Pequeñas mujeres rojas
Author:
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Pequeñas mujeres rojas (Little Red Women)

Llittle red women is the final novel in a trilogy: first two featured Arturo Zarco, an athletic gay detective who is still a close friend of his ex-wife, Paula Quiñones, to whom he was married for two years. She is the central character in the third. Although the Arturo Zarco novels are usually described as noir, they are very unconventional noir because of the unique literary style chosen by Marta Sanz that proceeds through an association of ideas that leaps from one subject to another and fuses different genres: fairy tale, horror story, western, and noir.

The plot of little red women focuses on the themes of historical memory and violence against women and children. In the summer of 2012, Paula Quiñones, who is pretty, lame and headstrong and a tax inspector by profession, travels with some members of a historical memory association that is collaborating with the village of Azafrán (Saffron) —that some hooligan with a spray gun has changed to "Azufrón" (Sulphur) on the sign at the entrance to the village— to help find graves from the civil war. While staying in a small hotel in Azafrán she will discover details of the lives and secrets of its inhabitants and uncover a crime that went unpunished and the existence of an informer, while beginning an amorous relationship with David Beato, a well-endowed pharmacist whose mother, Analía, is looking after her hundred-year-old husband. Paula writes letters to Luz, her former mother-in-law, and describes the things she is uncovering and well as reflecting on her past and her relationship with Zarco, who doesn't really appear in this novel. This is emphatically a political novel that denounces the crimes committed by the fascists and far-right during the civil war. In this final novel of the trilogy, Paula becomes the main character and acts as the detective ready to dig up bones and investigate the crimes of the past. For that reason, the novel can be read in isolation from the first two.

Marta Sanz's prose carries echoes of Juan Rulfo, Dashiell Hammet or Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, to name but a few. It is a challenging, ambitious novel, to be read slowly and relished. It has been well received by critics – "exuberant prose for a great novel".

From the perspective of style, little red women has great literary merit.

From the reader´s report by .