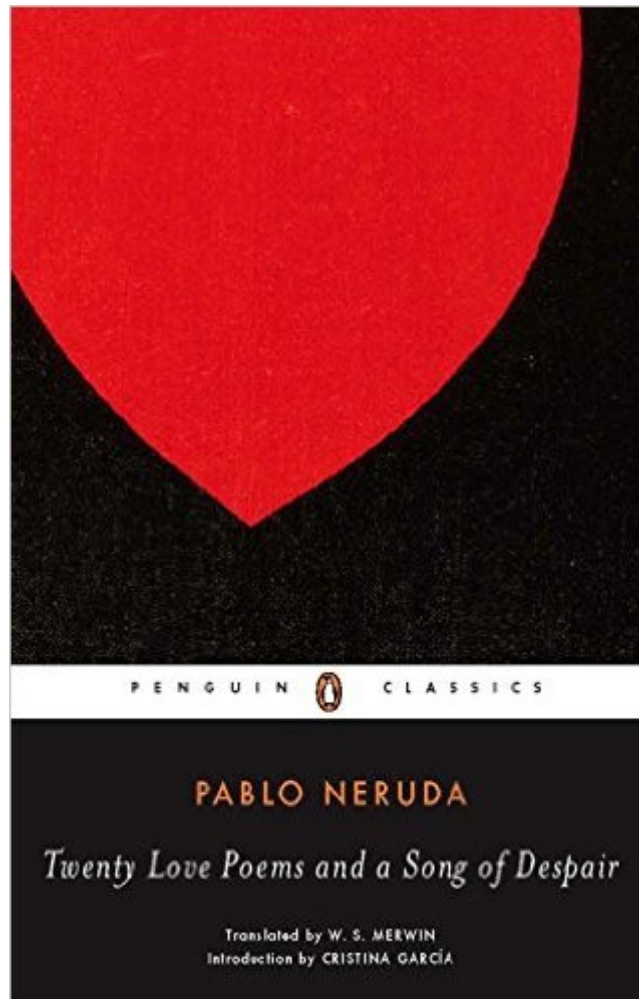


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Twenty Love Poems And A Song Of Despair (Spanish And English Edition)



Synopsis

The Nobel Prize-winning poet's most popular work. When it appeared in 1924, this work launched into the international spotlight a young and unknown poet whose writings would ignite a generation. W. S. Merwin's incomparable translation faces the original Spanish text. Now in a black-spine Classics edition with an introduction by Cristina Garcia, this book stands as an essential collection that continues to inspire lovers and poets around the world. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have read Neruda's poetry, in English, from time to time in anthologies and enjoyed it. I'm a great admirer of W. S. Merwin both as a poet and a translator. I respect the role Neruda took in supporting Chilean democracy. I am aware of the impact of this book when it was first published in 1924, when the author was 20, on Chilean literature and on the literature of Western European languages. The book consists of 21 poems about the poet's rejoicing in having a lover, and occasional resentments and frustrations. While these poems are mostly written in exultation of discovery, a sense of loss or abandonment stalks in the background with a nagging question of just who should be afraid of being

abandoned. Reading the poems you feel yourself in the poet's mind. The poetry is vaguely metrical and incantatory but not in precise meter in English. My copy has the Spanish on facing pages, and I know a little Spanish. In Spanish it seems a little more musical. His lover(s?) is never clearly identified as individuals, and we know them mostly as women whose bodies are visible and sensible to the poet and who make emotional gestures to him. What is most striking is the opulent succession of imaginative, sensual metaphors that on first reading don't make much sense but often make more sense on rereading. Often they seem to strain at originality or mildly shocking the reader: Your breasts seem like white snails. The butterfly of shadows has come to sleep on your belly. Se parecen tus senos a los caracoles blancos. Ha venido a dormirse en tu ventra una mariposa de sombra. Similes and metaphors like this make sense on reflection, but not in the way the strained metaphors of, say, John Donne, another passionate and explicit love poet, make sense.

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