

## **Other Letters to Milena / Otras cartas a Milena**

Reina María Rodríguez



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Published in Spanish as *Otras cartas a Milena*, *Other Letters to Milena* shows Rodríguez confronting pressing issues at the turn of the twenty-first century. These involve a new post-Soviet world and the realities of diasporic existence, which have a profound effect even on people like Rodríguez who have not migrated but continue to live and work in their home nation. The book's title references Franz Kafka, whose *Letters to Milena* was published after his death in 1952. This signals that Rodríguez participates in her city's long cosmopolitan tradition asserted by Cuban writers and scholars of Cuban literature. Rodríguez's youngest daughter, featured most prominently in the letters making up the collection's centerpiece, "A Girl's Story," was named after Milena Jesenská, the recipient of Kafka's letters.

With the poems provided in a bilingual format, the collection will be of interest both to English readers in general (this will be the first English translation of a complete Rodríguez collection not excerpted from a larger work) and to Spanish readers unable to obtain the collection in any form, given the difficulty of distributing Cuban literature outside that country.

As an introduction to the book, Dykstra has included a critical commentary. It clarifies many of the author's references, such as details pertaining to her family history—items Dykstra learned during lengthy discussions with the author about her work—and influences about her choices in the translation.

Available directly from the University of Alabama Press is a deluxe edition that includes a handmade, limited-edition color linocut print and letterpress-printed poem signed by both Rodríguez and artist Alejandro Sainz. To purchase a copy of this unique item, select the "Other Book" above.

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