



Eva Luna

Isabel Allende , Margaret Sayers Peden (Translator)

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Meet New York Times bestselling author Isabel Allende's most enchanting creation, *Eva Luna*: a lover, a writer, a revolutionary, and above all a storyteller—available for the first time in ebook.

Eva Luna is the daughter of a professor's assistant and a snake-bitten gardener—born poor, orphaned at an early age, and working as a servant. Eva is a naturally gifted and imaginative storyteller who meets people from all stations and walks of life. Though she has no wealth, she trades her stories like currency with people who are kind to her. In this novel, she shares the story of her own life and introduces readers to a diverse and eccentric cast of characters including the Lebanese émigré who befriends her and takes her in; her unfortunate godmother, whose brain is addled by rum and who believes in all the Catholic saints and a few of her own invention; a street urchin who grows into a petty criminal and, later, a leader in the guerrilla struggle; a celebrated transsexual entertainer who instructs her in the ways of the adult world; and a young refugee whose flight from postwar Europe will prove crucial to Eva's fate.

As Eva tells her story, Isabel Allende conjures up a whole complex South American nation—the rich, the poor, the simple, and the sophisticated—in a novel replete with character and incident, with drama and comedy and history, with battles and passions, rebellions and reunions, a novel that celebrates the power of imagination to create a better world.

Eva Luna Details

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Author : Isabel Allende , Margaret Sayers Peden (Translator)

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From Reader Review Eva Luna for online ebook

Abbie | ab_reads says

I'm delighted to say that my second Allende novel pretty much lived up to my expectations set by *The House of the Spirits*! I can see this woman becoming a firm favourite author of mine. She seamlessly blends magical realism with love, sexuality, politics, and feminism with a knack for characterisation that makes every sentence a joy to read!

Eva Luna is a story about stories; as Eva grows up in a tumultuous political climate, she finds herself in the care of an eclectic range of people, all of whom later feature as characters in the stories she trades and writes for a living. Although the characters are bizarre, there's something fundamentally real about them as well. Allende uses them to explore themes of self-identity, sexuality, integration, mental health, and many more, creating an unforgettable cast.

I also love her manner of including Chile politics without ever naming the country in which her books are set. The political side to her stories is never dull or dry or preachy, but another exciting and eye-opening element of her storytelling.

The translator is Margaret Peden and her translation is smooth and readable in English, while maintaining the cultural features of a Chilean novel.

The reason this wasn't a five star read for me was that it lacked a bit of the magic of *House of the Spirits*, and a lot of the scope since it only spanned two generations, one very brief! I also thought the ending wrapped up a little too neatly. But apart from that, *Eva Luna* was a delight and I'm excited for my next Allende!

Inderjit Sanghera says

There is something otherworldly about magical realism, something surreal, whereby the reader is transported into a parallel universe, a universe where, despite the stories ostensibly being set in our world, the colours, sights and sounds are richer and vibrate with the vivacity of the writer's imagination and the sensuality engendered by their prose. Although '*Eva Luna*' contains many of the tropes associated with magic realism; political dissidence and violence, a cast of eccentric characters including clairvoyants and curmudgeons, a strong sense of sensuality and a almost limitless litany of surreal scenes and scenarios, Allende's effortless storytelling, her ability to draw the reader in to the lives of the characters she creates and the richness of the world she imagines causes the reader to forget the feeling of *deja vu* they sometimes experience during the reading of '*Eva Luna*'.

The story follows Eva Luna, the only daughter of the ethereal Consuelo and her journey from being a girl orphaned at a young age to a full-grown woman. Along the way she comes across a number of characters who serve to shape her personality and future; the gentle Turk Zulema, whose benign nature and joviality belies his deep personal grief over his facial disfigurement. Zulema's lascivious cousin Kamal, seething with sex, the macho rebel Huberto and the sensitive, but no less recalcitrant Rolfe Carle, both of whom act as Eva's love interests, the ying to each other's yang.

