



His Last Duchess

Gabrielle Kimm

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When sixteen-year-old Lucrezia de' Medici marries the fifth Duke of Ferrara, Alfonso d'Este, she imagines life with her handsome husband will be idyllic. But little does she know that he is a very complicated man. The marriage is fraught with difficulties from the start, and, as time passes, Lucrezia becomes increasingly alienated. For Alfonso, the pressure mounts as the Vatican threatens to reclaim his title should the couple remain unable to produce an heir. Only his lover Francesca seems able to tame his increasing fury. But Alfonso's growing resentment towards his duchess soon becomes unbearable, and he begins to plot an unthinkable way to escape his problems. Originally inspired by a Robert Browning poem, His Last Duchess gorgeously brings to life the passions and people of sixteenth-century Tuscany and Ferrara. It is a story you are unlikely to forget for a long time.

His Last Duchess Details

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Author : Gabrielle Kimm

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From Reader Review His Last Duchess for online ebook

Skylar Burris says

I guess I'm a sucker for those Kindle daily deals. What a \$15 book that's only 99 cents? And I've never heard of the book? I'll buy it anyway. After all, I did read that Robert Browning poem it's based on a couple of times...So it turned out to be something of a torrid and rather graphic Harlequin romance style book, with a higher vocabulary and more scenery. The one good thing about it was that the villain was not one dimensional as he very well could have been. Yet it was so predictable that I could skim large portions of it and miss nothing. Usually when I do some skimming, I have to backtrack at some point - wait, what's going on here, did I miss something? Let me go back and see. I never once had to do that with this book. There was nothing to miss, I guess.

✿ Crystal ✿ says

I didn't really like this book. Too Dark. 2 stars feels pretty generous.

Anna says

The real-life story of whatever happened to Lucrezia de' Medici is intriguing. Why, then, was this book so slow? Where was the drama, the tension and the mystery, and why didn't I care about any of the characters?

I ended up skim-reading the second half after really struggling with the first. Very disappointing.

Ana Luisa says

Este é um livro simplesmente surpreendente. Um livro que desde o início me suscitou alguma curiosidade, sendo amante confessa de História muitos são os romances históricos que li e assim que me foi apresentada a sua sinopse quis lê-lo de imediato. Esta é uma obra que, na minha opinião, se encontra muito bem documentada e que mostra a valiosa pesquisa que a autora fez.

Apesar de no início me ter parecido que iria ser uma história com muitas descrições e detalhes não muito importantes para a ação, tudo isso se dissipou assim que foi realizado o casamento entre Lucrecia e Afonso. A partir desse momento toda a história deu uma volta de 180° e comecei a ver tudo acontecer a uma velocidade alucinante, algo que me fez crescer a vontade de virar uma nova página e continuar a leitura até ao final do livro, que acabou por ser lido em poucas horas. No final acabamos por aprender uma grande lição histórica acerca de alguns costumes comportamentais usados durante o século dezasseis. Apesar disso, é apresentado também um grande romance proibido que fará o leitor sentir-se deliciado com os obstáculos que irão sendo apresentados.

Ambiente sumptuoso, personagens fortes, acontecimentos marcantes. Estes são os três principais ingredientes que marcam todo este livro fantástico e que fará o leitor desejar ler mais obras desta autora.

<http://viv-omundoencantadodoslivros.b...>

Sarah says

This novel disproves the adage "Never judge a book by its cover" while rendering homage to Shakespeare's judgment on the futility of gilding a lily. Despite its archetypal Romance-novel cover, I picked it up for titular reference to Robert Browning's (most famous?) dramatic monologue. I'm passionate about many of Browning's monologues, and as this is among the shorter ones, I've had it memorized and enjoyed repeating it for several years. In fact, I even recently thought of the far-off possibility of writing novels based on some of those monologues.

First, I'll acknowledge that the novel did contribute to my understanding of the monologue through reminding me of the youth of the historical Duchess of Ferrara. However, the character was portrayed so much as a fiercely delicate, anachronistically bonhomie angel that she did not look "as if alive". Now, I realize that such is exactly the Duke's characterization of her, but in a novel claiming to deeply analyze character, Lucrezia comes out looking a lot like a stock romance heroine. The characterization of the Duke adds little that cannot be extrapolated from a close reading of the poem.

Despite its general blandness, the novel did pick up in the latter half. The ending was clever, but "false" -- false to what was historically likely, and false to the integrity of the story. In short, Browning managed to pack more substance into 57 lines than Kimm in 400 pages.

