

ing of any kind.

But for writers of either sex, these interviews, ranging over almost 40 years from Dorothy Parker in 1956 to Rebecca West and Anne Sexton just before they died, are an invaluable record and a mesmerizing read.



AND A BODY TO
REMEMBER WITH

BY CARMEN
RODRÍGUEZ

ARSENAL PULP PRESS,
1997

REVIEW BY ANN
DECTER

and a body to remember with is a beautiful looping journey through time and soul, traversing the Pacific coast of the Americas, connecting Vancouver and Santiago, Canada and Chile, friends and lovers, daughters and sons, parents and grandparents. *and a body to remember with* is a defiant refusal to forget, a vivid and startling remembrance.

In 14 stories Carmen Rodríguez refracts a nation's history through a prism of lives, writing personal and intimate stories of bodies who carry this history. For she possesses and uses the gift of personalizing the abstract, bringing a huge canvas to life in compelling voices and moving details.

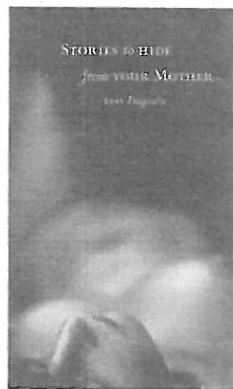
Voices like the one that begins the story "in the company of words" calling "Hey, Pilar Vallejo, remember when we used to run down Ferrari Street and the boats looked so small down there in the bay..." And you feel you do, because you can remember running with a friend, remember how fast your legs move down a hill, and how strange it is that big things look so small when they are far away. Rodríguez invites you inside the lives of her characters, inside stories of the Chilean coup and its resonances through decades.

These stories read easily, but the ease is all in the skilled writing. They are tough stories about human strength and yes, depth, a writer guiding readers through crushing forces. Listen as a woman wades up river on a broken leg, as a grandmother recognizes that by clinging to traditional values she devas-

tated her daughter's life, as young organizers face American tanks empty-handed. Deftly, Carmen Rodríguez leads you in, 'til you are waist deep in icy water, hugging a weeping grandmother, face against the guns of the old world order.

The resilient force in all this is love of life. In a fine gentle tale of a mother's dying, the adult daughter's parting question is, "How will I live without this love?" And in the closing piece two women, separated for 20 years, reunite in tears and laughter, "obviously the military did not count on this good memory, this love; they did not count on this immense desire to live, this propensity to laughter."

This good memory, brought vividly to the page. Bravo, Carmen Rodríguez, for a powerful book of transformation, a true witnessing of who we are and can be, as humans.



STORIES TO HIDE
FROM YOUR
MOTHER

TESS FRAGOULIS

ARSENAL PULP
PRESS, 1998

REVIEW BY KAROLLE
WALL

These may not be stories to hide from every mother, as I am one myself. However, as fate (or Fragoulis herself) would have it, I'm writing this review because my own mother, Jillian Ridington, found the book "too over the edge." Having read it, I understand why. Fragoulis's stories make for a disturbing and at times agonizing read. Yet they are playful and bizarre, and I couldn't help but wonder if I wasn't participating in some medieval carnival.

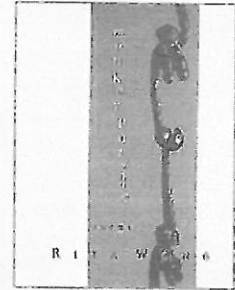
Fragoulis turns the world upside down and inside out; she gives women a voice that one expects to find accompanied and legitimized by Nancy Friday's psycho babble. But there are no explanations or treatises to explain the dark, sexual and often deviant side of Fragoulis' narrators. That is, until the reader meets Horace, both the chief

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