



The Contessa's Vendetta

Mirella Sichirollo Patzer

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To be buried alive is everyone's worst nightmare!

A deadly plague is killing thousands in 17th century Vicenza Italy. Contessa Mancini struggles to protect her family and servants, but despite her precautions, she is the one who falls prey to the deadly illness. Her body is tossed into a coffin and swiftly buried in the underground, dank confines of her family's vault. But Contessa Mancini is not dead. No, she is very much alive. She awakens terrorized, trapped in dense darkness surrounded by the flimsy wood of the coffin they buried her in. Desperate, she claws and kicks until she escapes its stifling restraint, only to find herself trapped in the mausoleum with the decaying bodies of her ancestors. As she seeks to escape, she discovers a vast treasure of gold, silver, and gems secretly hidden in the vault by brigands, and the secret tunnel they used to hide it there.

Free at last, she returns home to her beloved husband, her best friend, and her darling daughter. But before she reveals herself to her loved ones, she learns of an endless series of lies, deceits, and betrayal. As she unravels the labyrinth of shocking treachery, her wrath breathes life to an overwhelming need for vengeance. Slowly, meticulously, she launches her diabolical vendetta.

The Contessa's Vendetta is a retelling of the classic novel, Vendetta by Marie Corelli. Inspired by this epic story, the author weaves her own captivating tale in a new setting, a new century, and with new plot twists while remaining faithful to the key story elements.

The Contessa's Vendetta Details

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From Reader Review The Contessa's Vendetta for online ebook

Jae says

Teeming with typos and grammatical errors but I did so enjoy reading this one. 3.5

Zoe Saadia says

I picked "The Contessa's Vendetta" with great expectation, being a fan of historical fiction and having been fascinated by the description of the story. Well, disappointed I was not. An understatement!

For over a week I was immersed in the fascinating world of Italy of the late 16th, early 17th century, presented to the reader so skillfully I could feel myself wandering over Vincenza's markets and streets, inhaling its smells, listening to it's dwellers and their various activities. Written in a smooth, easy to read style, this story captured my interest from the very beginning and didn't let me go until the vendetta was finished in a heart-breaking, dramatic manner.

Carlotta Mancini is a very attractive character, three dimensional and vivid with life. Her deeds, if not always commendable, leaves the reader holding his/her breath, anxious for this woman to succeed. Her motives are easy to relate, but the way she behaves makes one smile with sympathy. She is a strong woman, and while she had been naive as a girl that everything came very readily to her, she changes in a very believable manner, turning into a bitter woman set on revenge.

This is a delightful tale, as appealing to history lovers as it would be enjoyable to the readers who just love a good read, with a measure of suspense and romance that are thrown in in just the right amount. The illustrations were an unexpected and very welcome bonus.

A beautiful read I recommend highly.

Shelly says

I really enjoyed this female version of Count of Monte Cristo even though it wasn't as good as that it was worth reading and I found myself hurrying through my chores to get back into the story! Solid 4 star read!

Laura says

The Contessa's Vendetta is a thoroughly entertaining and cinematic historical fiction. I could not put it down. I enjoyed the richly described setting, the elegant language, the dialogue's innuendo and the Gothic elements of this story.

The psychology of the main character was well developed. The emotional state in which one is forced to live so as to exact revenge over a long period of time is exactly why we often choose to forgive (or forget) no sooner is our compassion stirred. For this reason, I believe the author did an excellent job in portraying the

tortuous emotional path of the main character.

There are some deeply disturbing passages which further bind us to the Contessa in the hope that she will overcome her enemies. Since this sort of story may have cast a pessimistic outlook on life, I like that our protagonist was offered evidence that there still exists goodness in the world.

A story about revenge. Yes, this is a known genre formula but the language is what captivates together with the colorful and original setting. Overall the pace kept me reading in suspense. This would make a great film.

Mary says

The era is A.D. 1645, in the city of Vicenza, Italy. The population is rapidly decreasing because of a deadly plague. To protect her family and live-in servants, Contessa Mancini quarantines everyone in her home. Against her better judgment, one day the Contessa decides to take a walk, a decision she regrets for the rest of her life. During her stroll down the street, she comes across a young boy, ill and suffering on the ground. She tries to help, and comes in close contact with him, which results in contracting the disease.