Rio (Lynne) says

1.5 stars. I hate when you really look forward to a book and then you find yourself skimming and forcing yourself just to get through it. Lucrezia de Medici is one of those historical mysteries. A poem has been left in history about her "My Last Duchess" and historians want to know what happened to her? Alfonso, the controlling husband and Lucrezia the fun loving girl. Should make for a great novel right? The story never took off. It was very slow. The author didn't make me want to turn a page. I only did because I wanted to see what angle the author would take on what "happened" to Lucrezia. If you want to read about this time period, skip this one and read The Second Duchess by Elizabeth Loupas. Her story covers the second wife to Alfonso, Barbara of Austria, with her trying to discover the mystery of what really happened to Lucrezia.

Ana Santos says

Género Romeu e Julieta, mas com um verdadeiro vilão mentalmente perturbado entre o seu amor. Adorei!

SidneyKay says

You say Lucrezia and I say Lucrezia

You probably don't know this, but one of my favorite historical peeps in the world was Lucrezia Borgia, so when *His Last Duchess* by Gabrielle Kimm was released I was very excited. However, even though my eyes were seeing the words Lucrezia de' Medici, my brain was interpreting those words as Lucrezia Borgia. So,

when I began to read *His Last Duchess* nothing made sense. I mean really, I understand the words historical fiction. That is where you take history and change it to fit your fancy. But, this book was quite a stretch. I knew this was historical fiction, but **Gee Willikers**, this was really historical fiction. And then I reread the back blurb and saw the light. **Wrong Lucrezia!** Mind adjustment time. Now, it just so happens that everything turned out just fine, because this was a really good book.

It's been a while since I've read an historical fiction...I always find the rewriting of history intriguing. Especially, when things turn out a little happier than they actually did. As it turned out, Lucrezia de Medici was the daughter of Eleanor of Toledo, who happens to be the subject of one of my favorite portraits. When my mind finally figured out which person we were reading about, I also did some research of my own on Lucrezia's siblings...made for some fascinating reading.

In case you didn't guess from the mistake with the Lucrezia's, this story takes place in Renaissance Italy, a time and place that is vibrantly alive. This time period was filled with such opulent stories. It's a shame that it is mostly overlooked in Romanceland. *His Last Duchess* is Ms. Krimm's debut novel, however, it has a rich texture that brings the story to life. There were so many interesting things going on in this book, and the details on Fresco painting was quite engrossing. All of the characters in the book are vividly written, and Ms. Krimm does a fine job of weaving all the "what if's" into her story. Sometimes in historical fiction, I have a problem with the "what if's" b-e-c-a-u-s-e a lot of time there is a plethora of historical information out there and the historical fiction part of it too unbelievable...for instance Tudor England and Henry VIII. The Tudor's are really overdone, and please no more skinny people playing Henry VIII. However, in the case of Lucrezia de' Medici there is little written documentation, so we can create all manners of great stories about her.

His Last Duchess has some wonderfully poignant moments, some very suspenseful moments and a great villain (her husband.) This is a well written historical fiction book, rich in detail and if you like this genre, you'll love *His Last Duchess*.

And, yes this is based on Robert Browning's poem, but don't let that stop you.

Sue Uden says

From the very first word to the very last word, I loved this book. I was entertained, educated and entranced. I was back there, in the 16th Century, living in Italy with Lucrezia and her deeply damaged and menacing husband Alfonso d'Este. I felt her pain, her losses and her passion. My mothering instincts identified with her nurse, Giulietta and her waiting-woman, Catelina. They, and I, desperately wanted to protect her from... well, you will have to read the book to find out what!

I have to say that I enjoyed being able to read some particularly vivid and explicit bedroom scenes quite naturally and sympathetically without squirming with embarrassment - as is sometimes the case with other books.

I am full of appreciation of the massive amount of research which went into blending so much 16th century Italian history in with the story and particularly to learn about the preparation and painting of frescoes in such fascinating detail.

My only consolation on coming to the end of *His Last Duchess* is that I can still look forward to getting to know better the admirable and courageous Francesca, who is Alfonso's long-suffering whore and whose life story is, I understand, continued in Gabrielle Kimm's next novel, *The Courtesan's Lover*.

I massively recommend His Last Duchess as a fantastic read.

Manuela Santos says

Um romance de época com um enredo intrincado de personagens interessantes e fortes, bem construído e estruturado e com uma história cruel, desumana e perturbadora que me revoltou.

A escrita da autora é directa, clara, fluída e concisa.

