

Lucrezia Borgia: A Novel

John Faunce

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"A fascinating story, rich in detail. In every case, Faunce portrays [Lucrezia] believably, with wit and sensitivity."--Library Journal

Hundreds of years after her death, Lucrezia Borgia remains one of the most enigmatic and notorious women of history, accused of incest, of poisoning her rivals, and even of murdering her own father. Born into scandal, she was the daughter of the treacherous Cardinal Roderigo Borgia, who would later be crowned Pope Alexander VI. When her father ascended the papal throne, young Lucrezia's life changed forever. From then on, Lucrezia would be unable to escape the political ambitions of her father and her brother, the bloodthirsty Cesare Borgia.

In an era when the Vatican was as decadent and violent as any royal court, Lucrezia was its crown princess. Famed for her beauty, she was a valuable pawn in the marriage game, and Alexander VI would use her to create one alliance after another. When her kindly first husband no longer suited the Pope's needs, Lucrezia's virginity was restored by papal decree (her new maidenhood was declared "miraculous"), and she was married off again, this time to a man she truly loved, Alfonso, Prince of Naples. But her joy was short-lived. Alfonso loathed her brother and refused to participate in the Pope's imperial schemes, which threatened to tear apart the Vatican's political alliances--and Lucrezia's happy marriage.

In this unforgettable debut, John Faunce perfectly captures the rotten decadence of the Borgias' papal court and the inner steel of Lucrezia Borgia, one of history's great survivors.

"Fascinating...a searing portrait of an intelligent woman, cunning enough to shape her own bizarre destiny."--Booklist

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