Lucas Correa is an award-winning journalist, editor, author and the recipient of several awards from the National Association of Hispanic Publications and the Society of Professional Journalism. He is the author of the international bestseller THE GERMAN GIRL, which is now being published in 17 languages and has sold more than one million copies; THE DAUGHTER'S TALE; and THE NIGHT TRAVELER, for which he was awarded the Cintas Foundation Creative Writing Fellowship. He lives in New York City with his husband and their three children.

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