



The Liberation

Kate Furnivall

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The Liberation is set in Italy in 1945 as British and American troops attempt to bring order to the devastated country and Italy's population fights to survive. Caterina Lombardi is desperate – her father is dead, her mother has disappeared and her brother is being drawn towards danger. One morning, among the ruins of the bombed Naples streets, Caterina is forced to go to extreme lengths to protect her own life and in doing so forges a future in which she must clear her father's name. An Allied Army officer accuses him of treason and Caterina discovers a plot against her family. Who can she trust and who is the real enemy now? And will the secrets of the past be her downfall?

This epic novel is an unforgettably powerful story of love, loss and the long shadow of war.

The Liberation Details

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Author : Kate Furnivall

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From Reader Review The Liberation for online ebook

LindyLouMac says

It was quite by chance that I came to read this very readable novel set in southern Italy just after the Second World War. I just happened to see it on display at my local library recently and as an Italophile it appealed to me. I have never read any of Kate Furnivall's novels before but after enjoying this one she is an author I will not hesitate to read again.

The story is a tangled web of intrigue and deceit, a very descriptive account of a country that was struggling to survive. Caterina, the protagonist is a truly amazing young woman prepared to go to great lengths to protect her family. Highly recommended to fans of historical romantic fiction and Italophiles.

<https://lindyloumacbookreviews.blogspot.com>

Incy Black says

Stunning, shocking... Beautifully written.

A fabulous book, the storyline fat with conspiracy and intrigue and violence, the backdrop: Italy face down in the rubble, immediately after World War II, the population struggling against the ruination of their economy and infrastructure, law and order broken, corruption rife.

Such is the richness of the writing and imagery used, together with Kate Furnivall's incredible skill at transporting the reader, do not be surprised when on reaching the end, you check your feet for dust, your arms for sunburn, your clothes for sweat stains—I did.

Caterina, (heroine), many words define her, one stands out: Valiant. Faced with child street gangs, smuggled artworks, murders, betrays, secrets and family feuds, this engaging young woman doesn't know how to surrender, not when it comes to protecting her brother, her grandfather, her name.

She earns—boy, does she earn—her 'ahhh' moment with Jake, (the kind of quiet, steadfast hero we all secretly crave in our lives) but the climax of the twist-and-twist- again suspense plot is very much more 'bloody hell'!

Strongly recommended, the volume, a shout.

Margritte says

The book cover is just beautiful. It was the first thing that attracted me to this historical fictional novel.

Then there was the blurb which promised intrigue, suspense, mystery, and action. The latter being of a different kind than normally expected. A serious touch of sleuthing was added to a brilliant, multilayered plot.

THE BLURB

Italy, 1945: as British and American troops attempt to bring order to the devastated cities, its population fights each other to survive. Caterina Lombardi is desperate - her mother has abandoned them already and her brother is being drawn into the mafia. Early one morning, among the ruins of the bombed Naples streets, she is forced to go to extreme lengths to protect her family and in doing so forges a future very different to the one she expected. But will the secrets of her family's past be her downfall? This epic novel is an unforgettable powerful story of love, loss and the long shadow of war.

Main layers in the book:

- Post war Italy, the efforts of a nation to stand up again and face the future with the help of American troupes;

- the broken relationships;
- revenge and honor killings;
- the love of family;
- the fight for survival in a destroyed city;
- the role of mothers;
- fraud and corruption.

Young orphans roamed the street, looting, robbing and even killing to survive the cruelty of their surroundings. The circumstances for everyone was dire. No food, no money, no jobs for any adults either. Nothing was left that made sense. People with access to the country's art made more killings for themselves than they did for the war effort. Greed reigned and fear of an uncertain future made criminals out of once respected citizens.

I loved this book. It belongs in more genres than just historical fiction. It can be added to the murder mystery, as well as action-packed thriller genres, and the tale was vivid and gripping enough to keep me committed to it for more than 500 pages. Emotional investment was unavoidable.

One of those unexpected, beautiful gems. It rips the heart out, but in the end there was hope and optimism.

