



# Pig Behind The Bear

*Dr. Maria Nieto*

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It is 1971, one year after the killing of famed LA Times reporter, Ruben Salazar. A junior reporter, Alejandra Marisol, who works for the LA Times is asked to write a commemorative piece on Salazar in recognition of the one-year anniversary of his death. While doing work for the piece, Alejandra finds that she is embroiled in a murder mystery that appears to have ties to Ruben Salazar's death. Alejandra uncovers a world of evil and corruption with the help of an unlikely collection of people who become heroes and who challenge us to think differently about ourselves and the world we live in; Rocky the philosophizing WWI veteran, Sumire, the clairvoyant ex-Japanese internment camp prisoner, Tia (Aunt) Carmen, the wise-cracker who can wield a powerful left leg jab with a retractable prosthesis, Tony and Chucho, the neighborhood homeboys, and Gato the wonder cat. Alejandra also gets help from a dancing Jesus who feels misunderstood, and from his mom, Mary, who bestows Alejandra with a tube of lipstick that helps Alejandra unleash her inner strength. The reader will travel through streets and townships where rich Angelino culture comes to life, and where tragedy and despair are transformed into hope. Maria Nieto's "Pig Behind the Bear" is definitely a double treat: a fast-paced mystery story and a coming of age novel. At the center of both stories is Alejandra Marisol, a young L.A. Times journalist, who is as smart and courageous as she is charming and sensitive. While researching a story about the late L.A. Times reporter Ruben Salazar in 1971, she stumbles across a number of ritualistic murders and other crimes against the most vulnerable among us: the children and the immigrants. Her outrage fuels her determination to bring to justice the criminals. Maria Nieto has penned a most intriguing crime story, featuring a young heroine but also plenty of engaging characters of all ages?and yes, with plenty of romances for all ages, too! ?Pig Behind the Bear? is sure to capture the attention of both younger and older readers, who will keep turning the pages as fast as they can till the thrilling and satisfying end! Brava, Maria! Encore: otra, otra! Lucha Corpi, author of "Eulogy for a Brown Angel: a Gloria Damasco Mystery." Maria Nieto grew up in the Highland Park neighborhood of Los Angeles and moved from the area in 1984 to attend a Ph.D graduate program in Immunology at UC Berkeley. Maria currently resides in Oakland and is a Professor of Biology at California State University, East Bay where she has been engaged in underrepresented-minority student recruitment, teaching, and research for over 23 years. As a researcher and educator, Maria's writings have taken the form of scientific journal publications, and more recently popular press articles. Pig Behind The Bear represents Maria's first work of fiction.

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