Allende, like Eva herself, uses her natural ability as a storyteller to depict the lives of these characters, their hopes and dreams-too often snuffed out by the remorselessness world around them, their loves, lives and loneliness as seen through the eyes of Eva who is able to pay tribute to these characters, to remember them-as Eva's mother states on her death-bed-there is not death if people remember you and 'Eva Luna' is Allende's way of ensuring these characters stay alive forever in the mind of the reader.

Adrienne Snape says

Set in an unnamed, South American country *Eva Luna* is a poetic, modern day Latina flavored version of 1001 Arabian nights. Within the novel, whilst the protagonist and other main characters are living their lives, they all encounter fantastical, unique and morally ambiguous characters. What is most impressive about the novel though, is how all of those smaller, strange stories are wound together neatly at climax of the novel in a believable fashion.

The romantic triangle in the novel, though not emphasized, is what nags at the reader's mind and keeps them dedicated throughout all of the smaller sub plots. *Eva Luna*'s many romantic and sexual relationships are all written in a vividly passionate manner keeping the reader divided on whom is the proper ending for Eva. To contrast the "softer" romantic storyline is the "harder" storyline of constant political change in this fictional South American nation. Even apathetic, every day citizens find it hard to ignore the riots, rebellions and guerrilla forces making their mark around them. The soft and hard storylines contrast with each other wonderfully and later on play off each other.

The detail used in the writing, though occasionally tedious to work through, most of the time illustrates beautiful, almost romantic, visions. While our modern day Scheherazade, Eva, spins tales about those wacky secondary characters she uses precise detail to suck the reader into the story within the story. But I must reiterate, that the wonder of these sub stories is how Allende later makes them relevant to the main plot.

Politically and passionately charged *Eva Luna* is a fantastic novel about what it is like to be female growing up with enough flavor of it's to make it a unique tale.

Ryan says

The Good:

The characters are all amazing - mythical figures inhabiting an unnamed part of Latin America some time in the middle of the 20th century. The setting is vivid, and the series of vignettes through the first half of the book read like fairy tales. It's also pretty funny.

The Bad:

The sense of magic really died away in the second half. It became a fairly shallow political story full of neat resolutions and pleasant anticlimaxes. And books about writers always feel a bit self-congratulatory.

'Friends' character the protagonist is most like:

Eva is the emotional rock to her loved ones, and fiercely loyal, just like Joey. She also works in media.

Rosa Ramôa says

"Chamo-me Eva, que quer dizer vida, segundo um livro que a minha mãe consultou para escolher o meu nome. Nasci no quarto dos fundos de uma casa sombria e cresci entre móveis antigos, livros em latim e múmias humanas, mas isso não conseguiu tornar-me melancólica, porque vim ao mundo com um sopro de selva na memória."

(Isabel Allende, Eva Luna)

Emir Ibañez says

Reseña en el canal: <https://youtu.be/Js7BSclH86Y>

Este libro me acompañó por casi diez días y Eva me llenó de historias de personajes pintorescos e historia latinoamericana con la imaginación y la pluma que sólo Isabel Allende sabe manejar.

Ivana Books Are Magic says

Having previously read The House of the Spirits , Of Love and Shadows, Daughter of Fortune and Zorro , I can't deny having certain expectations when it came to this author. Did I expect to like this book based solely on the fact I enjoy her writing? I must admit that I did. Did I end up liking it? Very much so, thanks for asking.

At this point, I think I can say that I'm not only familiar with this writer's style but also with Allende's imaginative scope. Allende's imagination is truly impressive. Still, I realized that her imagination (despite being so potent), is in some ways a world within world, a labyrinth of sorts, that is a narrative enclosed within certain themes. I will explain what I mean later on, but for now it will suffice to say that having identified those themes I could foresee much of what happened. That being said, I still felt this book was magical in the sense that it managed to steal my heart. There was at least a dozen times that was truly moved while I was reading it and it was more than enough to make up for occasional predictably and possible flaws. Allende's a talented writer, no doubt about that. You may tire of her books, you might even dislike her style to start with, but you must give her credit, for if this is not writing talent, what is? Nevertheless, I could help wondering how I would have felt about this book if this was my first Allende and not book no.5. Would I have had enjoyed the story more?