RECOMMENDED

Svetlana says

2.5 stars :(

I was actually really enjoying the first half of this book. So much so that I would get lost in the story. I was very certain I was going to give it a good rating but I started losing interest in the latter half.

This was a post war novel based in Italy, 1945, where Caterina Lombardi lived with her blind grandfather and younger brother. She carved wooden music boxes and sold them so that she could put food on the table. Her father was killed in an explosion two years before and her mother ran away with another man (her father's friend to be precise!) when she was just 10 years old. When Caterina met an Allied Officer, he accused her father of treason, of collaborating with the wrong people. But she refused to believe anything because she thought of her father as an honourable and trustworthy man. Yet the more she delved into the matter, the more Caterina started doubting things.

What I liked was that Kate Furnivall was very descriptive in her writing, portraying the devastating effects of the war. There was *severe* hunger and poverty that at times I felt so overwhelmed and uncomfortable by the circumstances of the people. They ate cats and dogs off the streets because there was scarcely any food. Women sold themselves to soldiers to feed their starving families. Children had completely lost their innocence. They became orphans and turned into street rats. Destruction of families, homes, and rubble everywhere. I really felt the misery and helplessness of these people. It was heartbreaking to think that this is a depiction of reality. That people must have truly lived or currently live like this in war zone countries.

On the other hand, I wasn't always fond of Caterina even though she was shown to be a brave and strong-willed person. It was evident how much she loved her grandfather and brother, but to protect them she did things that were uncalled for; thus putting herself and them in a lot of danger.

The romance in this novel didn't really feel realistic and believable to me either. Aside from dealing with the problem at hand, there wasn't any other real interaction between the two main characters in the beginning. It was like one minute they were trying to find out the truth and the next they were really into each other. I didn't feel any sparks. And I couldn't connect to any of these characters because they just felt two dimensional.

Even with all the big reveals I literally had no emotions when I was reading the ending. I had figured out one of the bad guys from miles away. He seemed to be everywhere and was always too nice. On the whole, this just fell really flat for me even though it had a good start.

Jo (An Unexpected Bookish Geek) says

To be honest, I suppose I should consider myself lucky, that I don't come across books as bad as this very often. It's normally as rare as twice a year. It may seem harsh, but I'm afraid this is reality. This book was drivel.

To begin with, this book was way too long. This could have easily been a 300 page book, but instead it was terribly long winded and unnecessarily drawn out. This book is described as a sweeping and epic saga. No, this was neither of those things. It was poorly constructed, the plot was simply bland and the characters were not only boring, but they lacked depth.

The first few chapters were tolerable, but instead of a beautiful and epic story, I felt as if I was part of the mafia or something. There are just a lot of people running around with guns, cursing excessively and acting like they are gangsters. This is NOT what I like. Oh, and just before I finish, there was a ridiculous amount of use of the word "Fuck" I am not offended, but overused, it just adds no emphasis to anything and really, it's just pointless.

I am relieved to have finished this!!

Kirstie says

This seemed about 150 pages longer than it needed to be.

It just didn't float my boat. Beautifully written and the start really engaged me but it failed to keep me hooked

Emma Crowley says

I sensed before beginning *The Liberation* by Kate Furnivall that I was going to enjoy it. I am a big fan of Kate's writing and have loved everything she has written since her début *The Russian Concubine* but what took me by surprise was just how much I really did love this new book. I couldn't get it enough of it, or read quick enough, to discover how the ever tangled web of lies, deceit and intrigue would resolve themselves. Kate is on top form with this book and it's evident she enjoyed writing it through the superb character and plot development not to mention the extensive research needed to pull off such an incredible book. I really do think this is her most accomplished book to date as she has upped the ante with all aspects of this book. That's not to take away from any book she has written before because I have never read a bad book from her it's just this book really got underneath my skin with a strong female lead character who never ever said no, who never refused to believe what was being said to her until she satisfied herself by uncovering the truth through her own means. This was a seriously good story with so much mystery surrounding it and so many layers needing to be peeled back that I read it in two sittings so engrossed and enthralled was I with everything going on.