If that is not bad enough, a monk finds the Contessa, and tries to help her, as she did the child. However, thought to be dead from being in such bad shape, they bury her. The only problem is she is still alive.

Contessa Mancini wakes up, and to her advantage, because of a poorly built coffin, she is able to claw and kick her way out, ending up in her ancestor's mausoleum. During her efforts to escape the mausoleum, Contessa discovers a secret tunnel used by brigands to hide treasures of gold, silver, and gems worth a fortune.

Once Contessa is free, she learns her husband, Dario, and best friend, Beatrice, are having an affair. Neither grieved for her death, and she becomes aware of how little she meant to both, as a wife and friend. Dario even neglects their young daughter, and proves he isn't much of a father either.

This is where Contessa Moncini develops her strategy for revenge. She tells no one she is alive while she plans and executes her vendetta against Dario and Beatrice.

Mirella Sichirollo Patzer writes with attention and details to her characters and settings. Patzer creates this period of 17th century history to come alive, arousing my interest. All her characters bring substance to the story and I appreciate learning about Vicenza, Italy.

My personal concern with, *The Contessa's Vendetta*, is that many parts are drawn-out, for example: Contessa's thoughts repeated often, prolong the story.

I recommend *The Contessa's Vendetta* by Mirella Sichirollo Patzer, to be an entertaining approach to learning history, hence my love for historical novels.

Laurie • The Baking Bookworm says

This review, as well as many more, can also be found on my blog, *The Baking Bookworm* (www.thebakingbookworm.blogspot.ca).

Synopsis: A plague has swept across the countryside and has devastated the town of Vicenza, Italy in the 17th century. Contessa Carlotta Mancini is a much beloved woman of status but despite her position in the town she also becomes sick with the illness and is assumed dead. Her body is swiftly tossed into a crude coffin and put into her family's tomb. The problem is, Contessa Mancini is not dead.

She awakens, weakened from her illness and terrified, inside her coffin. Luckily for her, the coffin that she was put in was poorly and quickly constructed making her escape possible. But as she escapes her coffin she is disheartened to find that she is locked into her family's mausoleum. In her attempt to break free of the tomb she unearths a vast fortune of stolen gems as well as the hidden entrance that the thieves used in order to hide their treasure.

Happy to have escaped certain death, she makes her way back to her villa to her adoring husband, her best friend and her young daughter to let them know that she is still alive. Unfortunately, when she returns home she witnesses the ultimate betrayal and deceit that, unbeknownst to her, has been going on around her for some time. Determined to get her vengeance, she decides to not tell her family that she is alive and begins to plan her revenge armed only with her newly found riches.

My Thoughts: I had high hopes for this book. I visited Italy 5 1/2 years ago and still have a special place in my heart for that beautiful country as well as its history. When I read the synopsis of this book I thought it would be perfect for me. A fictional tale about a woman bent on revenge all set in 17th century Italy? Yes please!

While this book did hit on some of my favourite themes and places I finished it feeling a little let down. The star of this book, for me, was the vivid descriptions of 17th century Italy which were stunningly portrayed. Unfortunately I found the revenge/suspense aspect lacking and the characters came off as very clichéd. We have the betrayed woman hell bent on revenge, we have the wizened old crone who goads her on her quest, the deceitful yet beautiful younger woman, the conceited handsome husband You see where I'm going. There were no real surprises.

Carlotta started off as a good main character. I liked her. She was a kind yet strong main character but then she gets betrayed and she loses some of her likeability. I know she's a woman scorned but the book focuses so much on her incessant inner dialogue of plotting her revenge that it gets old and monotonous quickly. I'd prefer more action and seeing her get her revenge than hear her talk about it incessantly. She quickly went from interesting character to a caricature of a woman scorned.

My favourite character in the book was the monk who helped the Contessa in the beginning of the book. Unfortunately he was not used to (what I think was) his full potential. He seemed like the most authentic character of the whole book and yet he played a very minor role.

