



The Lion and the Rose

Riccardo Bruni

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Doge Loredan is determined to find the real culprit before the Pope can turn the people against him. To do so, he hires unorthodox German monk Mathias to investigate the murders. Soon Lorenzo Scarpa, a young printer and nephew to one of the victims, joins in the search. The mystery leads them into Venice's underground printing industry, where they learn of a dangerous book hidden somewhere in the city, a book whose secrets could determine the destiny of the Republic—a book that others are more than willing to kill for.

The Lion and the Rose Details

Date : Published October 6th 2015 by AmazonCrossing

ISBN :

Author : Riccardo Bruni

Format : Kindle Edition 364 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Mystery, Cultural, Italy, Fiction

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From Reader Review *The Lion and the Rose* for online ebook

Kathy says

Translated from the Italian, this is a mystery from the early troubled times of the 16th century. A troubled time in Venice where the Pope is trying to gain control over Italy and Venice is trying to end a war over trade rights with the Turks. A monk is tasked with finding a forbidden manuscript that if printed will rock the world of the church and bring enlightenment to the masses.

Andrea Zignone says

Riccardo Bruni's novel is well written.

For those, like me, who has always seen the phenomenon of "self publishing" as the beginning of the end, this novel is evidence that good writers can also be found away from "big" publishers.

As many have noted, the story and the plot, very need to predecessors (Eco with the "Name of the Rose", but also Vassalli with "La Chimera" or LutherBlisset with "Q") more or less illustrious, but the narrative keeps its own originality, and ideas (historical, geographical, literary) are credible.

As said earlier, the novel is well written, the story is engrossing and fascinating, the environments are well described and historically detailed: a book to read, a good one author escaped to talent scout of Italian publishers

Il romanzo di Riccardo Bruni è ben scritto.

Per chi, come me, ha sempre visto il fenomeno del "self publishing" come l'inizio della fine, come il dilettantismo al potere, questo romanzo è la prova che le buone penne si possono scovare anche fuori dalle case editrici.

Come molti hanno fatto notare, il racconto e l'intreccio, molto devono a predecessori (Eco del "Nome della Rosa", ma anche Vassalli de "La Chimera" o LutherBlisset di "Q") più o meno illustri, ma la narrazione riesce a suonare sempre originale, e gli spunti (storici, geografici, letterari) credibili. Forse Bruni cede un poco alla narrazione per immagini (un campione in questo è Faletti), cosa che regala leggibilità a discapito di un ritmo che poco concede alla riflessione.

Come detto all'inizio, il romanzo è ben scritto, la storia è avvicente ed affascinante, le ambientazioni sono curate e storicamente dettagliate: un libro da leggere, uno bravo autore scappato ai talent scout delle case editrici italiane

Michael says

Despite the resemblance to The Name of the Rose, the prose is not that of Umberto Eco. Nevertheless, it is an intelligent literary mystery, only marred in part by some dialogue more suited to romance novels than to true literature. I well remember my first introduction to Lorenzo Valla's exposure of "The Donation of Constantine" as an insidious forgery intended to enhance the authority of the Bishop of Rome. This is the text on which the mystery turns. Add a German Augustinian monk with a love of Wycliffe on the cusp of the

Reformation, the advent of the printing press, and *La Serenissima* and you have a formula for success. For those who love Venice, this will be a fun read. The dénouement occurs in San Marco, in view of the *Quadriga*, looted from Byzantium. I remember spending hours in contemplation of those four marvelous golden horses and could easily visualize the ending of the book. If you loved [The Name of the Rose](#), you'll like this one.

Rosaria Sgarlata says

<http://nientedipersonale.altervista.o...>

Siamo agli inizi del 1500 nella Serenissima. Venezia è preda della paura, strano omicidi avvengono nella Laguna. Omicidi che sembrano essere stati commessi da un demone. Un demone che toccherà al magister Mathias fermare. Mathias è un monaco tedesco che ha perso la sua fede a causa di una donna. E' una dura lotta tra Il Leone e la Rosa quella che vedrà coinvolti oltre al monaco, un giovane stampatore, un doge e un patrizio molto influente in città. Il Leone, Venezia, rischia di essere messo in ginocchio dalla Rosa, una confraternita di librai che ha lo scopo di salvare la città dalla Chiesa.