The Liberation has a dramatic cover befitting of the themes of the book and the thrilling events that unfold that keeps the reader guessing throughout as we never quite know who to trust. The book is set in Italy in 1945 during tumultuous times, even though World War Two may be over its effects are still being felt and will continue to do so for many years to come. On first glance at the cover I wondered who the woman was and what could she be running away from or to? It's as we begin the story that we meet Caterina Lombardi living in Sorrento with her young brother Luca and elderly grandfather Gisueppe (who is blind). Times are difficult for the family as they lost their father to a bomb on his workshop during the war and her mother Lucia ran away to Rome with a man from the town. So from the start we can sense that Caterina has been the one who has had to step into her fathers shoes in all sense of the world and try and keep the family from starving. After all life didn't revert back to normal once the war had ended, in fact from the way it was portrayed throughout the book I'd say life for the Italian people was even tougher than what they had endured previously.

Kate's last book had also been set in Italy so I questioned why she wanted to set this book once again in the same country? It soon became clear there was an even better waiting to be told story in *The Liberation* than that of *The Italian Wife*. Kate provided an eye opening storyline into a time I would have given scant thought to as Italy tries to get itself back up and running again. But beneath all the outer façade there is a lot more going on than at first meets the eye, and conspiracies and covers ups abound and the reader certainly gets a lot more than they bargained for than when they first pick up the book so much so that with every turn of the page it became increasingly hard to put down.

Caterina is a changed woman who has seen times of hardship yet she has endured and survived but her greatest test may just be around the corner. She is a talented wood inlay worker having learned her skills from her father and has taken up the reins where he unexpectedly left off. Without the beautiful masterpieces Caterina creates the family would be destitute and on the verge of starvation. It's while selling some of the boxes she has made to the American Gi's who remain in Italy to help clear things up that she encounters British born Captain Harry Fielding and American born Major Jake Parr. It may seem like a chance encounter but I felt if Caterina hadn't meet them when she did then they would have soon come calling to her workshop anyway. It starts to emerge that Caterina's father Roberto was involved in something she could never have dreamed possible that someone of his nature would find himself caught up in. Jake and Harry are part of a team attempting to recover lost or stolen piece and believe Roberto may have known more than his family thought. Of course Caterina is aghast at what she is hearing and can't believe her beloved father

whom she respected and learned all she knows from could involve himself in something so corrupt. But then one wonders when times are tough just what are people forced to do to survive when everything around them is destroyed or falling apart. Once this revelation is out in the open the action just never stopped but that's what made the story flow so well. The pace didn't seem frantic and difficult to follow yet there was never any lulls or boring moments. Caterina set out to prove her fathers innocence but as things come to light she questions whether what Jake has said could actually be true?

There was very little setting up to done at the beginning, we had a brief introduction to the family and their backgrounds and then it was straight into the story and I loved this. Too often all the good parts are kept for much later in the book and then can be rushed as if the author knows they are nearing their word count and need to get things wrapped up. This didn't happen here at all Kate just kept throwing everything at Caterina as she navigates areas of Naples and Sorrento she never knew existed in her quest to uncover the truth. This wasn't all glitz and glamour instead we saw the more seedier side to things and how those who like to remain anonymous can exert such power and force in order to satisfy their own greed.

Caterina was really one of the best female characters I have read of in such a long time. She found herself, not through her own doing, caught up in something far bigger than she realised but her passion and love for her family always was her main goal and no matter what was thrown at her or what situation she found herself in she never gave up fighting until the truth would out. Right from when her mother had abandoned the family Caterina had had to become the mother figure to Luca and the woman who would run the household and now with her father gone she took this role more seriously than ever and stepped up big time when needed to do so. Caterina was so brave and courageous and never faltered when she found herself in dangerous situations but forged on ever more determined to get to the root of what exactly was going on and she earned noting but my admiration and respect in the process. Like Caterina I never quite knew who to trust throughout the story, there were lots of characters introduced and I kept wondering ohh should I be keeping a close eye on this person or could it be someone else? Count Di Marco living in his mansion on the cliff-tops of Capri with his granddaughter Leonora seemed to come from a different time altogether and the scenes set her seemed to have an other worldly quality but yet they were pivotal to the overall storyline.

