



Covering the Sun with My Hand

Trade Paperback Edition

314pp

\$14.99

ISBN 978-1-5391222-6-5

PUB DATE September 1, 2015

E-BOOK ISBN 978-1-5390718-1-2

PUB DATE September 1, 2015

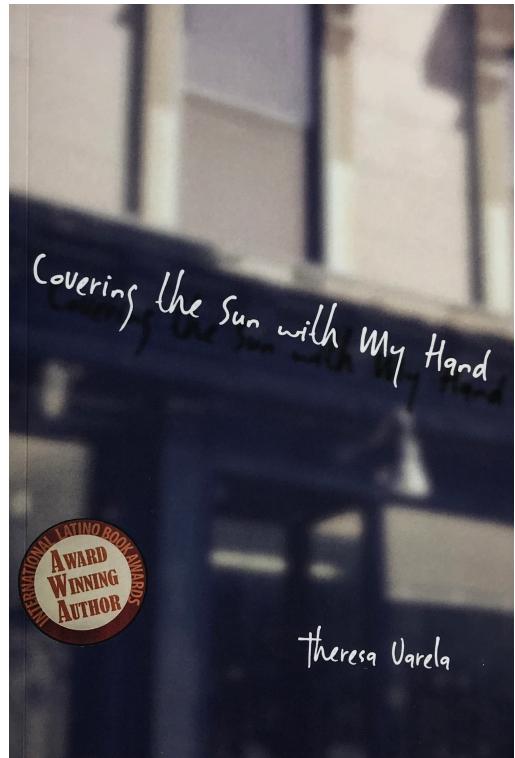
PUBLISHER Pollen Press Publishing

DISTRIBUTOR CreateSpace

GENRE Fiction

Autographed copies available at
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Award-winning Puerto Rican author Theresa Varela was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She is the recipient of International Latino Book Awards for *Coney Island Siren* (2020, Honorable Mention), *Covering the Sun with My Hand* (2015), *Nights of Indigo Blue: A Daisy Muñiz Mystery* (2016), and *Graciella la Gitana Oracle/Oráculo de Graciella la Gitana* (2019).

Dr. Varela holds a PhD in Nursing Research and Theory Development and currently works with the mentally ill homeless population in New York City. She is a member of *Las Comadres Para las Americas*. She is co-founder of *La Pluma y La Tinta*. Her blog, *LatinaLibations on Writing and All Things of the Spirit*, can be found at TheresaVarela.com

An award-winning coming-of-age story of a Puerto Rican woman living in Brooklyn, New York, who yearns to break free from strong family traditions but learns that the ways of loyalty and compassion build the rich foundation of love for self.

It's Park Slope, Brooklyn, in the summer of 1979, and Julia Acevedo plans her escape to college; away from her "too traditional" family. On her way to liberation, her twin brother, René, is stricken with mental illness. Mami strives to keep Julia at home as her own affliction with hoarding becomes paramount in how she survives the loss of the son in whom she has embedded her deepest hopes. Papi, lost in his own quiet alcoholic reverie, unconsciously pulls on his daughter's much needed reserves. Julia's desire for a lasting relationship with Victor is seemingly dashed when she hides her family's truths and enters into a crushing affair with Daniel. Julia keeps afloat as she moves into a denial that matches her mother's. Julia's saving grace is Caridad, her young neighbor, who easily dons the persona that Julia longs for by embracing a profound spiritual life in the Orisha tradition and who is guided and loved by Oshún, the deity of love, compassion, and motherhood. While accepting the sacrifices demanded of her, Julia searches for the happiness she feels she's being denied. Going against her upbringing, Julia ultimately opens to the incredible possibilities of life, deepening her relationship with her brother in the process.

*International Latino Book Award Winner 2015
Second Place for Best First Novel*

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