



Domingo's Angel

Jenny Twist

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When Angela turns up in a remote Spanish mountain village, she is so tall and so thin and so pale that everyone thinks she is a ghost or a fairy or the dreadful mantequero that comes in the night and sucks the fat from your bones.

But Domingo knows better. “Soy Angela,” she said to him when they met – “I am an angel.” Only later did he realise that she was telling him her name and by then it was too late and everyone knew her as Domingo’s Angel.

This is the story of their love affair. But it is also the story of the people of the tiny mountain village – the indomitable Rosalba - shopkeeper, doctor, midwife and wise woman, who makes it her business to know everything that goes on in the village; Guillermo, the mayor, whose delusions of grandeur are rooted in his impoverished childhood; and Salva the Baker, who risked his life and liberty to give bread to the starving children.

The events in this story are based on the real experiences of the people of the White Villages in Southern Spain and their struggle to keep their communities alive through the years of war and the oppression of Franco’s rule.

Domingo's Angel Details

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Author : Jenny Twist

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From Reader Review Domingo's Angel for online ebook

Paula Martin says

I thoroughly enjoyed this absorbing story set in a small mountain village in Spain. The characters are wonderfully real, not just Domingo and his 'angel' (English girl Angela, who hides her own guilty secret), but many of the villagers, notably Rosalba, the village matriarch, who has suffered heartbreak which she eventually shares with Angela (I confess to tears in my eyes when Angela read her a letter that Rosalba had been unable to read) and Guillermo, the self-important village mayor, is revealed to have struggled above his impoverished childhood, but still carries a heavy burden of guilt. Even the 'minor' characters like the old priest and the young one come over as very real people.

Skillfully woven into the story are the heartrending memories of the villagers about the horror of the Civil War and their ensuing struggles against poverty, starvation and epidemics.

PS I also loved the Marmalade the cat!

Mysti Parker says

As posted on my blog: <http://mystiparker.blogspot.com/2012/...>

It's been a while since a book pulled at heart strings I didn't even know were there. Jenny Twist has delivered a tale that delves so deep, it will leave a lasting impression in anyone lucky enough to read it.

The story begins in a tiny mountain village in post-WWII Spain. A pale-skinned, red-haired woman who "barks like a dog" and carries some sort of witch's book has bought a house there and has the whole place in an uproar. A lowly goat herder by the name of Domingo is the first one to approach her. She could be either witch or an angel for all he knows. But whatever the case, he is instantly enchanted by her sweet charm.

Angela, who is actually just an English woman looking for a fresh start, becomes known as Domingo's Angel. The two of them are inseparable, and their romance forms a warm undercurrent throughout the book. However, what I found most clever about this story is that Angela's arrival does more than just spawn gossip. Her presence uncovers some very real wounds, but in a good way.

Everyone suffered tremendous losses in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). They had done well to push past their grief and get on with the business of living. But, they hadn't really found closure, and they hadn't really healed. Angela helps them do just that, particularly the formidable Rosalba, the town's most important (and feared) woman. And in return, Angela also finds closure for her painful past.

I absolutely loved the way Ms. Twist weaved together the real-time events of Angela, Domingo, and the townspeople with the past atrocities the people around them had to survive. Instead of being info-dumpy as a lot of backstory can be in novels, she wrote it in seamlessly. Characters that came across in the beginning as cold and aloof became so very real and human as I read about their struggles.

Besides the story itself, I love Ms. Twist's writing style. It's smooth, vivid, and lyrical--just a pleasure to read. If I hadn't had to stop to eat, work, and sleep, I'd have finished it in a day. And that's rare for me. If you're looking for a great read, look no further. I'd recommend Domingo's Angel for young adults and beyond, particularly those fond of sweet, historical romance. You'll be glad you did!

Nancy Pennick says

Is Angela an angel or not? Perhaps not but after reading Domingo's Angel you have to wonder. She wanders into a small, Spanish town and the people of this village are slowly transformed by her presence. She wins over the town's matriarch, Rosalba, and begins to learn the secrets of what happened there during the Spanish Civil War. The story is rich in history and descriptions of the Spanish countryside. Immerse yourself in this wonderful tale of love, forgiveness and salvation. I highly recommend it.