The Liberation isn't a romance story in fact far from it. It's action packed and full of mystery yet there is a slight hint of romance that didn't take away from the main storyline and to be honest I was so caught up in what was going on it wouldn't have bothered me in the slightest if it was there or not so riveting were the events rapidly unfolding. Jake Parr was a good addition to the book and at times I could see he was torn between his loyalty to the job he was in Italy to do and also at the same time trying to protect Caterina from things she really shouldn't be getting involved in but in reality she had no other choice. As I mentioned there were lots of characters and by the end it became evident that everyone needs to be kept an eye no one is there as a page filler. Every character has a role to play be it major or minor and how they all come together was just brilliant. So many clues had been subtly dropped throughout the story that I really should have picked up on more than what I did but in a way it's testament to Kate's amazing writing throughout this book that I didn't.

The Liberation really was an epic story in every sense of the word, it's nearly 600 pages but to me it didn't feel that long at all. It's the book where you say to yourself just one more chapter and then you find yourself having read another 100 pages or so and it's getting later into the night. This book is a powerful read packed full of characters who you will love and hate in equal measure. There is tension, thrills, mystery, suspense, romance and so much more and through Kate's writing Italy at a time of unrest is brought to vivid life. Having finished the Liberation and found it to be one of the best books I have read this year it's really made me want to go back and reread everything she has written as she is such a marvellous author. Do yourself a favour and go buy The Liberation today I have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending it.

Gemma says

The story in this novel warrants about 350 pages; instead it runs to 560 pages. It's not some epic tale of history or a three generation family saga. It's simply an ordinary detective story where everything takes place in a short span of time. In other words it's incredibly long-winded and over detailed. I also found it poorly constructed – innumerable chapters that simply weren't necessary. It was like the author put down on paper every single thought passing through her head and didn't afterwards go back and edit it. It was also too melodramatic for me. I gave up at 300 pages. Ironically the best thing about it for me were the descriptions of a master craftsman working with wood. Unfortunately the author didn't display a similar talent for craftsmanship. Really disappointing - though I enjoyed the descriptions of Sorrento.

Julie says

Caterina is trying to survive in Sorrento, Italy in 1945. The war has ended and British and American troops are in Naples trying to restore peace to the war devastated city. Caterina has taken over her dead father's business to try and support her young brother and grandfather who rely on her.

I enjoyed the first half of this story but it seemed to take me a long time to get through the last part.

Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says

Kate Furnivall is an author who is quite familiar to me. I devoured Furnivall's series of books set in Russia, she has a real knack for bringing to life places and specific time periods from the past. It has been awhile since I have read a book written by Kate Furnivall, so I was excited about the prospect of reading Furnivall's latest release, *The Liberation*.

The Liberation effortlessly transports the reader back to post war Italy. In 1945, Caterina Lombardi is a young woman among countless Italians fighting to survive. The reader quickly learns that Caterina is fiercely protective of her family and will do anything to ensure that their safety is secured. After losing her Father two years ago, Caterina has continued the family trade of wooden handicraft. One day, she finds herself selling these articles in Naples and runs into trouble. A robber tries to attack Caterina but she is saved by two Allied Army officers. These officers change Caterina's life, as she discovers that her late Father has been accused of treason and black market dealings. As Caterina fights hard to clear her family's name and protect them from further anguish, she is lead on a dangerous journey.

If you enjoy historical novels grand in scale, look no further than *The Liberation*. An epic novel at over 500 pages, the length of this novel first seemed a little daunting. Thankfully, I was soon swept away by the breathtaking locations and compelling time frame of this novel, to concern myself about the breath of this book. There is no question that author Kate Furnivall takes care to ensure she presents her readers with an accurate depiction of the specific time and locales in which her books are set. *The Liberation* is no exception. By far, what I enjoyed most about this book was the vivid setting. While reading *The Liberation*, I was also reminded of what I appreciated about Furnivall's writing in the past, her scene setting is faultless. At many points in the novel I felt like I was a genuine part of the action in Italy during this desperate, perilous and

uncertain time period.