As I was reading this story, all of the Allende's other novels came to my mind. That analytical part of my brain didn't seem to get in the way of the other part that enjoyed this novel for what it was- good literature. Knowing where the narrative is going to take me didn't ruin neither the feeling of an authentic story, nor the emotional impact it had on me. The fact that I didn't find many things plausible didn't bother me either (it is called magic realism for a reason, right?). However, at some point the similarities between Eva Luna and all her other female protagonists started to create this feeling of déjà vu than subsequently lead to ask myself how much of them was in Eva Luna (and vice versa). I wonder how much these mental wanderings of mine were prompted by the fact that Eva Luna is, among other things, a novel about a woman who becomes a writer. In this novel, I really hung on those passages about the writing process. I found what the author (or Eva Luna? Or is it the same person in this case?) had to say about it very interesting. When Eva Luna explained how and even more importantly WHY she writes---that's such a precious passage. As someone

who obviously loves reading, I found myself (metaphorically) nodding in agreement. We write and we read to make sense of this world. To put things into perspective. To be heard....Allende's (or Eva Luna's ?) words made me think of Tennessee Williams who (in one of her prefaces) compared all writers with a little Southern girl who wanted to be heard and payed attention to. In one other instance (or perhaps within the same preface) Williams said (something along the lines) that in real life we love and betray one another, if not in the same breath, then within a very short time period. Literature gives us an opportunity to process things. In life so many things are happening at once that sometimes we're simply unable to make heads or tails of it.

A few words about this novel. Its protagonist is Eva Luna, a daughter of a servant and of a wandering Indian. Eva grows up in a house of her mother's employer, a strict doctor who doesn't even know Eva is there and who didn't even notice that his loyal servant (Eva's mother) had been pregnant. Eva's mother conceived her with a snake bitten Indian. Eva's Indian father miraculously survived the snake bite, but left her mother as soon as he recovered. Eva Luna is an imaginative child, enchanted by her mother's stories. Eva's inherited, among other things, her mother tendency to daydream. What does life has in store for this little girl? As I was reading the story of Eva Luna and her childhood, I couldn't help comparing it with the childhood of the protagonist of Daughter of Fortune. Is this one so different, I asked myself? As long as I enjoy her writing, does it even matter? Should it matter?

I will explain what I mean. If my observations are correct, Allende's novels are strikingly similar not only in their choice of protagonist, but also in their plot. It is almost as there is a formula to them (something you wouldn't exactly expect in magic realism). Often there is a young female protagonist with an interesting family background. This background is always revealed, making her novels a mix of individual and collective, of individual story and family sagas. Childhood memories always play an important part in the development of the heroine (and the other protagonists for that matter.) The atmosphere of South America as a multicultural and unique blend of contrasts, is always well recreated and often reflected on. Often there is an elderly man who not having an emotional contact with anyone establishes it with a young girl. In The House of Spirits, the strict (scientific) Estaban loves his granddaughter dearly. In Eva Luna, the little girl cares for a dying elderly man so tenderly that he decides to leave everything to her, despite him not being exactly sure who she is. This older man, an employer of her late mother, establishes a first real emotional connection only on his death bed. As a life of one young girl gets started. An appropriate metaphor, I would say. Life and death travel hand in hand in Allende's novels- as they do in life.

There is another theme that is often repeated in Allende's novels. Theme of forbidden 'almost' incestuous love (the so called Wuthering Heights syndrome, love between people not related but raised together or in some cases that of one raising the other- this would qualify as The Thorn Birds syndrome, right?) are frequent. In addition, Allende's heroines often fall in love with man who are revolutionist and guerrilla fighters. Often they have to hide their love from everyone. Likewise, often her heroines have to decide between two man, one of whom was their first love and to whom they feel bound with strong strong passion AND the other someone they met after the first, learned to love more slowly but more steadily). As far as I noticed this was pattern was followed in Eva Luna, Daughter of Fortune and Of Love and Shadows. Another thing I noticed is that there is no stereotyping. A heroine may have romantic feelings or attraction even towards man from the regime (take for example, the army fiance in Love and Shadows and the military figure who courts Eva in Eva Luna).

