



The Salt Roads

By Nalo Hopkinson

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- The Salt Roads was published in Warner hardcover (0-446-53302-5) in 11/03 and received rave reviews.
- Nalo Hopkinson made her debut with *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1998), winning the Aspect First Novel Contest and the John W. Campbell Award for Best New Writer.
- The author's previous book, *Skin Folk* (Aspect, 2001), won the World Fantasy Award for Best Collection, was named Recommended Fiction for 2002 by Black Issues Book Review, and was named a New York Times Best book of the Year. Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber* (Aspect, 2000), a New York Times Recommended Book of Summer 2000, received an Honorable Mention for the Casa de las Americas Prize. It was a finalist for the Nubula Award for Best Novel, the Hugo Award, and the Philip K. Dick Award.

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The Salt Roads By Nalo Hopkinson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

In beautiful prose, Nalo Hopkinson's *The Salt Roads* tells how Ezili, the African goddess of love, becomes entangled in the lives of three women. Grief-powered prayers draw Ezili into the physical world, where she finds herself trapped by her lost memories and by the spiritual effects of the widespread evil of slavery. Her consciousness alternates among the bodies/minds of several women throughout time, but she resides mostly in three women: Mer, an Afro-Caribbean slave woman/midwife; Jeanne Duval, Afro-French lover of decadent Paris poet Charles Baudelaire; and Meritet, the Greek-Nubian slave/prostitute known to history as St. Mary of Egypt.

Ezili becomes entangled with Mer because the midwife's prayers helped draw her into the mortal world. The novel presents a reasonable, though undeveloped, connection between Meritet/St. Mary, the Virgin Mary, and the goddesses of Africa. However, it's not clear why Ezili becomes entangled with Jeanne Duval. This is because *The Salt Roads* is sketchy, its three storylines compressed; the novel reads more like three novellas incompletely braided. This is a shame, because each mortal character's life could have made a fine, full, fascinating novel by itself.

John W. Campbell Award winner Nalo Hopkinson's first novel, *Brown Girl in the Ring*, won the Warner Aspect First Novel Contest and the *Locus* Award for Best First Novel. Her second novel, the *New York Times* Notable Book *Midnight Robber*, was a finalist for the Hugo, Nebula, Philip K. Dick, and James Tiptree Jr. Awards. *The Salt Roads* is her third novel. --*Cynthia Ward*

From Publishers Weekly

Whirling with witchcraft and sensuality, this latest novel by Hopkinson (*Skin Folk*; *Midnight Robber*) is a globe-spanning, time-traveling spiritual odyssey. When three Caribbean slave women, led by dignified doctress Mer, assemble to bury a stillborn baby on the island of Saint Domingue (just before it is renamed Haiti in 1804), Ezili, the Afro-Caribbean goddess of love and sex, is called up by their prayers and lamentations. Drawing from the deceased infant's "unused vitality," Ezili inhabits the bodies of a number of women who, despite their remoteness from each other in time and space, are bound to each other by salt—be it the salt of tears or the salt that baptized slaves into an alien religion. The goddess's most frequent vehicle is Jeanne Duval, a 19th-century mulatto French entertainer who has a long-running affair with bohemian poet Charles Baudelaire. There is also fourth-century Nubian prostitute Meritet, who leaves a house of ill repute to follow a horde of sailors, but finds religion and a call to sainthood. Meanwhile, the seed of revolution is planted in Saint Domingue as the slaves hatch a plan to bring down their white masters. Ezili yearns to break free from Jeanne's body to act elsewhere, but can do so only when Jeanne, now infected with syphilis, is deep in dreams. Fearing that she will disappear when death finally calls Jeanne, Ezili is drawn into the body of Mer at a cataclysmic moment and is just as quickly tossed back into other narratives. Though occasionally overwrought, the novel has a genuine vitality and generosity. Epic and frenetic, it traces the physical and spiritual ties that bind its characters to each other and to the earth.

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From [Booklist](#)

Jamaica-born Hopkinson has carved out a fertile niche in the sf and fantasy realm, writing spicy and clever tales involving Caribbean spirituality. She now infiltrates mainstream fiction with an earthy, fanciful, not altogether successful historical novel about three women whose lives are affected by a fledging female deity. Hopkinson's imaging of Ezili, the Afro-Caribbean goddess of sexual desire and love, is at once mystical and

funny as the goddess struggles to figure out the extent of her powers and how to use them. Ezili first finds herself inhabiting a beautiful brown-skinned woman living in Paris with her lover, the poet Charles Baudelaire. Although Jeanne (based on a true-life figure) is compelling, Baudelaire is painfully cartoonish. Then there's Meritet, an enslaved Nubian prostitute who travels to Jerusalem, where she miraculously transforms herself into St. Mary of Egypt. And, finally, there's Mer, Hopkinson's strongest character, an enslaved lesbian healer involved in Haiti's slave revolution. Like Erica Jong, Hopkinson uses sex to entice readers into contemplating the long history of misogyny, specifically women's suffering during the African diaspora. *Donna Seaman*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jennifer McNab:

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each guide has different aim or even goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They may be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is reading a book. What about the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man feel need book once they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you will require this The Salt Roads.

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James Hutchinson:

Is it an individual who having spare time and then spend it whole day through watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This The Salt Roads can be the answer, oh how comes? The new book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your time by reading in this new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these publications have than the others?

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