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# **Prospero's Daughter**

Elizabeth Nunez



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"The very title of Elizabeth Nunez's gripping and richly imagined sixth novel, *Prospero's Daughter*, distances her work from both the original *Tempest* (in which the daughter, Miranda, is perhaps the least developed of all Shakespearean heroines) and from the many postcolonial reactions to the play . . . Nunez, who is a master at pacing and plotting, explores the motivations behind Caliban's outburst, hatching an entirely new story that is inspired by Shakespeare, but not beholden to him." —*New York Times Book Review* 

"Masterful . . . simply wonderful . . . [an] exquisite retelling of *The Tempest*." —*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

"Absorbing . . . [Nunez] writes novels that resound with thunder and fury." —*Essence* 

"A story about the transformative power of love . . . Readers are sure to enjoy the journey." —*Black Issues Book Review* 

*Prospero's Daughter* is a captivating recreation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* set on a verdant Caribbean island during the height of tensions between the native population and British colonists. Using Shakespeare's play as a template to address questions of race, class, and power, Nunez turns an intimate eye to an unlikely bond formed between a boy and a girl of disparate backgrounds.

When Peter Gardner's ruthless medical genius leads him to experiment on his unwitting patients—often at the expense of their lives—he flees England, seeking an environ where his experiments might continue without scrutiny. He arrives with his three-year-old-daughter, Virginia, in Chacachacare, an isolated island off the coast of Trinidad, in the early 1960s.

Gardner considers the locals to be nothing more than savages. He assumes ownership of the home of a servant boy named Carlos, seeing in him a suitable subject upon whom to continue his amoral medical work. Nonetheless, he educates the boy alongside Virginia. As Virginia and Carlos grow and come of age together, they form a covert relationship that violates the outdated mores of colonial rule.

When Gardner unveils the pair's relationship and accuses Carlos of a monstrous act, the investigation into the truth is left up to a curt, stonehearted British inspector, whose inquiries bring to light a horrendous secret. At turns epic and intimate, *Prospero's Daughter* is one of the finest novels of the past two decades.

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