The same can be said for the notorious brigand Cesare Negri (as well as his band of thieves) whose stolen stash the Contessa found and used. I was hoping and expecting for Negri to come back to claim his loot making a great addition to the story (in my humble opinion anyway) and added more excitement to the overall storyline. Unfortunately that didn't happen.

Another issue that I had with the book was how unbelievable and contrived the storyline became. We started off on a good note -- there was the beautiful scenery, the buried alive contessa. Somewhere after she broke out of her tomb and happened upon some jewels is where I think the story got off track for me. I had to suspend my grasp on reality for me to believe that the loved ones of this contessa wouldn't recognize her after a short time even with her newly whitened hair, some dark glasses and a few scars. It was just too big of a leap for me to take and it effected how I enjoyed the book.

Finally, I found the writing, at times, to be too melodramatic and over the top for me. {Please note that I

admit that I'm not a romantic at heart and not a lover of romance novels in general}. For example, when a woman (Beatrice) is telling her love how much she adores him she states "I am jealous of the ground you tread, of the air that touches you ..." Really? I guess I'm just not a romantic because I've never been jealous of the air around my husband. The writing just felt too saccharine for my tastes.

This romantic tidbit uttered by Beatrice was later followed by Carlotta calling her husband's lover a "worthless, frivolous, turd of humanity". Nice image. Accurate description of his character but was it historically accurate? I couldn't be certain that Italians in the 17th century used the word "turd" but it felt a little odd to read. Funny, but odd.

All in all, this was a decent if you enjoy a very light, historical fiction/romance read. If you're looking for more of an in-depth, edge of your seat storyline with more plausibility you may not enjoy this book as much as you hope.

My Rating: 3/5 stars

Note: Special thanks to Great Historicals and History and Women Press for providing me with this complimentary book in exchange for my honest review.

Lady Alexandrine says

You'd better read the original book by Marie Corelli "Vendetta!" than this one.

Marie Corelli (1855 – 1924) was a very popular English novelist. In the Victorian era she sold more books than any other author! She was extremely popular, but her popularity was without merit. She produced pulp fiction for the Victorians. François Ozon directed a movie in 2007 titled "Angel", that was based on Maria Corelli's life. It is a beautiful, touching movie and it made me interested in Marie Corelli and her writing. Nowadays her books seem very dated and ridiculous, full of embarrassing sentimentality and questionable morality. They are painful to read at times, but if you want to know what Victorian bestsellers looked like, then you should check them out.

This book seems like "Vendetta!" by Marie Corelli. The style of writing and the description of events are very similar. In my opinion it is better to just read the original by Marie Corelli.

Italo Italophiles says

Are you in the mood for some Gothic romantic revenge fiction set in the mid sixteen hundreds in Italy? Even if this is not your favorite genre, the author's lyrical and lovely writing style may capture your heart. We are treated to a first-person memoirs written by a woman who has voluntarily sequestered herself in a convent after a tumultuous young life.

Carlotta Mancini of Vicenza, Italy, was an extremely innocent woman, and dangerously wealthy, too. She attracted cads and rakes, and one rake in particular, the sociopathic man she married. The older Carlotta warns us of her shortsightedness along the rocky road, hinting at events to come in her tale.

Carlotta offers many warnings to her female readers that they make their own messes with men, by allowing

the men to abuse their emotions.

"Woe the blindness of women. With all our abilities; with all the world before us to conquer, we crumble at an abusive word or rude gesture by a man..."

This is escapist fare of 370+ pages transports the reader to another world, Vicenza and Venice, Italy, in the 1600s. We get high drama, Gothic horrors, death, ghosts, cunning plots galore, and the central vendetta is the story of extreme innocence turned to extreme hate.

There were multiple moments when I mentally yelled at Carlotta to stop her deadly plot and turn to living life, but that was not to be. She lost her mind early in the book because of a severe trauma, and became monomaniacal about her vendetta, not seeing the chances that were before her for a second chance at happiness.