Tori Ridgewood says

As a history buff and teacher, I really enjoy fiction with a historical bent. We learn so much from stories of the past, especially when told by someone with such skill and talent as Jenny Twist. "Domingo's Angel" is many things: enchanting, engrossing, poignant. It is the story of the human heart, in war and peace -- how complicated, and how simple, our choices in life can be. I loved all the characters. It reminded me of the film "Chocolat", and of "Under the Tuscan Sun". We are so far removed, now, from the relative simplicity of village life, that we tend to forget about the complexities of hierarchy and relationships; too, living in a relatively peaceful country, we forget so easily how difficult survival can become. Twist reminds us of all of these things. I see in her writing a plea to stay true to the essence of life, which is loving, living, being able to forgive, and rising above the petty squabbles which can lead to so much heartache. Wars may happen, but the point is to stay alive.

Thank you, Jenny, for bringing us this wonderful novel. Your characters will live on in my heart.

Dawn Luedecke says

Pale and waif like Angela is the daughter of a deceased English sailor, who told his daughter tales of the many beautiful places he'd visited on his trips. After the death of her parents, Angela followed her father's footsteps to Spain. Since she couldn't speak Spanish when she came into the serene town, the townsfolk believed her to be a witch or magical creature of some sort.

When Domingo introduced himself he misunderstood her name and told everyone in town she was an Angel. After that she was forever known as 'Domingo's Angel'. Little do they know, Angela holds a secret from her life in England. The various lives of the townsfolk will sink into Atlantic City readers hearts and make them want to visit the sleepy Spanish town and become a part of the simple, yet complicated, life there

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Tifferz says

This is a great story about love, loss, abuse, neglect, lies, suffering, forgiveness and friendship. I enjoyed the romance and history in the story. I also liked how Ms. Twist was realistic and did not sugar coat things. I liked how the story was not only about Angela and Domingo's. It was fun to escape to the village and feel a connection with them. Ms. Twist has written a wonderful story. I only have two things that bothered me. First was I did not like how it changed from one perspective to another, it got a bit confusing. The second was the ending. It felt very abrupt. Other than that I felt like it was a lovely escape about Angela leaving England to make a life in Spain.

Joaquin Santiago says

Jenny Twist's Domingo's Angel is a remarkable tale on all accounts. She has a talent for narrating a story within a story with so much ease. Her characters are so depthful and vivid that while reading I felt like I was living in Amendillas as one of their neighbors. Don't be fooled by the rosy narrative found at the beginning, for each character has a dark past they must come in terms with.

The book is culturally enriching in an interesting fashion and the switching perspectives between characters allow the reader a chance to sympathize with all of them. Hope and dreams are deeply imbedded in this story amongst the detrimental living conditions the characters had to live through due to Dictator Franco's war. The unbreakable bond the strong community has also shines through, paving the way for the realistic hope of a brighter tomorrow without the overcast murkiness of the past.

Lindsay Townsend says

This is the story of a young woman who finds herself and love in Spain. It is tender and sweeping, taking in the sights and scents and sounds of village life in Spain during and after the era of Franco. Angela, the English-born heroine, has fled to the remote village and there she finds the love of her life, the goat-herder Domingo. She also finds the other villagers, who all have their own amazing and sometimes tragic stories.

I read 'Domingo's Angel' in a sitting, and was utterly bewitched. Jenny Twist writes in a flowing, elegant style that draws the reader in completely. She shows the horrors and tragedies that these simple-living yet far from simple villagers endured during the Spanish civil war and after. It is a beautiful love story, reading at times almost like a fable, but it is also so much more – a celebration of life, of forgiveness and reconciliation, of the survival of the human spirit.

I look forward to reading Jenny Twist's other books.

Tim Vicary says

This is a beautiful book. It tells the story of an English girl, Angela, who comes to live in a remote Spanish village some years after the war. But it is not just her story, it is the story of the village itself, and all the people in it. Angela comes from a cold English city where she knows almost no-one; here, in the heat of the Spanish countryside, she comes to know everyone. Each person in the village has a story: some funny, many moving, some shockingly tragic. As she learns more about the people around her, she gradually becomes part of the village herself.

