

In a city where survival is everything...

The Eyes of Oro



...one boy and his dog discover the power of loyalty and resilience. Tijuana's gritty slums in the 1970s are the backdrop for this story, where 14-year-old Ernesto escapes the chaos of his life through his art, sketching scenes of the vibrant yet unforgiving world around him. But when he finds Oro—a majestic, golden-colored dog, left bloodied and broken on the beach—his life takes a turn he never expected. As Ernesto nurses Oro back to health, their growing bond offers solace in a life filled with hardship.

Yet survival in Tijuana is never easy. Raúl, a young man with big dreams of rising above poverty, enters Ernesto's world with promises of opportunity. But Raúl's ambitions lead him into a shadowy underworld, where dangerous smugglers and moral compromises threaten to derail his plans—and their lives. When these worlds collide, Ernesto must summon all his courage to protect Oro and his fragile hope for a better future.

The Eyes of Oro is a profoundly moving story of resilience, compassion, and the powerful connection between a boy and his dog. Perfect for fans of heartfelt tales like *A Dog's Purpose* and *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, this novel explores themes of loyalty, perseverance, and the lengths we go to save what matters most.

Will Ernesto's bond with Oro withstand the dangers threatening to tear them apart? Readers of YA fiction and heartwarming animal stories won't want to miss this unforgettable journey of love and survival.

About Robert L. Phen

After earning a BS and MS in engineering, Bob Phen joined Aerojet-General's Systems Division full-time. Early in his career, he identified the cause of the Pioneer 1 spacecraft failure, which transitioned him from mechanical to systems engineering, where he gained expertise in operations research, optimizing designs for complex systems like spacecraft. At Aerojet, he worked on classified military projects and managed NASA and Air Force propulsion studies. Later, he led the Aerojet Study Center, conducting propulsion studies for NASA and other clients. He then contributed to classified missile and satellite studies and led Aerojet's response to a HUD initiative for low-cost housing systems. When Aerojet restructured, he joined the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), where he supervised propulsion studies, including preparing NASA's response to federal energy initiatives. After a year at NASA Headquarters, he developed a national fuel cell plan, and he returned and led energy technology projects and taught thermodynamics at Cal State LA. As an Assistant Program Manager at JPL, Bob managed energy R&D projects and spearheaded advanced transportation initiatives, including contracts with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to support Intelligent Transportation Systems, evaluate signaling systems, and develop dynamic car models.

After a successful career in engineering, Bob retired and mentors high school seniors in math to help them graduate.

Always fascinated by the complexities of immigration, he delved into books and articles on the topic and explored the economic challenges of underdeveloped countries. He and his family often visited Tijuana for camping trips along the beaches south of the city. During one of these trips, Bob witnessed a lone dog attacked by spotted dogs—a moment that stayed with me and planted the seeds for this story.

Book Information: Published by: PhenBooks Publishing
Release date: late Spring 2025
Page count: 309

ISBN: 979-8-9912230-2-7 Paperback Edition
ISBN: 979-8-9912230-1-0 Hardcover Edition
ISBN: 979-8-9912230-0-3 Digital Edition