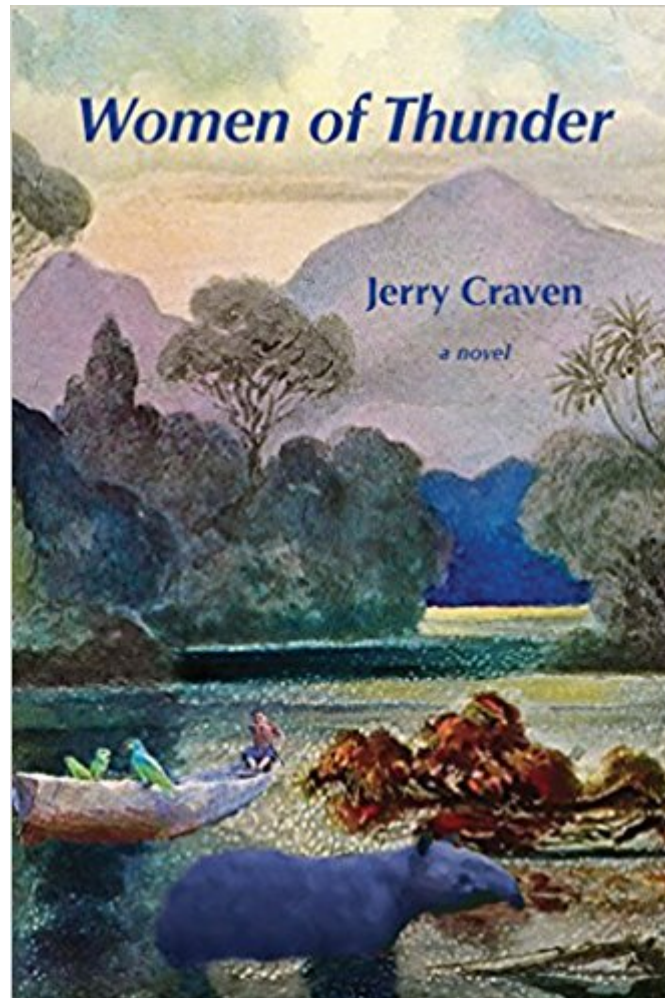




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Women Of Thunder



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Synopsis

In an attempt to regain a youthful innocence, Vietnam Veteran Tom Seal returns to El Tigrito, Venezuela, hoping to find his childhood friend, Rosa Rojas, nearly two decades after Tom's family returned to the United States. Tom longs to recreate an adventure he and Rosa shared when they were young and to return to the "Eden of their childhood" they had stumbled upon as children. But the ensuing eighteen years have changed not only the jungle, but the two friends as well. Departing for the jungle in the rainy season, Tom and Rosa try to regain the same joy and happiness they had experienced so many years ago, but instead they are beset by howler monkeys, flesh-eating butterflies, the Jungle People, and perhaps most dangerous of all—the ghosts of their own painful pasts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

JERRY CRAVEN, Director of Lamar University Press and Ink Brush Press and Editor-in-Chief of Amarillo Bay, is on the writing faculty at Lamar University. An experienced traveler to exotic places around the world, including Agra, Venezuela, Delhi, and Khazakhstan, he is an award-winning author of fiction, nonfiction, short stories, and poetry.

In this beautifully written and finely crafted novel Jerry Craven takes us on a most unusual adventure into the deep Venezuelan jungle. Don-Tom returns there after many years where he hopes to recapture the innocence of youth when he and Rosita-Rosa trekked into the wildness of the rainforest. Tom is now war-worn, been through a traumatic divorce and yearns for an adult

connection with Rosa who has become a curandera (healer), but who has undeserved guilt for her grandmother's death. Tom convinces her to retrace their steps, but the jungle is not as forgiving as they remembered, and they encounter many horrors along the way. I was immediately caught up in Craven's knowledge of place and realized this would be a journey of either redemption or catastrophe. One aspect I found intriguing was in his delivery from both points of view of an event, and since I thoroughly enjoy mystical realism, he handles it with aplomb. I devoured this book from start to finish and would recommend it to anyone.

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What a journey we take with author Jerry Craven! A land where nothing is all it seems, only because it is more than it seems. I felt caught up in a swirl of nostalgia and horror for a past that is both irretrievable and still present. There is a whiff of Jim Jones evil, a ride into dangerous magical realism, and a muted lament for the general ruination of the world--human and natural--meant to be inviolate and consecrated. Craven handles the alternating narrators brilliantly and the dialogues flow with effortless grace and stunning impact. Craven makes writing seem so enviably effortless. The novel is rich in dualities--Don-Tom, Rosita-Rosa, their memories of innocence and experiences of maturity, an Asian jungle of horrors and a Venezuelan version where a better world may yet lurk. Tom and Rosa win our sympathies and we cheer for them as they get to their feet--howler monkeys, spiders, bats, snakes, and caimans--to give life another go. This is a great piece of writing.

Jerry Craven's new novel is a follow-up to his *The Wild Part*, and it's just as exciting and insightful as its predecessor. The mood is darker, the action is riveting, and the writing is exuberant.

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