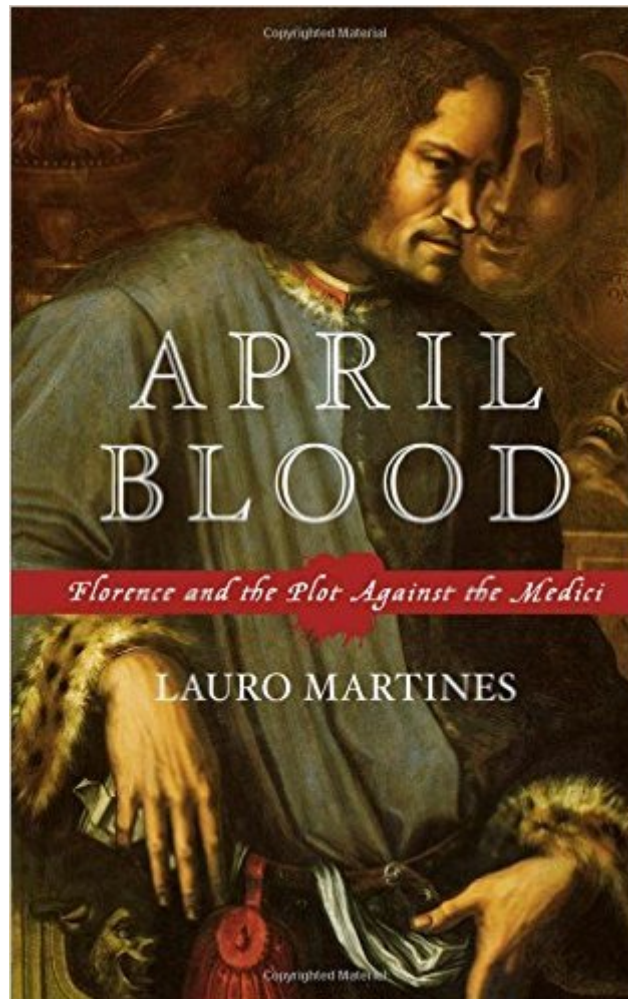


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April Blood: Florence And The Plot Against The Medici



Synopsis

One of the world's leading historians of Renaissance Italy brings to life here the vibrant--and violent--society of fifteenth-century Florence. His disturbing narrative opens up an entire culture, revealing the dark side of Renaissance man and politician Lorenzo de' Medici. On a Sunday in April 1478, assassins attacked Lorenzo and his brother as they attended Mass in the cathedral of Florence. Lorenzo scrambled to safety as Giuliano bled to death on the cathedral floor. *April Blood* moves outward in time and space from that murderous event, unfolding a story of tangled passions, ambition, treachery, and revenge. The conspiracy was led by one of the city's most noble clans, the Pazzi, financiers who feared and resented the Medici's swaggering new role as political bosses--but the web of intrigue spread through all of Italy. Bankers, mercenaries, the Duke of Urbino, the King of Naples, and Pope Sixtus IV entered secretly into the plot. Florence was plunged into a peninsular war, and Lorenzo was soon fighting for his own and his family's survival. The failed assassination doomed the Pazzi. Medici revenge was swift and brutal--plotters were hanged or beheaded, innocents were hacked to pieces, and bodies were put out to dangle from the windows of the government palace. All remaining members of the larger Pazzi clan were forced to change their surname, and every public sign or symbol of the family was expunged or destroyed. *April Blood* offers us a fresh portrait of Renaissance Florence, where dazzling artistic achievements went side by side with violence, craft, and bare-knuckle politics. At the center of the canvas is the figure of Lorenzo the Magnificent--poet, statesman, connoisseur, patron of the arts, and ruthless "boss of bosses." This extraordinarily vivid account of a turning point in the Italian Renaissance is bound to become a lasting work of history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had read a little about Lorenzo and a lot about the Medici, so it was nice to come upon a book that focuses on the Medici and how Lorenzo the Magnificent ruled. Martines has done a superb job in portraying the facts behind the Pazzi Conspiracy. It starts off a little slow, leaving the reader to wonder when the author would ever get to the actual conspiracy, but when he does everything comes together. By the time the book ends you are left with both sympathy and hatred for both the Pazzi and the Medici. Sympathy because of the savage way they were attacked, following up with the nod of approval of the reprisals Lorenzo took (although they were a bit extreme). And hatred for the tyranny that Lorenzo and his house brought down upon the republic of Florence. The same for the Pazzi, for they were suppressed, and thus sympathy was on their side, but the savage destruction they wrought upon their own family and others in order to satisfy their lust for power leaves a distaste in their wake. There is some "filler", it would seem at a quick glance, but when delved in deeper it is evident that these "filler" chapters do in fact help our understanding of why and how the Pazzi Conspiracy happened. The profile chapters, although they don't touch upon the conspiracy directly, add weight to the notion and feeling that went behind the affronted patricians of Florentine society. The political chapters added substance and understanding to the why and how of the reasons behind the conspiracy. So the "filler" chapters do in fact add a lot to the telling of this dramatic time in history. All sides were represented, which makes this a very well rounded history book.

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