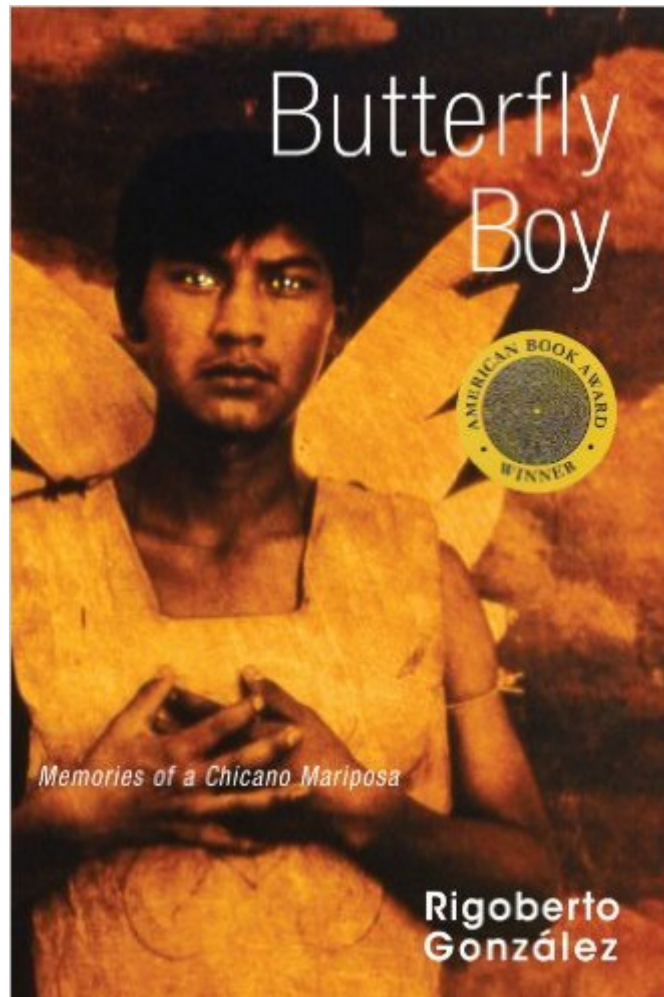


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Butterfly Boy: Memories Of A Chicano Mariposa (Writing In Latinidad)



Synopsis

Winner of the American Book Award

Book Information

Series: Writing in Latinidad

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: University of Wisconsin Press; 1 edition (September 1, 2011)

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (16 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

What makes a writer? This seemingly simple question can elicit many complex answers and even more questions. Case in point: Rigoberto Gonz lez's poetic and heartbreaking memoir, "Butterfly Boy: Memories of a Chicano Mariposa" (The University of Wisconsin Press, \$24.95 hardcover). Gonz lez is an award-winning author of poetry, fiction and children's books. He is also a book critic contributing regularly to the El Paso Times. How did Gonz lez, the son of migrant farmworkers whose first language was Spanish, become Gonz lez the writer? Answers begin to emerge from his painful assertion of himself as a gay man in a culture steeped in machismo. Gonz lez tells of his journey into adulthood and a life of literature in a nonlinear fashion, moving back and forth from childhood to adulthood, Mexico to the United States, self-loathing to self-revelatory empowerment. The book begins in Riverside, Calif., in 1990. Gonz lez, as a college student at the Riverside campus of the University of California, has fallen in love with an older man who, as symbolized by painful yet beautiful "butterfly" marks he places upon Gonz lez, brings both tenderness and brutality to the relationship. The unnamed lover cheats on Gonz lez and doesn't hesitate to beat him up to establish his superiority over his young man. At times, Gonz lez believes he deserves such brutality. Other times, he is grateful to have escaped the oppressiveness of his

family and its legacy of dropping out of high school to work in the fields. The escape comes in the form of literature. A sometimes-callous, sometimes-tender teacher named Dolly lends the young González a poetry book and works with him to subjugate his accent.

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