



# Once Upon a Quinceanera: Coming of Age in the USA (Spanish)

*Julia Alvarez*

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**Once Upon a Quinceanera: Coming of Age in the USA (Spanish) Julia Alvarez**  
**Finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, a “phenomenal, indispensable” (USA Today)**  
**exploration of the Latina “sweet fifteen” celebration, by the bestselling author of *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* and *In the Time of Butterflies***

The *quinceañera*, a celebration of a Latina girl’s fifteenth birthday, has become a uniquely American trend. This lavish party with ball gowns, multi-tiered cakes, limousines, and extravagant meals is often as costly as a prom or a wedding. But many Latina girls feel entitled to this rite of passage, marking a girl’s entrance into womanhood, and expect no expense to be spared, even in working-class families. Acclaimed author Julia Alvarez explores the history and cultural significance of the “quince” in the United States, and the consequences of treating teens like princesses. Through her observations of a quince in Queens, interviews with other quince girls, and the memories of her own experience as a young immigrant, Alvarez presents a thoughtful and entertaining portrait of a rapidly growing multicultural phenomenon, and passionately emphasizes the importance of celebrating Latina womanhood.

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