The book is written in a clear, simple, delightful style. It is wonderfully easy to read; many times, in the first half, I found myself smiling with simple pleasure. There is a lot of comic fun in the cultural misunderstandings between an English city girl and the Spanish peasants; and much pathos, later, as Angela learns about the tragic history of the village in the civil war. The book is full of moving human stories, lightened with a touch of fairy tale.

A lovely book; magical, a pleasure to read.

Susan Hughes says

I am never disappointed reading one of Jenny Twist's novels. One of the great things about her books is that you can't predict what's going to happen next and are compelled to keep reading. On top of that, the writing itself is so enjoyable you don't want to put it down. This story takes place in a Spanish village in the 1950s, but flashes back through the lives of various villagers as they struggled through the Spanish Civil War. As the story progressed I became increasingly invested in the characters--not just the central couple, Domingo and Angela, but the others, particularly Rosalba, whose poignant back story is revealed throughout. A heartwarming read; completely satisfying.

Masquerade Crew says

LYN'S REVIEW

Jenny Twist is a wonderfully talented storyteller and 'Domingo's Angel' weaves a spell of enchantment around the reader from start to finish. Although set in the 1950s (when the English woman, Angela, first arrives in the remote mountain village of Amendillas), there is nonetheless a timeless quality to the story. Through seamless flashbacks, the narrative takes us through the dreadful days of the Spanish Civil War and Franco's despotic rule, then forwards into a happier, hopeful future.

The small, self-sufficient community seems untouched by the outside world and, on the surface looks like paradise. However, every character has been affected and deeply scarred by past tragedies and each nurses his or her own secret pain. Widows, who have long ago stopped weeping and have put away their smiles - seemingly forever, are the backbone of this community now devoid of men of a certain generation.

The English Angela is escaping from her own tragic secrets, but her healing process begins when she meets Domingo who worships her as his angel, then little by little, the healing magic begins to spread. But it is

Rosalba, the excellently-drawn village matriarch, whose complex life-journey really captivates our hearts. Angela is quick to realise that “Whatever Rosalba thinks today, the village will think tomorrow” and the true love story is the growing bond between these two women, who learn to heal each other.

I read the latter half of the story almost entirely through misty eyes as the main characters grew larger than life with every page, unfolding their astonishing stories to me like good friends trusting me with their heartfelt secrets. When I reached the final page, I felt bereft and lonely, though completely satisfied that I had left them all in very good hands. Domingo’s Angel is a story I will certainly read again and this author goes straight to the top of my favourites list.

The Masquerade Crew (<http://s.tt/1tPzN>)

Maggie says

A young woman wanting a fresh start is enchanted by a Spanish village. The somber, pastoral setting is just the balm to heal her heart so she decides to stay. That single incident sets off a chain reaction in this remote place still living in the shadow of the bad times under Franco.

As Angela integrates into the village by marrying a local man, the effect is transformative for all. The characters and the village undergo a renewal and rebirth.

Twist’s tale brings this fictional village to life and endears the reader with its fairy tale simplicity. She shows us how humans fear change and how a village is more than the houses and people in it.

Toni says

A synopsis can’t do this story justice. Angela and Domingo’s story is interspersed with the story of the villagers...Rosalba’s loss of her husband and father, both shot by men supposedly freeing them from the Old Order, and the disappearance of her sons into the army, never to return...the mayor suffering guilt for turning against the man he replaced and sending him to prison when his only crime was baking bread and hiding it to give to starving children and pregnant women. The atrocities are contrasted with the lives the people now lead and the way they’ve survived to regain their dignity after facing what would seem to some insurmountable odds.

The author states the background for the story is based on what happened to the inhabitants of the White Villages in southern Spain during Franco’s rule. It’s a time not many of us know about and I, for one, was shocked that such a thing had happened and wasn’t even mentioned in our world history books. Domingo’s Angel is the kind of story I would expect on Masterpiece Theatre, and is only the second novel I’ve reviewed of which I say that.

I highly recommend it and if GoodReads had a higher rating than 5, I’d give that, too..

