



# EVA LUNA

**Isabel Allende (1987)**

## INFORMATION

Eva Luna is a novel written by Chilean novelist Isabel Allende in 1987 and translated from Spanish to English by Margaret Sayers Peden. Eva Luna takes us into the life of the eponymous protagonist, an orphan who grows up in an unidentified country in South America. While the country's political history, traced through several decades of the mid-20th century, bears many similarities to Chile (the author's original nationality), the geography and social context of the story depict a society more similar to Venezuela (where she was exiled for over a decade).

## SYNOPSIS

The story begins by telling us how Eva Luna, the protagonist of the story, is born. Her mother Consuelo, a redhead, was rescued by Indians and sent to the city, to the convent of "the sisters of charity", at twelve years old. Then, she went to work a doctor's house, Professor Jones, who spent his time embalming corpses, here she met an Indian poisoned by a snake and she was responsible for curing him and was crazy in love and so Eva Luna is born, in a room in the mansion where she worked, helped by another maid who was Eva's godmother. Consuelo leaves Eva orphaned at an early age, her death was caused by having swallowed a chicken bone, from that moment her godmother takes care of her.

On the other hand, we are told the story of the Carlé family, Father Lukas Carlé, a mad and feared Austrian teacher who applied severe punishment to his students, and was very hard with his children, Rolf Carle, Jochen and little Katharina. Then the father goes to war and does not come back after a long time, when he did he had a big argument with his family where the eldest son, Jochen, struck him and then fled. After this he suffered a dubious death, they found that him hanging from the neck in the middle of a forest, because of this the mother sends Rolf to South America, to his uncle Rupert and his Aunt Burgel. Rolf fell in love at first sight with his two cousins, and a wild love between the three of them began.

Eva, meanwhile, works in a new house where she met Elvira, whom she became very fond of. Because of the deterioration of her godmother she was separated from her and put to work in different homes, some of which she was uprooted from, that was how she met Humberto Naranjo in the street, who takes her to the house of "the lady" where he begins a friendship with Meletius, "a woman in a man's body" according to him. New entanglements put Eva back in the street, where she is picked up by a Turk named Riad Halabí, he takes her to her house and finishes raising her until his wife commits suicide. They fall in love and Riyadh sends his beloved Eva to the city where she is reunited with Melecio, but this time in a body of woman, Mimí, worked in a factory in the city, but soon became dedicated to writing. This is where the two stories that Isabel tells unite, she tells us about Eva Luna, when Rolf, already an important person who elaborated reports, meets with Eva, the two, together with Mimí plan the release of prisoners guerrillas, now that Humberto is the leader of the guerrillas. After achieving their goal, Eva and Rolf go to the house of uncle Rupert and aunt Brugel where they reunited with their cousins who are already married and with children.

## MAIN THEMES AND QUESTIONS

### Magic Realism

1. Allende defined Magic Realism as “a literary device or a way of seeing in which there is space for the invisible forces that move the world: dreams, legends, myths, passions, history.” Where do you see evidence of Magic Realism in *Eva Luna*?

### Gender differences

1. What traits do you think Allende celebrate most in her male characters?
2. Do you think of *Eva Luna* as a credible character, or does she strike you as a stereotypical female heroine? What do you think Allende intends to achieve with this character?
3. Comment on Mimi’s role in the novel, particularly with respect to gender.
4. Comment on the following: “it’s difficult not to sympathise with the Colonel’s wife.”

### Politics

1. In the context of the book, discuss this statement: “Revolutionary activity produces positive results.”
2. Discuss the characterization of Colonel Tolomeo Rodriguez.

### Relationships

1. Why do you think *Eva* ends up with Rolf as her lover instead of Huberto?

## REFERENCES

[https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva\\_Luna](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva_Luna)

<http://www.litlovers.com/reading-guides/13-fiction/302-eva-luna-allende?start=3>





