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ON-SALE: June 2, 2009

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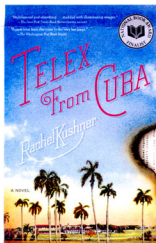
A NATIONAL BESTSELLER

NOW IN PAPERBACK, A NATIONAL BOOK AWARD
FINALIST AND ONE OF THE MOST CELEBRATED DEBUT
NOVELS THE YEAR

TELEX FROM CUBA

by Rachel Kushner

Named a best book of 2008 by *The New York Times* (Notable Book), *The Washington Post Book World*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Seattle Times*, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *The Christian Science Monitor*



"Multilayered and absorbing...[Kushner's] style is sure and sharp, studded with illuminating images...A dreamy, sweet-tart meditation on a vanished way of life and failed attempt to make the world over in America's image...Kushner has fashioned a story that will linger like a whiff of decadent Colony perfume."

—*The New York Times Book Review* (cover review)

"A pure treat from the cover to the very last page...A land that's gone now, but not yet quite forgotten: Cuba in the last few years before Fidel Castro took over...Rachel Kushner uses her considerable powers to bring it back for us, one last time."

—*The Washington Post Book World*

"With its sharp detail and precisely drawn characters, **TELEX FROM CUBA** offers a compelling look at a paradise corrupt."

—*People*

"Kushner...displays both a passion for history and a vigorous imagination...It's the children, in their journey from naïveté to reluctant knowing, who give **TELEX** its inevitable, ineffable poignancy."

—*USA Today*

For half a century, Americans owned and controlled Cuba's two most lucrative exports, sugar and nickel. These operations were headquartered in Oriente Province, where labor for mining and cane cutting was cheap, and life, for the Americans, sweet and languorous, a kind of colonial dream—swimming pools, staffs of servants, country clubs and private beaches—in the gated expatriate sister-enclaves of Nicaro and Preston.

TELEX FROM CUBA (Scribner; Trade Paperback; June 2, 2009, \$16.00; ISBN10: 1416561048) is Rachel Kushner's glorious debut novel about the upheaval of that colonial world. It is a portrait of the Americans who lived there, the end of their halcyon days, and their role in the complex set of events that sparked the revolution—a revolution Kushner has portrayed with all its contradictions, humor, and profundities.

TELEX FROM CUBA is partly inspired by Kushner's mother's own experiences as an American growing up in United Fruit's strained paradise in Oriente Province. Kushner's maternal grandfather moved his family to Cuba in 1952, when he took a job as a nickel mine executive in the American town of Nicaro. Kushner's mother and three aunts spent their formative childhood years there. Her mother and aunts mostly speak of an innocent and happy life in that exquisite seaside location. But they also remember unspeakable poverty in the vast workers' shanties beyond the gates of their insular expatriate world. They remember seeing local boys Fidel and Raúl Castro hanging around the nearby Cuban town of Mayarí, and Fulgencio Batista – a key ally and advocate for American businesses in Cuba – at their parents' American yacht parties. They remember the kidnappings in the summer of '58, when Raúl Castro rounded up nickel and sugar employees, and the cane fires set by rebels, when half their sugar yield went up in smoke.

TELEX FROM CUBA traces this burgeoning revolution through the lives of a diverse group of characters whose loyalties are sometimes conflicted and often inscrutable. In the American enclaves of Oriente Province, Everly Lederer and K.C. Stites come of age. As they grow into their teens, they become increasingly aware of both the poverty of most Cubans and the slippery alliances their parents must manage in order to maintain their toehold in Cuba. Meanwhile, K.C.'s brother Del has run away to join Raúl Castro's column. In Havana, the enigmatic cabaret dancer Rachel K. is a friend to Fidel Castro, who wrote to her from prison. She is also a mistress to both Batista's predecessor and to De La Mazière, a French collaborator turned arms dealer who profits from (and perhaps helps to incite) the growing unrest in Cuba. All the while, Fidel and Raúl prepare for revolution – a revolution that will change their lives – and Cuba – forever.

TELEX FROM CUBA is an astonishing debut – ambitious, beautifully written, and wise.

More praise for **TELEX FROM CUBA**:

★ "Castro's coup serves as a riveting backdrop...**gorgeously written**."

—*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"A riveting drama. Given the recent Cuba headlines, Kushner's tale, passionately told and intensively researched, couldn't have come at a more opportune time."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"[A] **lush, meticulous, cinematic debut novel**...Kushner's **vivid renderings** of country clubs and cane shacks are due in no small part to her access to primary sources: Her mother and three aunts grew up in Cuba, where her grandfather was an executive at the nickel mine."

—Megan Deem, *Elle*

"**TELEX FROM CUBA** is a **prodigious work, sparking into life throughout its pages, beautifully balanced** in its views of plantation society and the revolutionary force that ultimately overthrows it, written without bombast or self-referring language, as if the writer is so intent on the people she portrays, she writes of them with a kind of rare innocence, the innocence of the true observer who submits to the power of the tale she tells."

—Paula Fox, author of *The Coldest Winter*

"As a portrait of the 'other' 1950s Cuba, this novel is a departure from most others of its kind. Emphatically 'American' in its point of view and story, **TELEX** offers a glimpse of how American executives and their families lived in Cuba during that crucial epoch of change, and, as such, will offer readers a refreshingly eye-opening account of what went on behind the corporate scenes and in the back rooms of power."

—Oscar Hijuelos, author of *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* and *A Simple Habana Melody*

"**TELEX FROM CUBA** exerts the mysterious pull of a super-saturated postcard from a distant land, sent to you by a stranger. Kushner brilliantly transforms her family history—and history—into a page-turning, elegantly intelligent, and politically enlightening novel that rings as true as anything. Hers is an epic achievement."

—Heidi Julavits, author of *The Uses of Enchantment*

ABOUT SCRIBNER

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