



# Capirotada: A Nogales Memoir

*Alberto Alvaro Ríos*

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## **Capirotada: A Nogales Memoir** Alberto Alvaro Ríos

Capirotada, Mexican bread pudding, is a mysterious mixture of prunes, peanuts, white bread, raisins, milk, quesadilla cheese, butter, cinnamon and cloves, Old World sugar--"all this," writes Alberto Rios, "and things people will not tell you."

Like its Mexican namesake, this memoir is a rich melange, stirring together Rios's memories of family, neighbors, friends, and secrets from his youth in the two Nogaleses--in Arizona and through the open gate into Mexico.

The vignettes in this memoir are not loud or fast. Yet like all of Rios's writing they are singular. Here is the story about a rickety magician, his chicken, and a group of little boys, but who plays a trick on whom? The story about the flying dancers and mortality. About going to the dentist in Mexico because it is cheaper, and maybe dangerous. About a British woman who sets out on a ship for America with the faith her Mexican GI will be waiting for her in Salt Lake City. And about the grown son who looks at his father and understands how he must provide for his own boy.

This book's uncommon offering is how it stops to address the quiet, the overlooked, the every day side of growing up. *Capirotada* is not about prison, or famous heroes. It is instead about the middle, which is often the most interesting place to find news.

*Capirotada* was selected as the 2009 ONEBOOKAZ by the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records.

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