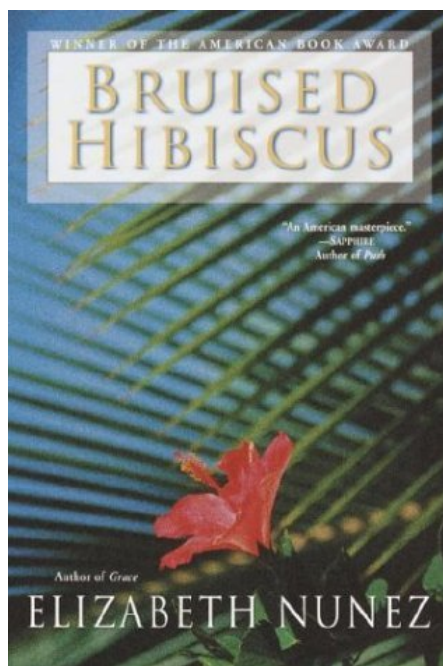




Bruised Hibiscus

Elizabeth Nunez

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The year is 1954. A white woman's body, stuffed in a coconut bag, has washed ashore in Otatiti, Trinidad, and the British colony is rife with rumors. In two homes, one in a distant shantytown, the other on the outskirts of a former sugar cane estate, two women hear the news and their blood runs cold. Rosa, the white daughter of a landowner, and Zuela, the adopted "daughter" of a Chinese shop owner used to play together as girls—and witnessed something terrible behind a hibiscus bush many years ago.

Bruised Hibiscus Details

Date : Published March 4th 2003 by One World/Ballantine (first published 1994)

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Author : Elizabeth Nunez

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From Reader Review Bruised Hibiscus for online ebook

Cindy says

slow start, kind of confusing but intense subject matter. Getting better...

Joanne says

While I wasn't a total fan of Ms. Nunez's writing style, the story of Bruised Hibiscus was captivating. Although the story grabs you, it is certainly not a happy story. The reason I rated it so highly is because I can't hate characters so vehemently if the story is horrible. And, hate them I did. I found most of the characters just awful. Until the very end, there are very few redeeming traits in any of the characters and I found that awfully unbelievable. In a story with so many characters, I just find it far-fetched that no one was even remotely normal or healthy. This is a bitter, twisted story but once you get going, it's hard to put down.

This is the only work of Ms. Nunez that I've read, but it surely doesn't seem as though she likes her country and country people very much. And, that's a shame for it is certainly not my experience of Trinidad and its people.

Belicia says

Enjoyed reading about the struggles of two women in trinidad and how they overcame them! Exelent book!!

Audrey says

Read this for Caribbean Romances. Nunez's writing is magnificently beautiful but not cheesy. This is not a love story, in case you think that's what my class is about. It's about violence and hatred and grudges, and kind of where these things could have come from in the DR.

Candy says

Strong story relating to real life situations... Complicated writing style but definitely a good read.

Nicole Tahsildar says

I picked up this book and in my opinion it was a slow read at the beginning however once I got past the first couple of chapters I could not put the book down. Wonderful writing technique with beautiful attention to details to really put you in the story. There were a few shocking revelations that were made throughout the

story however one in particular I wished didn't happen when it came to Agnes.

Bronwyn Hegarty says

I have just finished and what a read. The story is very black (not a pun) and weaves two womens' lives together around the murder of a woman washed up on a Trinidad beach. It deals with the sexual abuse that both Rosa and Zuela have experienced in their lives. Rosa while married to a black Trinidadian man and Zuela from when she was taken from her family by a Chinese immigrant when 11 years old. A riveting story from start to finish.

Evna says

this was fire

Karen says

Ms. Nunez's prose was of course beautiful and she creates a vivid picture of her native Trinidad that makes me want more... However, I couldn't give it 5 stars because I hated, hated, hated the ending. I almost stopped reading after chapter 19. I know the world can sometimes be a brutal and dangerous place for young women but this just felt a bit gratuitous to me.

Ryan Mishap says

There are many books that contain gross amounts and kinds of violence against women, and for many of them, this is the main reason they were written and the main reason some people read them. There are other books, though, which contain enough shocking debasement and brutalisation of people--mainly wimmin--to match these but stand against the misogyny they describe. What's the difference? A book of fiction from a reality that doesn't deny a character their humanity; doesn't let go of compassion and true human nature. Where nihilism doesn't triumph, but the ending doesn't have to be happy. Bruised Hibiscus is this kind of novel.

Set in Trinidad, it tells the story of two wimmin, who, as girls, witness a shocking scene while hiding in the bushes. This occurrence reveals their differences and separate realities to each other. They part, and Zuela (originally from Venezuela) is taken by a Chinese opium trader when she is twelve and essentially kept prisoner. Rosa, who is white, marries a Trinidad-born man who becomes obsessed with the belief that she is cheating on him. When the body of a white woman washes up on shore, it sets off a chain of events that brings Zuela and Rosa back together. Unleashed are buried truths, violence, and redemption, of a sort. The end is tear inducing, but this book is tackling complex things and should be read.

Bonnie says

This book personalizes the ugly racial struggle and hatred between "whites" and "coloreds---which includes Indians and Chinese" in Trinidad. Rosa and Zuela, the main characters, are appealing and represent more than just two aspects of the divide. The writing is spellbinding, though the author's message about the damage of inadequate mothering seems overly stressed, even though I tend to agree with it. The ending is both painfully sad and wonderfully happy.

Cyndi says

The story itself is well done and interesting but the writing style is very difficult. Two themes in the book are opium addiction and the incomplete understanding a child has of adult affairs. Pretty much all the prose comes across as under the fog of one of these states. It's fine to give a sense of what that's like, but not to the point of confusing your reader so much they can't figure out what is happening.

Linda Campbell says

Wow. Extremely intense, full of violence, innocence, unfairness. Two girls...one mixed white/black, the other black, endure horrible sexual predation, one from age nine. But I was glad I read it...my first Nunez book. The only temporary hurdle for me was getting used to the Trinidadian dialect...all the dropped "th" replaced with "d"... but that isn't every sentence, so after a few pages I got into the musical feel of it. I don't know if the themes of this book and the other I read...Prospero's Daughter...are the only main themes Nunez writes about, but will go on to read more of her. You feel "woke" after reading...you feel more connected to the "Me Too" movement also. There are good men in both her books, but some really awful ones too.
