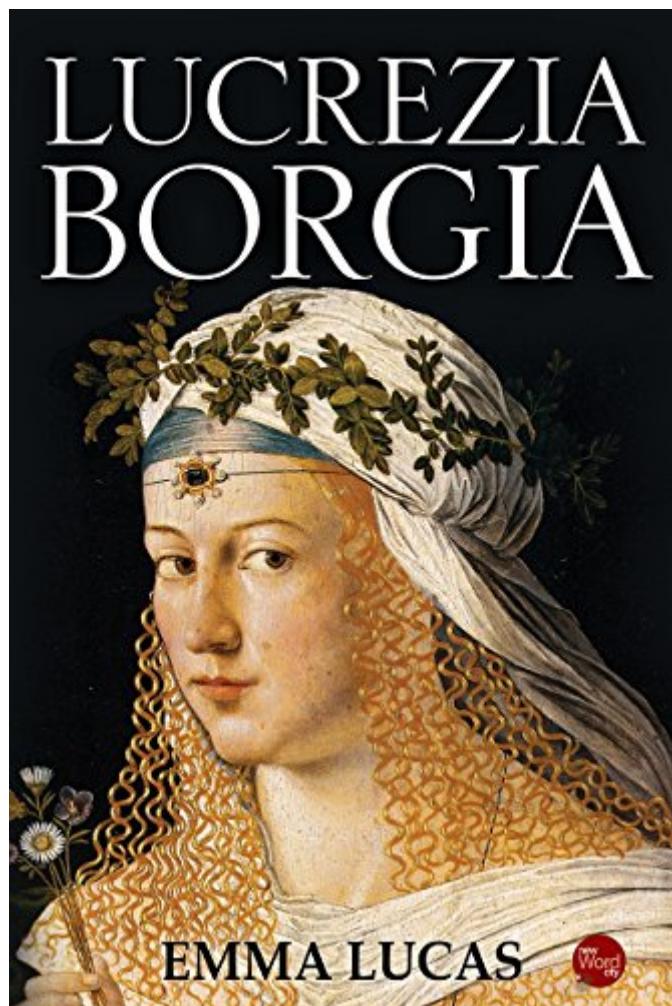


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Lucrezia Borgia



Synopsis

The stories about the Lucrezia Borgia's life - ruthless manipulator, possessor of a poison ring, sexual predator - often overshadow the more nuanced and fascinating story of her life. She was born on April 18, 1480, the illegitimate daughter of future Pope Alexander VI, then Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia and his long-time mistress Vannozza dei Cattanei. She inherited her mother's stunning looks - she was known for her slender figure, gray-blue eyes, and blonde hair. When her father became pope, he sought to consolidate his power and arranged a marriage between fourteen-year-old Lucrezia and the first of her three husbands, twenty-eight-year-old Giovanni Sforza. Shortly after the marriage, Alexander, concluded he no longer needed an alliance with the Sforza family. He ordered Giovanni's assassination, but when the young bridegroom escaped, ended Lucrezia's marriage by ordering an annulment. Following the lengthy annulment process - during which Lucrezia was accused of having an affair and a child with Alexander's chamberlain Pedro Calderon, whose body was later found floating in Rome's Tiber River, "where he fell against his will" - Lucrezia was married to Alfonso of Aragon in 1498. Alexander appointed a pregnant Lucrezia governor of the Umbrian town of Spoleto in 1499. Alfonso, wary of shifting political alliances, fled Rome for a brief time, but returned in 1500, where he was murdered. Alfonso left Lucrezia with a son, Rodrigo. After Alfonso's conveniently timed murder, Alexander arranged a third marriage for Lucrezia, to Alfonso I d'Este, a powerful duke. The two had several children, and Lucrezia came into her own as a Renaissance woman, overcoming her scandalous reputation - despite several affairs - and maintaining her position and power as the Borgia family's influence and fortunes fell following Alexander's death. Lucrezia Borgia was a woman of and ahead of her time. Here is her little-told story.

Book Information

File Size: 2385 KB

Print Length: 346 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: New Word City, Inc.; 1 edition (October 17, 2014)

Publication Date: October 17, 2014

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00ON2WGE4

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #345,157 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #119
inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Europe > Italy #129 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Italy #180 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Biographies > Popes & the Vatican

Customer Reviews

This book really should be called everyone but Lucrezia. Lucas goes into extensive detail on the birth and life of her father but mentions almost nothing about Lucrezia's early life. It takes almost 3/4 of the book before Lucas actually spends any length discussing her subject. I understand that the life of Lucrezia is very much tied to her father and brothers and I may even be able to accept such a detailed study of her famous family if the text hadn't been so dry. I am at a complete loss as to how one makes the Borgias boring but Lucas managed to do so. While yes, I do enjoy popular history, I also greatly enjoy what I like to call hardcore history, which is much more scholastic in nature. So the problem is not with the scholarly treatment of the subject. It took me a very long time to get through this work because it just did not hold my attention. However, I did add a star because of the tremendous amount of detail given to the period, politics and people of Italy during the life of the Borgias. Lucas clearly knows a great deal about this period in Italian history I just wish she had made it more palatable.

This book begins with a great amount of information of Alexander VI, Lucretia's father. At first I was put off by this but thinking about the amount of information available, it does seem right that more is known of a Pope (and Caesar) than of a daughter. I felt that the treatment of all the Borgias was even handed. Once Lucrezia is married to the Duke of Ferranza, there seems to be much more information to make the title of the book legitimate.

This book was interesting and entertaining, considering the multitude of historical characters involved. While scholars may take issue with some of the facts or interpretations of same, it was a

fun and easy read. I think it significantly changes one's perspective of Lucrezia and substantiates the perspectives of her father and her brother Cesare. The book also demonstrates again that in history and life, women can be much stronger when it comes to overcoming both physical and emotional pain. Highly recommend it if you are interested in this period of history, its leaders, and why somethings happened the way they did.

VERY detailed tome. Perhaps a bit too detailed. This book was a bit ponderous in places. While the author was extremely detailed in the background of the events, it got a bit confusing at times. It seems most of the book isn't about Lucrezia at all. I would recommend this for people interested in the time period, but not for info about Lucrezia. She just isn't a major player in it. Thumbs up for the details about the politics of the era, but it didn't hold my attention very well.

It was a fascinating period, cruel and inhumane, but little about Lucrezia. I. Found out that Caesare Borgia would be an interesting bio to find in the future.L

Slow reading. Too much detail about others with little about Lucrezia. This is probably inevitable since she wrote little or nothing and was just a pawn in a much larger picture. This book though is more about her dad than it is about her and might be better titled to him. Still a good history lesson. What a corrupt time! Sounds a lot like politics today. RAG

who? Although this book gives a detailed and exhaustive (exhausting?) look at the Catholic Church and Roman politics in the Middle Ages, it is short on making Lucrezia an interesting person. She seems to be a cardboard cut out taken to stand in the correct place so the authors can discuss what they love - the intense politics of the ages played out by men.

As a historical book it was good, but it should not be titled Lucrezia Borgia. It took almost six chapters before we heard anything in detail about Lucrezia. I almost gave up, but my OCD will not allow me to not finish what I have started. Italian names are hard to keep track of and I felt they were being thrown at me in every sentence. With a different title I probably still would have read it, but I would not have felt so let down.

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