Domingo’s Angel is available from Mélange Books, LLC, www.melange-books.com

Tara Hall says

An Epic of the Transformative Power of Forgiveness

An English stranger comes to a small remote Spanish village, instantly causing confusion and more than a bit of panic in the locals. But one, a goatherd named Domingo, chances upon the woman, and mistakenly understands her name Angela indicates she is an angel. The two began a romance. When Angela confesses her pregnancy, Domingo proposes marriage.

The beginning of this book is straightforward, a romance between the above characters with its sweet and funny moments, the latter particularly when Rosalba, the forbidding village matriarch, makes an appearance. Then midway through the book, as Domingo makes plans to marry Angela, the mood deepens from light romance to the dark undercurrent of not only Angela's horrific past, but also the terrible suffering of the villagers during the Spanish Civil War, as Angela begins to share her past with Domingo, and the villagers began to share their tales with her. Each character comes alive to the reader as they relate what happened to them, particularly Rosalba, who eventually shares with Angela the whole story of what she went through at the hands of the soldiers. The character of the mayor also touched me deeply; a man who betrayed his fellow neighbor to save his younger brother's life, and carried the guilt with him ever after.

This is a story of transformation. All the main characters undergo a healing, and a sort of maturation as they let go of grudges, guilt, and old pain, and embrace forgiveness for the hurts they suffered and inflicted. If you don't need the tissue box by the time you're done reading, you've got a heart of stone. And you won't be crying for sadness, but at the sheer joy of the final scene, when an English visitor comes to visit Angela, and remarks on the paradise she has found.

Su Halfwerk says

Domingo's Angel takes place in one of those villages whose image crop up in our heads when we imagine the perfect country life. The village is in Southern Spain and is a host to some of the most fascinating fictitious people I've ever read.

Angela is haunted by a secret in her past life, Domingo's insecurities are intimidating him, Rosalba, the formidable shop keeper who knows things (and I love her,) has her own memories to deal with, Guillermo, the avaricious and flashy mayor, harbors the recollection of a dark shameful deed that has been eating at him for years.

There are many more of these people in this book, with their suffering, dreams, fears, and the fact that they had a war to dread. Yet, somehow the book is full of hope. The story carries many threads, and each one of them is tied in a neat bow by the end.

The night passed very quickly as I sat in my bed, reading Domingo's Angel, hoping against hope that nothing bad would happen, for I felt as though I knew these people. I wanted them to be well and happy.

A fair warning: This book can compel people into time travel, will lure them into falling in love, and might break their hearts (only to mend them again.)

I totally recommend it

Floqueta says

A love story of Angela, a mysterious Englishwoman, that suddenly appears in a forgotten village of the Malaga Serrania. There she meets Domingo, a humble goatherd, and they begin to live together. But don't think that because Domingo is a simple goatherd, he is also very simple. On the contrary, he is a very resourceful man.

Angela has bought a little house outside the village and the inhabitants are envious of the mayor, Guillermo, the one that had the fortune to sell a property and make money with it. And in spite of her relationship with Domingo, she remains a stranger, contributing to it also her physical outlook, until she becomes a friend of Rosalba, the most influential person in the village. She is the shop owner, the wise woman to whom all come to get help for the ill, the poor. And we begin to learn more about Angela and the villagers when she gets to know them slowly as well as the terrible circumstances that happened in the past.

As an Spaniard myself, I can say that the author achieves a high verosimilitude in the story she tells us. Similar situations to the ones she recounts did happen. She tells about us about humble people with no big economical means that stick together and so they can overcome very difficult situations, such as when almost all the men in the village are forcefully taken away to be engaged in the Army in a war nobody understands nor wishes.

I found very engaging when Domingo, to Angela's surprise, with stale bread makes a delicious dish of crumbs. One of this ancestral dishes that poor people have invented to make good use of the scarce edible products at hand.

It is also to be mentioned that we do not have here an author giving to the characters strange names. The names she uses are very common in Spain, as well as the village name, a resounding one, but we have many villages with such kind of names. So no distancing factor there for someone from Spain in a tale made up by a non Spanish or not native in our culture.