La storia è un mix di realtà e di fantasia. Luoghi reali e personaggi per metà inventati. La Serenissima è stretta tra due fuochi, da un lato il papa e dall'altro i turchi. Entrambi vogliono prendere possesso di Venezia, unico sbocco per il mondo Orientale e per il mondo Occidentale. Ma non solo. Anche all'interno della città si trovano due fazioni ben distinte. La Rosa, una confraternita segreta di librai che vuole portare alla luce un trattato che smentirebbe ciò che la Chiesa rivendica come propri diritti donati dallo stesso Costantino e il Leone, che rappresenta i veneziani assetati di potere, coloro che sono pronti a distruggere la Repubblica per favori e pregi ancora maggiori. Ed è la morte di un libraio, Mariolino Scarpa, che Mathias insieme al nipote del libraio, Lorenzo, inizia la sua ricerca del demone. Quel demone che tortura a morte i librai facenti parte de la Rosa e che nascondono un libro capace di capovolgere non solo la storia di Venezia ma anche quella che regge il papato.

Mathias Munster è un monaco tedesco, espulso dall'università di Padova dove insegnava, colpevole di aver sostenuto delle idee troppo sovversive per un uomo di Chiesa. Uomo di Chiesa che però ha perso la fede, non è sicuro che la Chiesa sia la sua strada, ha peccato già una volta e si è innamorato di una donna. Lorenzo Scarpa, nipote del libraio ucciso Mariolino, si trova coinvolto nelle indagini del magister ma diventerà un personaggio fondamentale per la riuscita del piano che porterà alla Luce l'assassino. Giacomo Foscarini, un noto esponente della classe borghese, amico di vecchia data di Mathias. Sarà lui a riportarlo a Venezia e dargli l'incarico di scoprire cosa succede nella sua Repubblica (Esiste realmente un Giacomo Foscarini). Simone Luzzatto è la nemesis di Lorenzo. Ha perso la donna che amava perchè innamorata di Lorenzo, ha perso la bottega del libraio perchè riscossa da un donatore anonimo, ha perso la ragione credendo che essere ebreo significasse essere inferiore (E' realmente esistito un Simone Luzzatto ma non ho idea se sia un caso che l'autore abbia usato il suo nome, devo ricordarmi di chiederglielo alla prima occasione). Leonardo Loredan, doge di Venezia, deve lottare per mantenere il dogato e la Repubblica (Anche in questo caso troviamo un personaggio realmente esistito).

Lo stile di Riccardo Bruni è inconfondibile. Dopo *La notte delle falene* è stato lo stesso autore a segnalarmi casualmente anche questo suo romanzo scritto in precedenza con uno pseudonimo. Ma la sua scrittura, le sue storie e i suoi personaggi non sono affatto diversi. Anzi, si riconferma uno dei miei autori preferiti scoperti quest'anno. Lo so, ogni giorno scopro un nuovo capolavoro (a parte certe oscenità scelte personalmente) ma Riccardo Bruni merita davvero la top 5 dei miei nuovi autori preferiti. Ne *Il Leone e la Rosa* ci imbattiamo in

una congiura contro Venezia e facciamo la conoscenza di alcuni personaggi che seppur inventati porteranno alla conoscenza di un reale evento storico: il luteranesimo. L'inserimento di tanti personaggi realmente esistiti che han farcito un bellissimo thriller/mystery ha fatto del romanzo un testo da divorare in pochissimi giorni. La scrittura scorrevole, seppur con qualche refuso qua e là, ti coinvolge al punto da tenerti incollata alle pagine. Mathias e Lorenzo ti portano con loro tra le calli e i borghi, tra una gondola e un palchetto, per svelare il più grande segreto sulla Chiesa mai visto. E sarà proprio la scoperta del manoscritto del Valla, che scredita la Chiesa, a porre le basi per un nuovo credo che si svilupperà più avanti con l'ascesa di Martin Lutero. Ma non dimentichiamoci che in città gira indisturbato un assassino che si diverte a torturare le sue vittime ed è la persona più insospettabile.

4 stelle

#2016bingoreadingchallenge

Paromjit says

The Lion and the Rose is historical crime fiction written by an accomplished author. It is the story of a Venice in turmoil in the sixteenth century. It begins with the discovery of three severely mutilated bodies found in the canals that breed fear and horror in the local population with talk of the killings being the work of a demon punishing Venice for being outside the yoke of the Pope's rule.