Often the female protagonist is, at some point in the narrative, imprisoned or tortured. At any rate, the heroine always observes a lot of suffering but despite of it she always manages to establish meaningful

relationships and friendships. There is always a bit of humour, amidst of all the melancholy, death and sadness. Her female protagonist always feel a connection with their country and people. Their gaze is both critical and loving at the same time. The conditions and the times in which the heroine lives in are always turbulent, there is always a revolution of some kind. Politics are always a part of her heroine's life, which doesn't mean that romantic lives of Allende's heroines are lacking in anything. Quite on the contrary, the themes of politics, war, power, oppression and danger often get mixed up with friendship, idealism, artistic tendencies and love. Moreover, Allende's heroines often break taboos be it by falling in love too early and running away only to change their mind and fall in love with someone else towards the end of the novel, or by loving someone out of their social circle, or/and someone of other race or religion.

Isabel Allende has a very unique writing style, and this I'm sure, was noted by many. Personally, I'm a fan of her style of writing but it is not the only thing that fascinates me. You see, somehow Allende manages to retell stories without making them sound repetitive and that is something quite exceptional. I could find 1000 similarities between her novels, between her protagonists, between her plots...I could find so many to make a good case that she is recycling them...However, I don't believe that to be the case. As Allende herself notes in *Eva Luna*- sometimes changing even a little detail can change the story. For example, at one point in the story, Eva retells the story of a death of loved one in such a way as to make that person deal with loss more easily...and who knows if this 'invented' story isn't in some ways true? Perhaps their loved one really felt they were there with them in that moment? So, I'm not sure it could be said that Allende recycles her stories. Probably it wouldn't matter to me- even I believed it to be true. Her stories move me deeply. You know how most painters have a certain style and you can recognize them in different stages of their artistic development? Well, the same can be said about Isabel Allende. I might never tire of her books. Enough said.

The only novel of hers that I didn't fall in love with was *Zorro*. I used to think that *Zorro* didn't turn out that well because Isabel Allende was limited by the theme and because those limitations somewhat cramped her style. Now, that I think about it, I think *Zorro* failed because the protagonist was a man. Allende was meant to write from a female point of view, her novels are stories told from a distinctly womanly/feminine point of view. Not that I mind that, you know. Her sensual heroines are a refreshment. In real world, I find it hard to believe that such bold woman would be so universally liked- but who knows? After all, persons who know how to love are often the ones who end up being loved the most. How can love be just a coincidence? The more we love, the greater the odds we will be loved in return. Friendships are born out of love. Romantic love is just another form of love. Friendship are hardly ever developed without courage and initiative. The same could be said for love. It is not a matter of chance or of a coincidence. I, for one, don't believe in coincidences. I believe in magic.

César Lasso says

It's the only book by Allende I have read and I really liked the story. The characters are very varied. There's an important character, an Arab immigrant, who is a lovely person, honest, generous and modest.

Anyway, I've been told this author can get very repetitive... Save for that sweet Arab immigrant, I didn't find much in the book that might encourage me to go on with other works by Allende.

Luís C. says

She managed with difficulty to overthrow the barrier of prejudice and Melecio convinced the benefits of the proposal. He felt first shocked by the atmosphere of the place, but, during his first night, he discovered that not only housed a woman in itself, but rather an artist.

Undoubtedly a novel worthy of 4 stars.

Josie says

I found that reading this book was a bit like attending a storytellers' cocktail party, at which the hostess (the author) has got drunk and decided to rapidly parade every unusual and eccentric character she could possibly imagine before the gathering, in order to impress her friends.

A host of unusual tales tumble out of this book, like so many magpie-gathered jewels that had been crammed into a box. Eva Luna hits us with one bizarre scenario after another, in rapid succession. Whilst an amazing and tumultuous tale is told, I found it a little frustrating... I wanted to know Eva Luna and the characters she encounters, a little more, explore their emotional depths, understand their motives, perhaps even warm to them.

The book is suffused with lyrical flashes and memorable imagery and yet at other times I felt that monumental events and important relationships are glossed over too rapidly.

