

Mama Fela's Girls: A Novel

Ana Baca

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Mama Fela, a skilled seamstress, is the aging matriarch of the Romero clan in Santa Lucía, a small town in northeastern New Mexico at the height of the Great Depression. Her six-year-old granddaughter and constant companion, Cipriana, delights in the Shirley Temple movies that occasionally come to the town's theater. Through Cipriana's eyes, we see her parents' struggles over money. Graciela, Cipriana's mother, is a teacher in a rural school system who juggles the roles of wife, mother, and breadwinner. Cita, Cipriana's aunt who is in her mid-twenties, spends her days mothering neighbors, nieces, and a nephew, while dreaming of creative pursuits in a time and place where women's roles are strictly defined and dreams are stifled. Together, these strong women cope with the challenges of poverty and prejudice, striving to pull their families through these difficult times.

"Literature at its best introduces humankind to itself. Meet Mama Fela--wife, mother, grandmother, caught in a crossfire of time and geography, a prism through which pass the many colors of Hispanic life in America. Ana Baca's compelling tale will draw you in until you, too, join the family."--Jerry Spinelli, Newbery Medal-winning author of *Maniac Magee*

"Delightful read. Details, from muddy roads and crank-start cars to schoolhouses heated by wood fires and cold, spider-infested outhouses, all lend historical accuracy."--Lisa Lenard-Cook, author of *Dissonance* and Coyote Morning



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