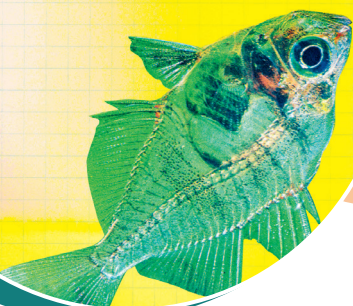


A MULHER DO PADRE

The priest's wife

A mulher
do padre



Author: Carol Rodrigues

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An ironic and affectionate account of a childhood lived in the 90's. Carol Rodrigues takes the reader through the moments of unravelling and introspection that accompany the maturation of Lina, a girl busy observing what happens – and what doesn't happen, and why things are as they are – around her.

We meet Lina, and the world interpreted inside her head, during her early years spent in England with her parents. **She introduces us to her daily life, her favourite meals, her games, and also to the spot on her mother's forehead – «a lizard is growing inside her» she says, and it makes her always sad, and sometimes violent.**

She tells us about her neighbours Harry and William (sounds familiar?), who invite her to unusual games, her love for the Backstreet Boys and her fear of mad cow, just two of the many references to the 1990s present in the narrative.

Back in Brazil with her family, Lina experiences remarkable moments in the country's history – such as the demonstrations of the “cara-pintadas” during the Collor era –, **always with the curious look of someone who is still growing up and trying to understand the world.**

She dreams of skating like the attendants at a supermarket chain, hates ballet classes and is learning to cope, groping, with a mother of fickle humour and a father who always seems a little lost.

In the brief chapters of this book, written in a **lean and inventive language, we walk with Lina and her unusual thoughts through adolescence**, her first romantic interests, school exams, an international trip, and that sense of dislocation and confusion, of discovery and wonder that accompanies this formative period.

The priest's wife is a nostalgia-spiced delicacy for those who grew up in the 1990s, with **inescapable references and memories** (as delightful as they are embarrassing) that can be shared among many of us. In this scenario, we witness Lina's moments of doubt, tenderness and violence, and, with doses of humour and horror, we are reminded of how **childhood, with its not knowing and not understanding, can be a time of great loneliness and doubt, but always full of life.**



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The author

Carol Rodrigues was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1985 and lives in São Paulo. With her debut book, *Sem vista para o mar* (Edith Seal, 2014), she won the Jabuti and Clarice Lispector awards from the National Library. Her second book, the novel *O melindre nos dentes da besta* (7Letras, 2019), was a finalist for the São Paulo Literature Prize and the Jabuti. She holds a master's degree in Performance Studies from the University of Amsterdam and works as a screenwriter, curator and teacher.

From the book

«It's New Year's Eve and there's no party because Mum just wants to sleep because the lizard grows inside her and it must be really sleepy, so Dad and I have dinner of ham and cheese rolls and hot milk with cinnamon. He always eats very quickly and leaves the table and I take my time when I don't like it and also when I like it because then I want to feel in my mouth every tasty little piece. In the bedroom and in the very yellow light of the lamp the dolls talk quietly. The carpet irritates my thighs a lot, everything itches, do you like *paçoca*? I like it but there's no bread here. I miss grandma's *guarana do sol* and *maguary juice*. Fan in the bathroom, short skirt, buckle sandals. What was the word for *tomate*? Tomato.»

«So whoever arrives last is the priest's wife. I don't listen because I'm wondering why the flowerbed is called a flowerbed if it's not a bed at all, so I run out and I arrive last at the Secret Building and I'm the priest's wife because I arrived last and now there are a bunch of people pointing their fingers and calling me the priest's wife and I don't know what that means. Is it the nun? Are they calling me a nun? But the nun is not the priest's wife, she is Jesus' wife, or God's wife, and I also don't know why sometimes she calls one and sometimes the other, the nun stays with the Father and the Son but what about the Holy Spirit, and the priest doesn't have a wife because he can't marry so the priest's wife is a secret forbidden hidden lover or is a woman who doesn't exist. Or she is the one who already died and dies again dancing in the place of the boy she likes. Or it's like Wendy who likes Peter Pan but he only wants her for a mum. That's it. Isn't it? Since you came in last, you're going in first. All right. And alone. That's good. Alone. That's good. Alone is a paroxytone with consonant digraph. If some nun catches me here I'll say that I got lost, or that I hurt, or that I cried, or that I ran away.

Video

[Carol Rodrigues interviewed about the process of writing *A Mulher do Padre*](#) by Entrelinhas (Automatic Subtitles Available).