Negin says

Isabel Allende is one of my favorite authors and I'm having fun re-reading some of her books. It took me a little longer to complete this one. I mean that in a good way. Her writing is so beautiful and so rich, that I often found myself re-reading paragraphs. I love the depth and richness of all the characters.

A quote that I loved:

“The house was a vast labyrinth of books. Volumes were stacked from floor to ceiling on every wall, dark, crackling, redolent of leather bindings, smooth to the touch, with their gold titles and translucent gilt-edged pages and delicate typography.”

Audrey says

Perhaps it is merely a reflection of my feebleness as a reader that I assume the basic conceit of any first person novel is for the author to be the narrator, more or less. In my defense, this book is dedicated to Allende's mother. And the story itself is about a girl who loses her mother and loves her mother deeply and

has all kinds of wooooonderful adventures, only to discover writing and have even more maaaaaaagical adventures, and become highly successful, and be pursued by a general and also a communist rebel and a successful photographer. Everyone loves her. Something about it rubs me the wrong way. Maybe because I think the narrator is Allende and yet my main problem with the narrator is that she apparently has no flaws. She is never mean to anyone in the book, never angry, and, truth be told, never too interesting. People want a narrator who is riddled with doubt and self-loathing. Someone a little more like you and me. Instead we get heavy handed and self important:

"I just do what I can. Reality is a jumble we can't always measure or decipher, because everything is happening at the same time....I try to open a path through that maze, to put a little order in that chaos, to make life more bearable. When I write, I describe life as I would like it to be."

Barf. I will also say I disliked that the narrator had a quality of simply announcing the events of the book. One day she was just done with loving her communist rebel. Poof. One moment she just decided she was beautiful. Abracadabra. Always with little or no lead-up. I like to move with a narrator, not several steps behind her.

There were still flashes of the mystical storyteller I recall so fondly from House of the Spirits. Maybe I was just younger then. I don't know. All I know is I'm glad I checked this book out of the library instead of buying it.

Just? says

mergait?, kuri pasakojo sitorijas

Apklotu šiltai apsikamšius, elektrinio šildytuvo prišildytame kambaryje su pietetišku romanu gal?jau jaustis beveik tropikuose, jei, žinoma, ne vaizdas už lango. O ten „balta balta kur dairais“, kitaip ir nepasakysi. Kam gražu, kam smagu, o man po palm?m visgi smagiau, kad ir knygos puslapiuose.

Su ?ilietiškomis, sodriomis, egzotiškomis Isabel Allende fantazijomis susiduriu jau antr?kart. Pirm? kart? lankiausi „Dvasi? namuose“, o š? kart? praleidau dvi dienas pažindindamas su „Eva Luna“. Abi jos gana panašios ir, man rodos, bent jau to tipo jos istorij? gij? už?iuopiu ir turb?t kr?voje tekst? sugeb??iau atskirti Allende stili? be jokio vargo. Jos istorijos tokios karš?iu dvelkian?ios, juslingos, kupinos keist?, dramatišk? likimo vingi? ir ekstravagantišk? personaž?. Ta?iau labiausiai išskiria j? visgi ne tie melodramiški siužetai, bet kaip ji sugeba juos papasakoti. ? keli? pagrindini? veik?j? keli? ?pina ?vairiausi? ?domi?, nors ir ne?tikim? istorij?, kurias skaitydamas ?sitruaki ir net nepajunti kaip puslapiai tirpsta lyg sniegas Evos Lunos rankose. Rašytoja sugeba papasakoti apie por? m?nesi? taip, kad rodos tai, k? ji nupasakojo, vyko met? metus. Ir ?domiausia, kad visk? atskleidžia ne?mantriaiš sakiniškai ir taip paprastai, kad tas sodrus tekstas tampa toks lengvutis.

