



A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories

By Lucia Berlin

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A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories By Lucia Berlin

"I have always had faith that the best writers will rise to the top, like cream, sooner or later, and will become exactly as well-known as they should be-their work talked about, quoted, taught, performed, filmed, set to music, anthologized. Perhaps, with the present collection, Lucia Berlin will begin to gain the attention she deserves." -Lydia Davis

A MANUAL FOR CLEANING WOMEN compiles the best work of the legendary short-story writer Lucia Berlin. With the grit of Raymond Carver, the humor of Grace Paley, and a blend of wit and melancholy all her own, Berlin crafts miracles from the everyday, uncovering moments of grace in the Laundromats and halfway houses of the American Southwest, in the homes of the Bay Area upper class, among switchboard operators and struggling mothers, hitchhikers and bad Christians.

Readers will revel in this remarkable collection from a master of the form and wonder how they'd ever overlooked her in the first place.

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A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories By Lucia Berlin Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #17859 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-08-18
- Released on: 2015-08-18
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

"[Berlin's] stories are peopled with sharp, unpredictable, vital characters (often drunk!). They hit you with a force the moment you happen upon them." -- Jackie Kay, Best Holiday Reads 2015 Guardian

"[Lucia Berlin] may just be the best writer you've never heard of ... Imagine a less urban Grace Paley, with a similar talent for turning the net of resentments and affections among family members into stories that carry more weight than their casual, conversational tone might initially suggest ... Berlin's offbeat humor, get-on-with-it realism, and ability to layer details that echo across stories and decades give her book a tremendous staying power ... [A Manual for Cleaning Women] goes a long way toward putting Berlin, who died in 2004, back in the public eye." --*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"This selection of 43 stories ... should by all rights see her as lauded as Jean Rhys or Raymond Carver. John Self Independent A major talent ... A testament to a writer whose explorations of society's rougher corners deserve wider attention." --*Kirkus* (Starred Review)

"In *A Manual for Cleaning Women* we witness the emergence of an important American writer, one who was mostly overlooked in her time. She is the real deal." --*New York Times*

"Vivacity, humor, sorrow, pragmatism and sheer literary star power ... How a writer with this much appeal slipped under the radar is unfathomable." --*Newsday* "Begin reading a Berlin short story and you know immediately that you are in the presence of a unique and searing literary force ... This revelatory volume now brings her forward to stand beside her peers." --*Booklist*

"Lucia Berlin has long been overlooked as one of America's best short story writers, and it only takes readers the first couple of pages to recognize that. Nylon Lucia Berlin might be the most interesting person you've never met ... Every detox ward, dingy Laundromat, and sunbaked Mexican palapa spills across the page in sentences so bright and fierce and full of wild color that you'll want to turn each one over just to see how she does it. And then go back and read them all again." --*Entertainment Weekly*

"*A Manual for Cleaning Women* is a miracle of storytelling. Elle Berlin's posthumous, highly semiautobiographical collection will catapult her into a household name." --*Marie Claire*

About the Author

Lucia Berlin (1936-2004) worked brilliantly but sporadically throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Her stories are inspired by her early childhood in various Western mining towns; her glamorous teenage years in Santiago, Chile; three failed marriages; a lifelong problem with alcoholism; her years spent in Berkeley, New Mexico, and Mexico City; and the various jobs she later held to support her writing and her four sons. Sober and writing steadily by the 1990s, she took a visiting writer's post at the University of Colorado Boulder in 1994 and was soon promoted to associate professor. In 2001, in failing health, she moved to Southern California to be near her sons.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Clarence Hamm:

This A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is usually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories without we comprehend teach the one who studying it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories can bring when you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even mobile phone. This A Manual for Cleaning Women: Selected Stories having excellent arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

Leonard Santiago:

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