

The Seventh Veil of Salome

by Silvia Moreno-Garcia



About the Book

A young woman wins the role of a lifetime in a film about a legendary heroine --- but the real drama is behind the scenes in this sumptuous historical epic from the author of MEXICAN GOTHIC.

1950s Hollywood: Every actress wants to play Salome, the star-making role in a big-budget movie about the legendary woman whose story has inspired artists since ancient times.

So when the film's mercurial director casts Vera Larios, an unknown Mexican ingenue, in the lead role, she quickly becomes the talk of the town. Vera also becomes an object of envy for Nancy Hartley, a bit player whose career has stalled and who will do anything to win the fame she believes she richly deserves.

Two actresses, both determined to make it to the top in Golden Age Hollywood --- a city overflowing with gossip, scandal and intrigue --- make for a sizzling combination.

But this is the tale of three women, for it is also the story of the princess Salome herself, consumed with desire for the fiery prophet who foretells the doom of her stepfather, Herod: a woman torn between the decree of duty and the yearning of her heart.

Before the curtain comes down, there will be tears and tragedy aplenty in this sexy Technicolor saga.

Discussion Guide

1. THE SEVENTH VEIL OF SALOME is partly set in 1950s Hollywood and inspired by the author's deep research into the period. What did you learn about the world of Old Hollywood from this book? What surprised you or changed your view about what that period was really like?
2. The heroine is given a new name, a new look and a new personal life by the studio as they shape her into a star. What effect do you think this transformation had on Vera? How does she change from the beginning of the book to the end?
3. Some might characterize Nancy as the "villain" of the story. Why do you think she makes the decisions she does that lead to the tragic ending? In what ways do you find her sympathetic?
4. Vera falls in love with Jay, an aspiring musician with a different background and life from hers. What do you think drew these characters together? What do you think their relationship might have been like if not for the events of the climax?
5. At the end of the book, we learn that Vera leaves Hollywood and had a career as a musician instead. Why do you think she abandoned stardom? What role did her passion for music play in her life?
6. THE SEVENTH VEIL OF SALOME is told in multiple points of view, including those of various minor players in Vera Larios' life. Why do you think the author chose to include these points of view? How do these characters' perspectives affect how you see Vera and Nancy?
7. Vera and Salome lived centuries apart, but what similarities do you see between their lives and stories? Why do you think the author chose to pair these two stories?
8. The Biblical story of Salome has been told in many forms over the centuries, including in Hollywood film. What did you know about the story of Salome before you read this book? How is the author's interpretation different from the Biblical story or other artists' interpretations?
9. The last character who speaks in the book is Joe Kantor, the screenwriter. Why do you think the author gave this character the closing scene? And how do you interpret the final scene, Salome's dream?
10. In her end note, the author mentions being inspired by the sword-and-sandals movies that were always on TV in her childhood. What are some films you saw in your own childhood that stayed with you? What role do the movies we love as children have in shaping who we become?

Author Bio

Silvia Moreno-Garcia is the author of the novels THE SEVENTH VEIL OF SALOME, VELVET WAS THE NIGHT, MEXICAN GOTHIC, GODS OF JADE AND SHADOW and a bunch of other books. She has also edited several anthologies, including the World Fantasy Award-winning SHE WALKS IN SHADOWS (aka CTHULHU'S DAUGHTERS). She has been nominated for the Locus Award for her work as an editor and has won the British Fantasy Award and the Locus Award for her work as a novelist.

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