Uma leitura agradável com sentimento, com um final inesperado e surpreendente que me agradou bastante, a autora deveria ter desenvolvido mais certos aspectos da história, tais como os personagens.

Lucrecia casa com o duque de Ferrara com apenas 16 anos, e imagina uma vida boa ao lado do seu marido. O que deveria ser um casamento mágico, depressa se transformou num pesadelo. Alfonso torna-se num homem reles e frio e quanto mais o tempo passa e não conseguindo que Lucrecia gerasse um filho seu, mais desprezível e arrogante se torna, procurando assim amantes.

Lucrecia é humilhada constantemente pelo marido, percebendo ela que afinal este casamento não passava de um mero contrato. Uma personagem adorável, cativante, simples e modesta que trata todos com respeito, consideração e dignidade, não fazendo distinção entre pobres e ricos. Tendo como sua confidente a dama de companhia.

Gostei das personagens de Jacomo e de Francesca, duas pessoas encantadoras, gentis e afáveis.

“O que aconteceu a Lucrecia de Médici”?

O livro é envolvente, perturbante, emocionante e seduziu-me da primeira à última página. Uma narrativa estimulante de perigos, tragédia, terror, raiva, confidencias, segredos, revelações e amor, Recomendo a leitura desta história verídica, na visão entre a fronteira que separa a realidade da ficção. Também pelas pesquisas que a autora teve que realizar.

Victoria says

This is a really well written book. It focuses more on the development of the characters and the plots rather than the history. However, the author has done a large amount of research on frescos and plaster work in this period to be able to write in such detail. The research shows on every little detail written. I'd recommend this book to anybody that wanted a good story(historical or not). I'm really looking forward to reading the next book written by Gabrielle Kimm, The Courtesans Lover.

Yin Chien ?? says

If you want to read a good historical fiction, this book is what you need. Before marrying the Alfonso, Lucrezia lives a happy, free life with her parents. She expects her wedded life to be blissful and felicitous, but she does not understand the man under the admirable facade. He is actually a cold and distant man who

cares little for his wife and only views her as a rare treasure.

Gabrielle has written this book in a way that readers will immediately connect with Lucrezia's pitiful condition and vote for her happiness. She is an aristocrat, but she is actually a poor girl, because she can never pick her own partner. When she seeks happiness beyond the castle in which she is trapped, you will feel excited but scared for her. Her only friend is the kitchen maid she brought from her parents' residence, Catelina.

Alfonso's character is dark and depressing. I can't figure out his motives most of the times. He doesn't seem to have a heart. Well, metaphorically. He gives me an impression of a man without a soul. When he tries to do something terrible towards Lucrezia, I'm really shocked.

His Last Duchess starts out well, and the plot keeps building until the climax, which is totally awesome. I love the ending of this story because it gives us an exact idea of the aftermath of the terrifying event. Never lacking of suspense and thrilling events, His Last Duchess is a book that you will not be able to put down.

Parental guidance is suggested for teenagers under 18 years of age as there are adult contents in this book.

Lorraine says

This was okay, but it did fall flat in places and I found myself skimming through boring sections of tedious explanations that took you away from the main plot. The last part moves at a faster pace and I was eager to discover how it would all pan out once it got moving. If it wasn't for the rather chilling prologue, I think I would have set this one aside. It was the only reason I kept reading.

Suzanne says

Can't really decide between 2 or 3 stars. The first 100 pages really didn't grasp me so that part is 2 stars I'm afraid, but after that it got better and it would be 3, perhaps.

I liked: the characters of Lucrezia and Catalina - loved those girls right from the start / the details on fresco painting - very interesting!! / the ending with Chiara's dad - I normally don't like coincidences but this wrapped it up so nicely it felt very satisfying / the fact that the poem was implemented at exactly the right place in the book / the lovely cover - of course

I did not like: that all characters, even the minor ones, seemed to be thinking only about sex all the time in the first approx. 100 pages - it was just way too much, even though it might have been needed for the later story. This was my biggest turn off, sorry / the character of Alfonso and his dark thoughts and cellars / what happened to the dog.

Chequers says

I protagonisti si chiamano Alfons D'Este e Lucrezia D' Medici:si potrebbero anche chiamare Mario Bianchi e Anna Rossi.
Cambiate i vestiti e gli arredamenti, non fa differenza, si potrebbero inserire in qualsiasi epoca.

Per chi lo apprezza, un Harmony in tutto e per tutto, per chi cerca il romanzo storico, da evitare.