Please visit the full and illustrated review at my Italophile Book Reviews site.
<http://italophilebookreviews.blogspot...>

Linda says

Great concept and setting, but needs further editing for typos, missing words, etc. I gave it 2 stars because the story held my attention, but it is basically a fairy tale, not an historical novel. I could accept the ridiculous ideas that the Contessa's hair turned white overnight and that no one could recognize her after only two days of illness if it was a fairy tale, but to expect the reader to embrace such nonsense as "historical" fiction is insulting. The author should have had the Contessa undergo some major disfigurement such as from bad burns rather than having her catch the plague. None of the three types of plague caused sudden death anyway. It usually took several days for symptoms to appear following exposure (not several hours). Was this just sloppy research or was the story supposed to be simply a fantasy? With a total re-do I think it could be a good book.

Yawatta Hosby says

I liked this 35 chapter book. It was told through Carlotta's first person point-of-view. Beware of a woman scorned. My favorite line: A false man or woman deserves death. It was amazing how most people in this time period thought it was acceptable to kill your cheating husband or wife since there was no law/punishment for adultery. Instead of going that route, Carlotta decided to devise a plan to seek revenge on her husband Dario, who had a secret affair with her best friend Beatrice.

Dario and Beatrice were cold-blooded—especially the way they treated the daughter Chiara. You don't have to be a murderer or someone violent to be a villain. They were both despicable; they had no shame as though they were narcissistic psychopaths. But that takes a brilliant talent with the author's ability with characterization. As a reader, I really loathed some and really cared for others. It felt good to have a strong reaction toward everyone, instead of a blah, not caring reaction. Readers should hate Dario and Beatrice because, of course, Carlotta wouldn't shed them in a positive light.

After escaping from being buried alive (they thought she had died from the plague), she wised up. Instead of crying in a corner, she got revenge. Mirella Sichirolo Patzer was also great with voice. The novel had a

storytelling vibe as though Carlotta was talking directly to the readers. This tied in to the beginning where it's revealed she's transcribing her events (I believe as a letter).

I understood the concept of the story from the get-go, she would seek revenge, so I wished the word "vendetta" wasn't used so often in the narration. But then again, Carlotta would've been obsessed with that scenario, so I can see why the word was repeated over and over. I also wished that there weren't so many exclamation points, but it didn't distract me from the story.

My favorite scenes: 1) when Carlotta meets a crazy old woman at the market who encourages her to kill her husband if he's not excited for her return back from the grave, hinting he'd already have another woman 2) all the scenes with Carlotta and Paolo. I like that even though she got burned, she still believed in love and wanted other couples to make it 3) when both parts of the vendetta were executed.

I RECOMMEND this book to read.

Darcia Helle says

Patzer is a talented author, and she excels at the language and details of historical fiction. She is able to fully immerse me in the world her characters live in.

That being said, this story was not a favorite for me. It had a powerful start, pulling me right into the Contessa's world. But, as she became more involved with and consumed by her vendetta, I just couldn't make sense of some of her decisions. I don't like to give spoilers, but this is a small one: The biggest problem for me was the disparity between her intense love for her daughter, and her decision to leave her behind in favor of revenge. Revenge can be had in many ways, without hurting innocent people. This woman became so consumed with her specific plan that it didn't matter to her who got hurt along the way. I guess, by midway through the story, I simply did not like the Contessa. Since she is the main character, and the book is written in first person, I found it hard to like the story when I didn't like her.

The other problem I had was the situation stretched the imagination a bit far. Simply having your hair turn white and hiding your eyes would not, in my opinion, be enough to conceal your identity from family and close friends. That part of the story requires a leap into fantasy, and since this isn't fantasy, I found myself constantly questioning the ignorance of the people around the contessa.

