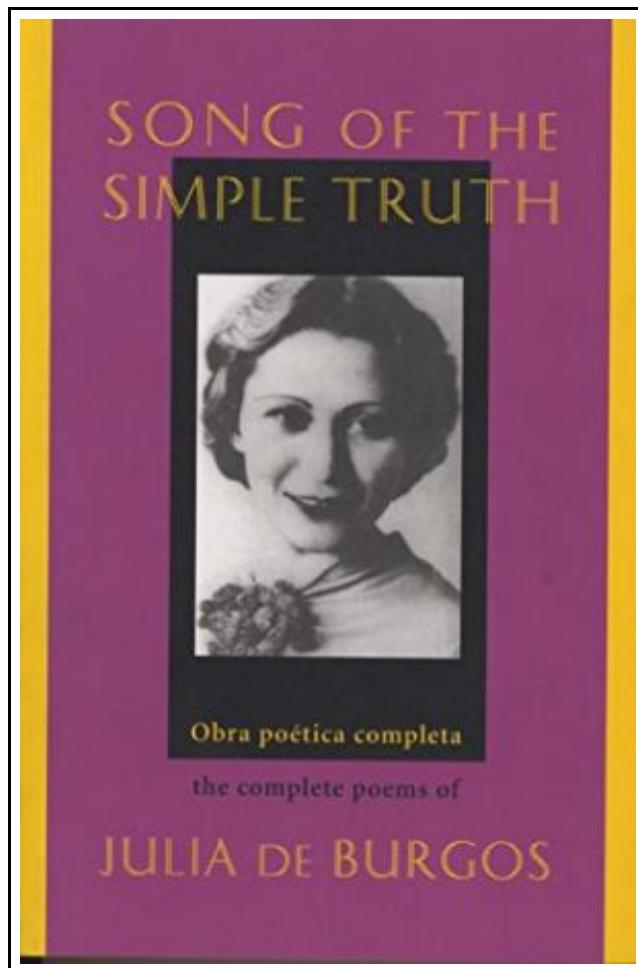


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SONG OF THE SIMPLE TRUTH: THE COMPLETE POEMS OF JULIA DE BURGOS

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Curbstone Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 524 pages. Dimensions: 8.7in. x 5.9in. x 1.6in. From the IntroductionOne summery day in Puerto Rican East Harlem, I leaned on the sidewalk fence in front of the headquarters of the Association of Puerto Rican Postal Employees. The three story brick building on 109th Street near the corner of Lexington Avenue and its ample stoop were a favorite hang-out for our gang, the Senecas. Sometimes twelve or fifteen of us would sit all over the steps leading to the parlor floor entrance. The caretakers of the building were very tolerant of our congregating on their steps and did not normally chase us away. They knew us to be one of the peaceful gangs of East Harlem in those years when I was just a teenager--the 1950s. That particular day there was just myself and a man whose name I now forget--a street friend who frequently stopped to chat and tell us jokes. That day, standing in a hot sun, we were talking in the late afternoon. Suddenly, a group of four or five men came around the corner and with them there was a woman. The men were all ruddy and disheveled. They spoke and laughed loudly and you could see several pints of rum or wine among them. We assumed that they had just come from the liquor store on 110th Street and Lexington Avenue. In the midst of the five men there was a woman. A tall woman, as tall as the tallest man, and taller than several of them. As the animated band walked by, my friend straightened up and watched them intensely. When they had passed, he asked me, Do you know who that woman was I said no, expecting him to crack some joke. But he remained very serious...

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