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## The Umbrella Country

By Bino A. Realuyo

Ballantine Books. Paperback. Condition: New. 320 pages. Dimensions: 8.4in. x 5.5in. x 1.0in. Certain things are better kept than said. . . . But certain things you have to find out now. . . . On the tumultuous streets of Manila, where the earth is as brown as a tamarind leaf and the pungent smells of vinegar and mashed peppers fill the air, where seasons shift between scorching sun and torrential rain, eleven-year-old Gringo strives to make sense of his family and a world that is growing increasingly harsher before his young eyes. There is Gringos older brother, Pipo, wise beyond his years, a flamboyant, defiant youth and the three-time winner of the sequined Miss Unibers contest; Daddy Groovie, whiling away his days with other hang-about men, out of work and wilting like a guava, clinging to the hope of someday joining his sister in Nuyork; Gringos mother, Estrella, moving through their ramshackle home, holding her emotions tight as a fist, which she often clenches in anger after curfew covers the neighborhood in a burst of dark; and Ninang Rola, wise godmother of words, who confides in Gringo a shocking secret from the past--and sets the stage for the profound events...

### Reviews

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-- **Isobel Bailey**

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-- **Mr. Maynard Kessler PhD**