Kitas ypatingas jos k?rybos bruožas – kaip nuostabiai jos k?ryboje atsiskleidžia Piet? Amerika. Ji, dr?stu teigti, beveik visai neaptarin?ja peizaž? ar interjero, nebent ten yra kažkas labai ?domaus, bet bendrai pasakoja apie žmones, situacijas ir sukuria tok? piln? vaizd?, kad n? sekunde nepasimirši, kur vyksta veiksmas. Nors man asmeniškai nelabai kult?riškai išsiskyr? tos vietas su Austrija, neskaitant karo vaizd?. Bet ir tai tikriausiai normalu, nes juk visk? pirmuoju asmeniu pasakojo ?iliet? mergina, kuri vargu ar ten kada nors ir buvo, o atotr?kis toks didžiulis – net ir fantazija ne visuomet ?ia padeda. Ir žinoma, Allende k?ryboje labai daug diktat?ros, perversmo, revoliucijos, partizan? vaizdini?, bet visa tai rašytoja pasakoja tik

iš paprast? žmoni? perspektyvos ir labai kažkaip artimai – pažin?iai su Piet? Amerika turb?t pats tas.

Kaip visada niekam tikusioje anotacijoje tarp daug tuš?iažodžiavimo ir klaidinimo, „Eva Luna“ apib?dinama kaip meil?s istorija (vienintelis konkretus ten parašytas dalykas), ?tariu, kad daug kas j? taip vadina, bet man atrodo jai toli gražu iki to. Nors gal b?t? teisingiau sakyti, ji toli gražu virš „meil?s istorijos“. Tie ?simyl?j?liai pirm? kart? susitinka likus šeštadaliui knygos (penkiasdešim?iai iš trij? šimt? puslapi?) ir knyga labiau pasakoja t? dviej? žmoni? gyvenimo istorijas, atskirus j? gyvenimo kelius, sunkius ir kli??i? kupinus, kuriuos galiausiai sujung? meil?, bet ji toli gražu nebuvo centrinis romano dalykas.

O pasakodama tas dvi didži?sias istorijas Allende ?pina ir daug pašalini?, dažnai tragišk?, komišk? ar ne?tikim? istorij??. Apie ministr?, kuris vietoje tualetu tuštinasi k?d?je su naktipuodžiu. Arba juodaod? tarnait?, pagimdžiusi? skirting? odos spalv? siamo dvynius, išmetusi? juos ? šiuksli? konteiner?, v?liau reikalavusi? palaidoti juos šventoje žem?je, o po kurio laiko užsisiuvusi? sau makšt?. Arba išprot?jus? žmogel?, daranti genialias mumijas. Ar moter?l? iš keistos medžiagos gaminan?i? nuostabiausias ?vairiausi? daikt? imitacijas. Ir tie veik?jai vienaip ar kitaip šm?kš?ioja visame romane, n?ra tik betiksl?s butaforijos – j? istorijos kažk? reiškia jei ne istorijai, tai bent pagrindinei veik?jai. Visos tos istorijos tiesiog ne?tikimos bet tekstui tinka, o ir šiaip jau jos daug logiškesn?s nei neva realistiški santykiai visokiuose šeš?liuose ar katastrofose, o ir skaityti gerokai ?domiau. Žinoma, ne tik istorijos bet ir j? veik?jai unikalios asmenyb?s, su kuriomis sunku nuobodžiauti, turb?t d?l to ir tekstas toks ?traukiantis.

Man labai patiko romano pabaiga – ji labai gražiai ?r?mino tekst?. Suteik? kažkokio neperd?to iškilmungumo, prasm?s, kai sus?dus prie televizoriaus tame rod? svarbius knygos ?vykius ar veik?jus. Simboliška ir tai, kad per televizori? viskas buvo visai kitaip nei realyb?je, visai kitaip – iškraipyta ir perspausta. O ?domi buvo ir turb?t nelabai pastebima paralel? tarp istorijos ir m?s? vadinam? meksikietišk? muilo oper?, kurias kartais Allende istorijos ir primena.

- Komendantas Rochelijas papraš? mane filmuoti. Valdžia bandys nutyl?ti teisyb?, o aš bandysiu j? atskleisti. O tau ko ?ia reikia?
- Minkysiu tešl?.

