



Boy Kings of Texas: A Memoir

Domingo Martinez

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER AND NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FINALIST

Lyrical and gritty, this authentic coming-of-age story about a border-town family in Brownsville, Texas, insightfully illuminates a little-understood corner of America.

Domingo Martinez lays bare his interior and exterior worlds as he struggles to make sense of the violent and the ugly, along with the beautiful and the loving, in a Texas border town in the 1980s. Partly a reflection on the culture of machismo and partly an exploration of the author's boyhood spent in his sister's hand-me-down clothes, this book delves into the enduring, complex bond between Martinez and his deeply flawed but fiercely protective older brother, Daniel. It features a cast of memorable characters, including his gun-hoarding former farmhand, Gramma, and "the Mimis"—two of his older sisters who for a short, glorious time manage to transform themselves from poor Latina adolescents into upper-class white girls. Martinez provides a glimpse into a society where children are traded like commerce, physical altercations routinely solve problems, drugs are rampant, sex is often crude, and people depend on the family witch doctor for advice. Charming, painful, and enlightening, this book examines the traumas and pleasures of growing up in South Texas and the often terrible consequences when different cultures collide on the banks of a dying river.

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