



Nothing, Nobody: The Voices of the Mexico City Earthquake (Voices of Latin American Life)

Elena Poniatowska

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September 19, 1985: A powerful earthquake hits Mexico City in the early morning hours. As the city collapses, the government fails to respond. Long a voice of social conscience, prominent Mexican journalist Elena Poniatowska chronicles the disintegration of the city's physical and social structure, the widespread grassroots organizing against government corruption and incompetence, and the reliency of the human spirit. As a transformative moment in the life of mexican society, the earthquake is as much a component of the country's current crisis as the 1982 debt crisis, the problematic economic of the last ten years, and the recent elections.

In masterfully weaving together a multiplicity of voices, Poniatowska has reasserted the inherent value and latent power of people working together. Punctuated by Poniatowska's own experiences and observations, these post disaster testimonies speak of the disruption of families and neighborhoods, of the destruction of homes and hospitals, of mutilation and death—the collective loss of a city. Drawing the reader dramatically into the scene of national horror through dozens of personal stories, Poniatowska demonstrates the importance of courage and self-reliance in redeeming life from chaos.



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