The Doge brings Mathias, a troubled monk back to Venice to find out who killed the people in such a horrific manner. It turns out one of the bodies is that of a local bookshop owner who was aiming to become a printer with a desire to print a particular book. Mathias is joined by Lorenzo, the nephew of the murdered bookshop owner in the hunt for the killer. In a skilfully evoked Venice of that period, the two of them uncover political intrigue, infighting, backroom machinations and secret groups who wish to unseat the current Doge and let the Borgia Pope take over in Venice. Mathias and Lorenzo find themselves in situations of extreme danger when they discover the bodies are connected to the secret society of the Rose, whose aim is to print a explosive secret book that demonstrates that the Donation of Constantine, upon which rests the Pope's legitimacy and power, is a complete fake. Those who seek to unseat the Doge want that book destroyed and will do anything to get hold of it as further murders prove.

With so many of the Venetian nobility united in trying to unseat him, the Doge's only weapon to fight the opposition is to secure the book and thereby weaken the opposition. To that end, Mathias and Lorenzo uncover the political conspiracies in a thrilling finale. Having done so, the only way they can continue to live is by leaving and thriving independently of the patronage of key figures in Venice. Interweaved in the story are the love affairs of Lorenzo and Mathias.

I can recommend this book wholeheartedly. It brings alive this historical period of Venice and the hotbed of its politics extremely well whilst building stunning atmosphere and suspense. I could not wait to find out who was behind the killings and the political attempts to bring down the current Venetian regime. So read this book and find yourself spellbound until the end. I received a copy of this ebook from netgalley for a honest review.

Gina Burgess says

I love stories set in times gone by. It doesn't matter what age, either.

This one is set in the 1500s, and was originally written in Italian. Add to it that it's a murder mystery, and how good can it get?

Well... as it turns out the book is just a little bit on the tedious side. Character development is not as good as it should be. The mystery/tension is basically put on the back burner while the reader tries to understand the motivations of a monk called to Venice to solve the mystery. We're told why the Doge wants the monk there, and then it becomes clear the monk's motivations are not as straight to the point as we're led to believe at first. That is an interesting twist. Yet, it falls a bit flat because we view this story from too many points of view. This could very well be a translation problem rather than an editing problem or author problem. Perhaps delicate nuances are not captured in English as depicted in Italian.

Instead of one mystery, you've got three to unravel, and because of that, none of them are done well.

I think the potential for a great book is here especially with all the ingredients, but the editing was not good so the story fell flat. Terror hovers just beyond reach, with glimpses and glimmers of it flashing and drawing the reader deeper into the novel, but the number of characters the reader must keep up with make the book rate only 2 stars.

Description

Translated by Aaron Maines

In sixteenth-century Venice three bodies surface in the dark waters of the Canal Grande. Entrenched in a terrible war with the Turks and caught in a political struggle between power-hungry Pope Alexander VI and the newly elected Doge Loredan, the people of Venice fear that a demon has come to exact divine punishment for their sins.

Doge Loredan is determined to find the real culprit before the Pope can turn the people against him. To do so, he hires unorthodox German monk Mathias to investigate the murders. Soon Lorenzo Scarpa, a young printer and nephew to one of the victims, joins in the search. The mystery leads them into Venice's underground printing industry, where they learn of a dangerous book hidden somewhere in the city, a book whose secrets could determine the destiny of the Republic—a book that others are more than willing to kill for.

Martina says

Non è certo "Il nome della Rosa"... Un romanzo che si legge volentieri, anche grazie ai suoi capitoli brevi e avvincenti, ma la trama soffre un po' del paragone con il capolavoro di Eco: un libro proibito che causa la morte tra atroci sofferenze di chiunque ne venga in possesso...

I riferimenti a Eco non finiscono qui, ma non voglio fare spoiler per chi leggerà il libro...

Sicuramente interessante e originale l'ambientazione, la Venezia del XVI secolo, dove sono in pieno svolgimento guerre contro nemici esterni e interni. A parere mio il libro si sofferma un po' troppo sulle lotte interne alla Serenissima tra famiglie fedeli alla repubblica e famiglie favorevoli al papato e sulle varie strategie messe in campo dai nobili per veder prevalere la propria fazione, tanto che a volte mi sembrava di leggere un romanzo di spionaggio.

Anche alcune sotto trame mi sono sembrate un po' eccessive...

Padmin says

Non so come questo libro sia finito sul mio Kindle (ma è un fatto che Amazon ogni tanto svalvola). Tuttavia so il perché.

Seguimi.

L'ho terminato nella notte tra il 22 e il 23 febbraio.

Ora, il 22 febbraio del '43 è ricordato, tra le altre cose, perché fu la data d'inizio del processo contro Hans e Sophie Scholl e Christoph Probst. I ragazzi della Rosa Bianca.

