



BEST BOOKS *of Indiana*

2011 FINALIST
FOR NONFICTION

*Maria's
Journey*

With Maria Perez's journey to America with her older husband, Miguel, from an arranged marriage at the age of 14, and her young daughter, the world receives a miraculous message of hope, determination, love and sacrifice. *Maria's Journey* creates a feeling of nostalgia for early Twentieth Century living, with memories rising from street hawkers, ice trucks, Saturday afternoon matinees, union beginnings, and a more quiet way of living that did not involve modern-day technology such as cell phones or video games. Indeed, Maria suffered a hard, new-immigrant life, living in a train boxcar while her husband struggled to make ends meet. Maria's determination to make a better life for her children shows quite admirably in her large brood, all of whom learned of hard work, hope, and discipline to succeed. Even though the family dynamics were more paternal in structure, it is quite obvious that the Arredondo siblings learned their attributes from their mother, Maria. A remarkable family is revealed through the eyes of one of the youngest siblings, Ramon, along with his wife, Trisha. Ramon shows a remarkable gift for memory and detail, showing succinctly in the format, content and structure of the book. He and his family have captured the struggles that many immigrants face in America, from generational mores to citizenship status to language barriers to low-paying wages. Although a bit confusing in a few spots on time lapse and back flash, it is nevertheless a remarkable book for showing resiliency of the early immigrant to succeed in America. A wide audience level enjoys reading biographies and autobiographies, and *Maria's Journey* will not disappoint.