



RAQUEL MARTINEZ GOMEZ

THE HOLLOW OF MEMORY

Literary fiction

Manuscript available.

Characters: 425.000 spaces included

Spanish manuscript available

Is it possible to go back in time and communicate with someone from a different time period? Fabiola works for a publisher, discarding out-of-print books. She comes across the work of Manuela, who also lived in Madrid, but fifty years previously. Manuela's words motivate her to go on a journey through a personal minefield to liberate herself and become more free. Fabiola is changed by the power of Manuela's writing. She follows in Manuela's footsteps, exploring the concept of creation and destruction. Emotionally damaged by broken relationships, Manuela is unable to leave a country that, since the Franco regime feels like a prison to her. Fabiola is determined to break down barriers, which have as many similarities as differences to those of Manuela.

Fabiola is a XXI century's woman living in a country which has been affected by dictatorship, ignorance and silence. It seems that everything has changed, but her difficulties are similar to those that Manuela faced fifty years ago. Like a tightrope walker, she tries to balance work and family life. She looks after her daughter, Amaya, who surprises her every day with her fresh view of things. An ability, which she seems to have lost.

After the Spanish Civil War, the new regime prevented Manuela from teaching in school. She had no choice, but to channel her anger and her need for expression through literature. She dreamed of her youth and that other country that might have been, because she now feels that Spain is a barren and hostile territory. Although she wants to leave this kingdom of sadness, it is impossible for her to emigrate, due to the fear of losing her sons.

Raquel Martínez-Gómez was born in Albacete. She has a PhD in Communications Sciences from the Complutense University of Madrid and an MA in Modern and Contemporary Literature, Culture and thought from the University of Sussex, UK.

She lived in Spain, Mexico, UK and Uruguay.

Her short stories and poetry have received much recognition: her novel *SOMBROS DE UNICORNIO* (Agaida) awarded the European Union Prize for Literature in 2010 and the Premio Ateneo Joven de Sevilla (2007) and has been translated into 8 languages. Also, in 2002, her novel *Del Color de la lava* awarded the prize Ciudad de Mostoles.

Her Blog about literature is <http://www.otromundoestenmarcha.org/ceniza-de-ombu/>.

She is subject to her husband's ambition, whom she is unable to recognise, as he has changed so much since the defeat. Tragic events, such as the murder of one of her sons, the censorship of her novels and the departure of her lover mark the end of Manuela's dreams.

Fabiola find an excuse to go to Manuela's temple, where her sister Candela lives. Candela, a former researcher, was always in Manuela's shadow and now she needs tell Fabiola her own story.

Manuela passed on her desire for exile to Eloy, who felt that the context is inappropriate for his relationship with the author. He decided to emigrate to the South of England and was the missing link in Fabiola's investigation. She felt compelled to go looking in Sussex to complete the broken pieces of the story.

Shane, an Irish friend, helped Eloy to open doors that the Spanish had closed, so that he could put down roots in another place. They add another angle to the investigation that is impossible to conclude. Fabiola ends her search, with another lead to go in a different direction. It will be impossible to stop being who she, but her trip into the past gave her the opportunity to image another reality and she will dare to try new things.

The gaps are testimony to the complexity of human beings; memory is a vain attempt to close those gaps.