



Teresa, My Love: An Imagined Life of the Saint of Avila

Julia Kristeva

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Mixing fiction, history, psychoanalysis, and personal fantasy, *Teresa, My Love* turns a past world into a modern marvel, following Sylvia Leclercq, a French psychoanalyst, academic, and incurable insomniac, as she falls for the sixteenth-century Saint Teresa of Avila and becomes consumed with charting her life. Traveling to Spain, Leclercq, Julia Kristeva's probing alter ego, visits the sites and embodiments of the famous mystic and awakens to her own desire for faith, connection, and rebellion.

One of Kristeva's most passionate and transporting works, *Teresa, My Love* interchanges biography, autobiography, analysis, dramatic dialogue, musical scores, and images of paintings and sculpture to engage the reader in Leclercq's and Kristeva's journey. Born in 1515, Teresa of Avila outwitted the Spanish Inquisition and was a key reformer of the Carmelite Order. Her experience of ecstasy, which she intimately described in her writings, released her from her body and led to a complete realization of her consciousness, a state Kristeva explores in relation to present-day political failures, religious fundamentalism, and cultural malaise. Incorporating notes from her own psychoanalytic practice, as well as literary and philosophical references, Kristeva builds a fascinating dual diagnosis of contemporary society and the individual psyche while sharing unprecedented insights into her own character.

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