I began saying this is a love story of Angela and Domingo, but also of Angela and the villagers. And the place in the world she decides to belong to. An interesting story.

Lynette Sofras says

Jenny Twist is a wonderfully talented storyteller and 'Domingo's Angel' weaves a spell of enchantment around the reader from start to finish. Although set in the 1950s (when the English woman, Angela, first arrives in the remote mountain village of Amendillas), there is nonetheless a timeless quality to the story. Through seamless flashbacks, the narrative takes us through the dreadful days of the Spanish Civil War and Franco's despotic rule, then forwards into a happier, hopeful future.

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seemingly forever, are the backbone of this community now devoid of men of a certain generation.

The English Angela is escaping from her own tragic secrets, but her healing process begins when she meets Domingo who worships her as his angel, then little by little, the healing magic begins to spread. But it is Rosalba, the excellently-drawn village matriarch, whose complex life-journey really captivates our hearts. Angela is quick to realise that “Whatever Rosalba thinks today, the village will think tomorrow” and the true love story is the growing bond between these two women, who learn to heal each other.

I read the latter half of the story almost entirely through misty eyes as the main characters grew larger than life with every page, unfolding their astonishing stories to me like good friends trusting me with their heartfelt secrets. When I reached the final page, I felt bereft and lonely, though completely satisfied that I had left them all in very good hands. Domingo’s Angel is a story I will certainly read again and this author goes straight to the top of my favourites list.

Nora Weston says

In “Domingo’s Angel” by Jenny Twist, the past and present collide in a remote Spanish mountain village when Angela, a mysterious woman thought to be an angel, arrives to make quite an impression on Domingo. Angela’s unusual looks...hair the color of oranges dried on the tree, eyes that are the “colors of the sea moving in sunlight,” and skin so white it appears blue further add to the mystique of this beautiful woman who unknowingly helps to ease the pain and torment suffered by the village people during Franco’s rule.

The blossoming romance between Domingo and Angela is a wonderful part of “Domingo’s Angel,” and I love how well suited they become for each other, but I especially fell for the way Angela affects Rosalba, the village wise woman, healer, midwife, shopkeeper, and truly an asset to her community (even though she is quite feisty). Of all the characters in this book, Rosalba is the one who sticks with me the most. I simply cannot imagine living through what she did. During Franco’s rule (1939-1975), the atrocities sustained by people in Spain included thousands being shot by a firing squad, brutal torture, and for some souls—imprisonment for years was their misfortune, so this story definitely makes you count your blessings. It has also prompted me to read more about the Spanish Civil War.

Franco’s rule and the consequences upon the people could have taken over this story, but Ms. Twist controls the anguish with a skillful touch. Her words deeply touch the heart and yet, at the same time...this author is able to light the way for hope to shine because in the midst of war and tragedy, heroes like Salva the Baker and Carlos (Rosalba’s husband) emerge. The fact that one person can make a difference in the lives of so many is a prominent theme in “Domingo’s Angel,” as is the importance of family and community. It’s a marvelous book that I thoroughly enjoyed because Domingo, Angela, Rosalba, and Guillermo are well developed, fascinating, and unlike any group of characters I’ve encountered before. I highly recommend “Domingo’s Angel.”

KG Gardner says

This read kicked off a heated debate over "well written" vs "the story worth knowing" in our bookclub. This

is a charming read which frames the Spanish Civil War in a way I only knew through Picasso and Goya. It didn't matter to me if the horrors of those historical years were cushioned within a story-book read. It almost seemed as if Jenny Twist recorded the hand-me-down stories of a village's elders who couldn't read or write. Even if it were not intentional to contrast such dreadful acts done during war against a sweet point of view of an outsider, I'm happy to have had a better understanding of that war. Telling of tales can be soppy, especially if they are told to young children. Here's a story worth hearing. These are not word constructs worth relishing.

Tim Orchard says

I think Jenny Twist is on another winner here. Her uncluttered style sits perfectly with this unlikely love story between an expat and a local goatherd, set in a Spanish village where the horrific memories of Franco's dictatorship become slowly manifest, as she becomes accepted into the community.