Il 23 febbraio, invece, è tradizionalmente considerato come l'anniversario della nascita del primo libro stampato, la Bibbia di Gutenberg.

La storia: si tratta di un polpettoncino scontato e dal finale abbastanza prevedibile, con questo contorno:

- una rosa bianca da interpretare
- un monaco inquisitore
- un gruppo di stampatori veneziani finiti nelle grinfie di feroci assassini
- un libro proibito da cercare, e forse distruggere, ad ogni costo...

Cosa ti ricorda?

Ma è scritto benino e le fila del mistero sono tenute assieme senza sbavature/incertezze. Molto, molto meglio del Codice da Vinci, per intenderci.

Tre stellette di stima :-)

David Sudhalter says

Very interesting piece of history

Good story but a bit confusing at times very suspenseful at times would recommend this book to anyone interested in the period

Janice says

Great read!

Liz Terek says

Reading historical fiction always requires the modern readers to forget DNA evidence & everything else we've learned from CSI. Mathias has zilch as far as clues go & word of mouth can be bought for a few ducats. With this frame of mind, we realize how drastically difficult investigating a crime would be. Mathias is beyond intelligent with both an analytical mind & as a good judge of character. It will also serve readers to bear in mind how much influence the Pope wielded during this era. With Pope's such as our modern Francis, it's difficult to reconcile a heavy-handed Pope such as the one in our story.

Much as changed in our world for sure. Regardless, the mystery aspect of the novel was fantastic. Unique references that I've not encountered before plus the use of an under-used setting definitely played in the book's favor. Mathias is a flawed, unlikely type of hero. He's surrounded by a large cast of characters that make one want to cheer or slap them depending on the scene. My first complaint is in regards to the character names. Everyone had a similar name except Mathias. Surely there's not that big a shortage in Italian names to use? It became confusing. While I understand the need to titles etc., it became a cyclone of confusion.

I did appreciate that while some of the torture is described, I believed it to be only in a necessary way to further the story. Some sensitive readers will be surprised by the inclusion on a number of sexual scenes. Complaint #2: there was no need for the sex scenes. All it did was add too many more pages to a book that was already close to 400 pages. In fact, the book came very close to being too long. It seemed to just drag along in parts. While historical explanations were certainly necessary to understand the entire plot, there were many that were non-essential.

A more condensed version, centering ONLY on Mathias & his mystery, would have been an easy 5 star book. Sadly, all the hoopla included knocks it down to 3.

Charles Nash says

A suspense filled read from the past

This was well written and contained just the right mix of history and location to keep the plot interesting. A very good read in my opinion.

Rachel Aranda says

The Lion and the Rose is a solid 3 star book. I found the characters engaging, especially Mathias Munster, Lorenzo and Mariolino Scarpa, Caterina Marin, and Simone & Moses Luzzatto, and liked how the author ended the story. There are two things that bothered me about the book that made me take away stars.

The first thing that bothered me were the side stories with all the smaller characters. There were side stories, like the one with Simone Luzzatto, that made sense why they had to be there since his story ends up teaching a valuable lesson to the reader and Lorenzo Scarpa. However, there was a vagabond known as The Worm, who was promised payment for his snooping by Mathias. He just seemingly never got paid once he relayed his information but instead chose to disappear and forfeit his payment to help his fellow vagabond. Another was Righetto who just appeared to have sex on his mind and works for the same master throughout the book. Even though he allowed us to see what transpired from a working servants point of view, learning more

about him felt unnecessary since the section was also told by one of the main character's point of view, which to me was the more interesting point of view. The last thing that bothered me was the fact that I wanted to stop reading at times there were too many unnecessary side arcs like the sexual ones and the repetitive conversations about unchanging politics or what was lacking from each side. There were developments throughout the book that I would have liked the author to go more in depth into. The past memories of sexual encounters seemed enough to ensure that the characters are indeed in love with each other. The reader doesn't need to be reminded so often about what the main characters don't have.

I'm glad I read this book, but if I were asked if I would read it again or pick up the sequel if it were to be released my answer would be no.

Katy says

A Good Read

The story was full of intrigue and very engaging. I did not know what was going to happen and the ending was very surprising. I did have difficulty with all the different names. Sometimes the last last name was used and sometimes the first to identify the characters. I would get mixed up on some of them and have to go back and reread.

MaryKaye O'Brien says

Reads like a historical docudrama

Second book I have read from this author and both were, can't put them down page turners. This was a real suspense and the ending took me a bit by surprise