Paskutin? ?domi detal? – dialogai. J? knygoje n?ra labai daug, akivaizdu, kad rašytojai labiau patinka lieti paprast? pasakojim?, bet kai dialogai pasirodo - jie ?dom?s, dažnai charizmatiški, žinoma, yra ir papras?iausi?, pasakojimui b?tin?, bet šiaip tikrai nesišvaistoma žodžiaisiai. Kad ir šitas dialogas – atrodo visiška nes?mon?, bet su kontekstu jis tikrai šmaikštus ir ?domus, o ?d?tas jis kaip tik tam kad pagyvint? t? scen?, o ne kad paaiškint? kas ir taip akivaizdu, kaip dažnai b?na. ?ia turiu pasidžiaugti ir tuo, kad vert?ja š? kart? kažkaip nenuvyl? – nepabijojo ir ?prast? gramatin? žodži? tvark? apeiti, kas leido išsaugoti t? dialog? tikroviškum?, kuris dažnai prasmenga po redagavim?.

„Eva Luna“ - pasakojim? romanas, kuris d?l nuostabaus Isabel Allende talento pasakoti neleidžia d?mesiui nukrypti nei sekunde ir priver?ia ramiai, tolygiai m?gautis tekstu, kuriame trykšta spalvos, sprogsta fantazijos ir kuris sugeba nunešti net ? kit? pasaulio krašt? ir jautriai pasakoti apie gyvenim?, kartais komišk?, kartais žiaur?, bet visuomet nenusp?jam?.

Zoë says

This is the first book by Isabel Allende that I've read and I can totally see myself getting addicted to her writing...That, and my mother has sent me about 10 of her books to read here in Malaysia. But I stayed up all

night last night just to finish the last half of the book, and that usually means that I really like it. The story is about two people who fall in love, but the story is about their lives before they meet. The story is also about the social and political situation in the anonymous South American country Allende is writing about. I believe it's Chile, but if anybody knows for certain tell me! Beautifully written. I just picked up some of her short stories in Spanish, so I'm pretty excited to keep reading this author!

???? ???? says

?????

DD says

For some reason, this is one of my all-time favorite books. I think I was deeply moved and inspired by the novel because of the formative time period in my life when I read it. For me, it's about a woman who has had a difficult early life and who develops resilience and forbearance in the face of adversity. The entire novel for me is about the journey not just of herself but of an entire society that learns to adapt and transform reality in order not to dwell in suffering but to live a life of appreciation and joy.

One aspect of the book I particularly liked is how Eva Luna comes to accept herself as a woman in ways that seem so natural and practical. For example, a passage in the novel reads, "As I approached my seventeenth year, I grew to my full height and my face became the face I have today. I stopped examining myself in the mirror to compare myself to the perfect beauties of movies and magazines. I decided I was beautiful - for the simple reason that I wanted to be." In our society where women are taught to be obsessed with their appearance, this view seemed so refreshing to me.

Allende chooses to weave throughout her novel a refreshing perspective of living in gratitude even when faced with lack of material and/or physical wealth, unlike so many contemporary novels today in which people seem so cynical, privileged, and lacking in integrity in their relationships. For example, she describes a scene of great environmental catastrophe: "Victims on the roofs of houses [waited] patiently to be rescued by military helicopters. Although stunned and hungry, many sang, because it would have been pointless to aggravate misfortune by complaining."

There are so many pearls of wisdom in this book plus it's a whirlwind story that blends reality with fantasy in entertaining, fascinating ways. Ultimately, the novel is also a love story because she created the opportunity for love on many levels by never being defeated by life's difficulties.

Elyse says

"Eva Luna", by Isabel Allende was first written in 1987 --translated from Spanish to English.

I've read most books of her books - but never read this one.....which is now available as a Kindle download-- for \$2.99

Eva, (a storyteller much like Isabel Allende, and revolutionary), begins this story -- narrating in first person. She describes her mother, Consuelo's, life. Her mother worked for a professor-- and usually did everything

he asked her to do. One day an Indian Gardner was bitten by a snake. The professor left instructions of what Consuelo was to do to prepare him for his deathbed. Instead of following his orders she made love to him, thus conceiving Eva.

As a turn of events - the Gardner recovers - but Consuelo dies after choking on a chicken bone.

Eva is left to fend for herself- an orphan. ...and after the professor dies her one friend, Huberto Naranjo at the time - and later sometime lover until she falls for another man - places her in the care a Lady Pimp named La Senora.

