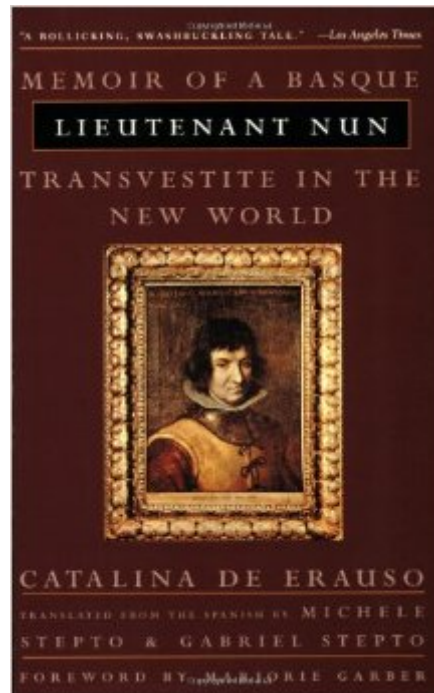


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Lieutenant Nun: Memoir Of A Basque Transvestite In The New World



Synopsis

Named a New York Times Book Review Notable Book of 1996 One of the earliest known autobiographies by a woman, this is the extraordinary tale of Catalina de Erauso, who in 1599 escaped from a Basque convent dressed as a man and went on to live one of the most wildly fantastic lives of any woman in history. A soldier in the Spanish army, she traveled to Peru and Chile, became a gambler, and even mistakenly killed her own brother in a duel. During her lifetime she emerged as the adored folkloric hero of the Spanish-speaking world. This delightful translation of Catalina's own work introduces a new audience to her audacious escapades.

Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.4 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (27 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #78,525 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Spain & Portugal](#) #10 in [Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Gay & Lesbian Studies](#) #16 in [Books > Gay & Lesbian > History](#)

Customer Reviews

Celebrated in Spanish legends and folklore as the marvelous Lieutenant Nun, Catalina de Erauso was born to a prosperous Basque family in 1585 and sent to a convent at age 4. Destined to become a nun, there she remained until age 15. Days before she was to take her final vows, she escaped, taking only needle, thread, scissors and a few coins. Despite her previously sheltered existence, de Erauso plunged into her new, wordly life as a man with unusual gusto, as described in her memoir, Lieutenant Nun. Written some 20 years after her flight, when she correctly deemed confession of her ruse and her still virginal state might save her from the rope or an even more ignominious fate, the memoir describes at breathtaking pace a life of soldiering, banditry and dueling in the wilds of Peru and Chile. While this slim volume is packed with action, there is little self-reflection or explanation. Transforming her convent undergarments to boy's clothing, she quickly obtains a position with a scholar, runs off when he apparently exhibits too much attention in

the boy, and becomes a page at the king's Court. But when her father (who does not recognize her) appears at court, distraught over his daughter's disappearance, she slips away again. After two comfortable years as a page elsewhere, she quits, "for no more reason than it suited me," returns to her hometown, sees her mother in church (who also fails to recognize her) and leaves, drifting until she finds work as a cabin boy on her uncle's galleon. While convent education may have fitted her for work as a page, nothing had prepared her for shipboard life. "The work was new to me and I had a hard time at first," is all she has to say about that.

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