



Vera Pilgrim and the Ritual of the Dolphins

Bryant Rollins

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"Vera Pilgrim" is a myth for our times --- a work of magical realism about an African American woman, her wayward son, a 400-year-old African ritual, and two magical dolphins who carry a healing message down through the centuries to the present. The book is a contemporary myth, an important contribution to postmodern perspectives on social, cultural and political issues. Vera Pilgrim, the lead character, is inspired by the life of Sojourner Truth, the 18th century heroine and leader. The work is a fictionalized and mythologized allegory that will appeal to a wide range of readers interested in science fiction/fantasy, history, mysticism, contemporary social and political matters, civil rights, women-centered issues, African-American life and culture, race relations and ecology. Vera's story provides insight into the life of many blacks who came of age in the mid-twentieth century. Its core is a 15th century African ritual and two mythological dolphins with whom Vera develops a special relationship. The awakening of the dolphins due to the brutality of the slave trade is a powerful element of the book. The dolphins achieve a new consciousness because of the unspeakable crime against humanity that occurred in their watery element. A Very Compelling Woman...The general fiction reader will be interested because Vera is a very compelling woman, a goddess, healer, giver of life, and keeper of a people's spirit. Her magical involvement in the Civil Rights Movement is an important part of her story, as is her upbringing in the foster care system and her transformation from a victimized child into a worldly, sophisticated adult. The story is located in Central Harlem, Upstate New York, Boston, Jackson, Mississippi and New Hampshire. It culminates in a rally involving 10,000 people around the Tidal Basin in Washington, DC, gathered there for a mystical celebration convened by Vera. Through the course of her life Vera develops relationships with unusual people

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