La Senora take Eva under her wing and gives her a makeover. Everything is peaceful for a few years until a new police chief moves in and crashes the brothel.

Next she meets Riad Hilabi -- a man with a cleft lip. Eva moves in with him and his wife, Zulema.

Things part of the story gets very complicated and dramatic- I won't spoil what happens -but soon Eva is going to flee again. (after some 'close calls').

NOTE: This novel moves 'a little' slow until this point - I didn't mind - we are getting to know the characters..... but then things speed up - action gets moving!

Eventually Eva meets Rolf Carle. The two 'do' fall in love - but their love has a bigger purpose than just themselves - they are both strong characters wanting to make a difference.

Their life is about service. Eva and Carle both work together to help the guerrillas in releasing nine prisoners from jail as an act of rebellion.

Throughout the novel a parallel narrative is told about Rolf Carle's life from childhood to adulthood. We learn what happened to him as a kid to make him the man he is.

It was nice to see a strong 'man' in this novel - as well a strong female....which Isabel is known for.

It's been a while since I remember reading early-fiction books by Isabel Allende. After her daughter died - she wrote two excellent non- fiction books. I treasure them both!!!

Later her fiction books began to get more and MORE contemporary. I liked them, but this is where Isabel's fans began to divide.

This novel was a nice RE-VISIT down memory lane. If readers liked Isabel' early fiction books - but missed this one - they are sure to enjoy "Eva Luna".

We will meet Mimi - the Beautiful and enchanting transsexual, and the Professor who is devoted to mummifying corpses. The characters are 'enchanting'.

There is political drama - sexual steam - history - comedy - tragedy - mysticism....and Isabel's delightful creative imaginative storytelling.

OLD SCHOOL Isabel Allende!

Ashley Nohemi says

“Perhaps we had the good fortune to stumble into an exceptional love, a love I did not have to invent, only clothe in all its glory so it could endure in memory—in keeping with the principle that we can construct reality in the image of our desires.”

I am so torn with my rating. The beginning of the novel deserves 5 stars. But once Eva Luna moved on from Riad Halabí (about halfway in the novel) the story became rushed and not as descriptive. I was unsatisfied with the ending because there could have been more character development on Rolf Carlé. Rolf Carlé's story was shared alongside Eva Luna's account of her own life. I feel like since Rolf Carlé was such a prominent character he deserved more. What exactly? I don't know but I definitely needed more.

Nevertheless, Eva Luna is a great story filled with characters I will always remember, passion and eroticism, and of course in true Allende fashion, historical and feminist connections.

Jennifer says

It is hard for me to recapture the innocence I once had with books, where the words were so real it was like being in a super reality. Age, a better understanding of the world, and my new education to psychotherapy has made literature more understandable and a little less mystical. But Allende gets me pretty close. The psychological lens of me understands Eva Luna's storytelling as therapeutic tool, her retelling of a traumatic past with newly imagined happiness makes the present palatable and a future possible. And I'm grateful that despite the novel's trekking through some terrible times--destruction of the Indians, abusive childhoods, government suppression, guerrilla revolutions, and violence against women--Allende does not glory in the gore but tells her story frankly and magically. The novel let me taste again the wonderful mystery of the literary art. Sure, at times logical and understandable with child development and psychoanalytic theory, but mysterious and fiercely beautiful nonetheless.

Ray says

Eva Luna has a gift. The child growing up in an unnamed South American country is blessed with the ability to weave compelling tales which enchant her audience - children and adults alike. It provides her with a way to survive in an extremely tough world. She is born into the underclass and jobs are brutish, insecure and poorly paid. People close to her die or get sick on a regular basis.

Cue a fascinating journey involving amongst other things mummies, a stuffed puma, corrupt politicians and policemen, a (Lebanese??) shopkeeper with a harelip, an old lady in a lifesaving coffin, street urchins and a smoldering revolution. Allende manages to pack so much life into a short book, much of the story is tragic but at the same time positive and life affirming.

Some great funny bits amongst the grit and grime - who wouldn't want to pour a full chamberpot over the head of a pompous politician?

A truly wonderful read