Sophie Schiller says

The Bard once said, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" and this aptly applies to the Countess Carlotta Mancini in "The Contessa's Vendetta", a harrowing tale of vengeance and retribution that is told in the first person. A freak illness renders the Countess in a near-death state that sends her to a premature burial at the hands of a well-meaning monk. Upon awakening, she finds herself trapped in a coffin, but renders sufficient strength to break free of its horrifying confines, and allows her to make a breathtaking discovery. When she finally makes her way back home, Carlotta is confronted with the shocking truth about her marriage, that it has been a sham since the very beginning. The stage is thus set for Carlotta's vendetta against those she believes have wronged her. Along the way, she makes the acquaintance of good-hearted people, such as a swashbuckling, freedom-loving Venetian sea captain and a Venetian landlady and her sweet-natured spinster daughter. But these friendships hold no sway in erasing the anger and bitterness that have taken over Carlotta's heart, and in the end she is forced to make a crucial choice about whether or not she should

continue with her harsh agenda, a choice that will have far-reaching effects in determining the rest of her life. "The Contessa's Vendetta" is a page-turning thriller about an unforgettable heroine who will stop at nothing to seek justice.

Katherine Pym says

Revenge at Its Finest

The Contessa's Vendetta by Mirella Sichirollo Patzer is a dark tale, written in a formal language that took me back to famous authors of the 19th century. At first I thought it would detract from the story, but this formal style of writing enhanced the tale of revenge. It helped with the anticipation of how the revenge would unfold, and its outcome to the parties involved.

The act of revenge is like a character in itself, and part of the conflict which builds until I could not put the book down. I read into the wee hours with the need to know how the revenge unfolded. When it came I was amazed.

All in the voice of the protagonist, The Contessa's Vendetta is a fine read.

Gaele says

200 years after the infamous Borgia pope, and this book transports with the same sense of treachery and social duplicity as that time of history so often the subject of period dramas and cleverly written television. The Contessa, Carlotta Mancini, is looking back on her life, and explaining the genesis of the Vendetta that has so ruled her life and occupies a palpable feel of a character throughout the book.

Through the veil of memory, we are transported back nearly 20 years to a young Carlotta, rich, titled and parentless, as she meets the man who will be the genesis of the vendetta. From one moment to the next, her retelling is detailed, her strength and determination in surviving and moving forward while maintaining the anger needed to fuel the vendetta is admirable, even if you can't agree with her reasoning.

Through a series of twists and roadblocks, her plot is foiled, questioned, and detailed with meticulous care all fitting to the 17th century Venice. The Contessa, despite being a character fueled by anger and vengeance is actually one that you can't help but appreciate and empathize with, the characters who are truly evil in this book ooze slime and actually created a visceral reaction of disgust as I read.

With a couple of small pacing issues that arose in her repetition about the need for vengeance, the positives in the book: the writing, the detailed characters and the ability to describe a scene that transported me to Venice in the 1600's those little repetitions were easily ignored. Paltzer has recreated a wonderful dark story full of emotion and description that will transport and enchant.

I received an eBook copy from the author for purpose of honest review in the Indie Authors Rock promotions at I am, Indeed. I was not compensated for this review, and all conclusions are my own responsibility.

Victoria says

I loved the idea of this book. The plot line was so promising. Unfortunately, it didn't quite live up to my expectations.

Without completely spoiling the story, I found that the Contessa's "vendetta" was very unbelievable. The fact that both her husband and her good friend both went from being very nice people to stereotypical pantomime baddies was ridiculous. Then, that fact that Carlotta went from being a very nice young lady to a nasty, bitter woman was also ridiculous. In the first part of the story, Carlotta was a bit of a nicey, Mary-Sue type character. Then after her "death", she changed into a right piece of work.

Firstly, I honestly couldn't bring myself to buy into the idea that her hair could've changed from jet black to snow white overnight, illness and death or not. It just wouldn't happen.

Secondly, how on earth would her husband, close friends, servants, childhood nurse etc, not have recognized her? Yet her young daughter did? Very unbelievable. Plus, how exactly would a pair of tinted spectacles have "disguised" her from all her family and friends? Yep, that's right, they wouldn't.

The story does need some editing as I came across a fair few spelling mistakes, grammatical errors and words or letters missing throughout the text.

I really didn't care for any of the characters in this book, I just couldn't find any connection with anyone and I actually felt a strong dislike for Carlotta, Beatrice and Carlotta's husband.