It is hard to not like leading character Caterina Lombardi. From the opening pages, Caterina is clearly defined as fearless, as well as fiercely loyal. Caterina's love for her family is admirable, which we witness through the dangerous action she takes in the novel. Furnivall also gives Caterina a little romance to contend with in her determined quest to restore her Father's integrity. I did enjoy the scenes between Caterina and Allied Officer Jake, the chemistry between the two provided moments of light in a somewhat bleak time.

Readers will find the plot in *The Liberation* deeply satisfying. The Liberation travels at a steady pace and the pages flip by at an easy pace. On the whole, I found the narrative very intriguing, delivering plenty of twists to keep me on my toes. In fact, there were many points in the novel where I wasn't quite sure what Furnivall was going to serve up next. This added to the overall appeal of *The Liberation*. In terms of content, I have to say I found the story thread involving the stolen artefacts, paintings and statues fascinating. In addition, I was dearly holding out hope that Caterina could clear the accusation made against her Father in his association with these stolen goods. When I reached the end of *The Liberation*, I felt like I had been on a tumultuous journey but I was filled with feelings of hope for the future of these characters and Italy's restoration.

A story rich in history that demonstrates the strength of the Italian people and their love for family, *The Liberation* is a book that I endorse highly.

*I wish to thank Beauty and Lace for providing a copy of this book for review purposes.

Theresa Smith Writes says

Set in Italy at the end of WWII, *The Liberation* unfolds against a backdrop of savagery and desolation. Rarely have I come across a book that depicts the full devastation of war so intricately. Italy, at the end of WWII, was a country destroyed, ruled by corruption, fear, and poverty. Kate Furnivall gives us an insight into this with one woman's fight to keep her family safe while finding out the truth about her father. This was an excellent novel, rich in historic detail with vivid depictions of scene and character lending weight to its believability. There was a toughness to the Italians in this story that begs admiration but also generates great sorrow. While romance is present, it is by no means a sweeping tale of an officer and a peasant girl. Yet it does showcase love, in amongst all of the savagery, and honour runs deep throughout the entire novel, both on a personal level for the characters as well as a national notion for all of Italy's people. I enjoyed this book and recommend it highly to anyone who likes novels about WWII, even though it is set at its conclusion. *The Liberation* gives a voice to a dark period of Italy's history and sheds a light on what it must have been like to live in an occupied country with swinging political ideologies during a time of world wide conflict.

Brenda says

4.5★s

When Caterina Lombardi was only ten years old and her brother Luca was just a baby, their mother abandoned them. She deserted her husband and two children for another man, fleeing for the lights and money of Rome. Now, eleven years later and Caterina was twenty one; Luca eleven. It was 1945 and the war

was over; the British and American soldiers were trying to help the locals bring some order back to their lives in Naples and surrounding towns. Caterina lived with her brother and their grandfather in Sorrento, in the home their mother and father had once occupied – their father had been killed during the war when his workshop had been bombed; their grandfather was blind.

The unexpected intrusion into their lives by two of the soldiers was a shock to Caterina. But it was to get much worse. As Caterina found herself in a fight for her life and her freedom, the discovery of secrets in her family's past had her in denial. She refused to believe what was being said was fact. Her determination to discover the truth would put her and Luca in danger; the violence was out on the street – would she be safe? Would she find the answers she sought and find peace?

The Liberation by Kate Furnivall is an epic tale of love, loss and retribution. Heartbreaking and filled with sorrow, it is also a story of loyalty, trust and hope. I thoroughly enjoyed this historical fiction novel which is set after the war, and shows a different side to the effects that war has on a nation. Highly recommended.

With thanks to NetGalley and the publisher for this copy to read in exchange for my honest review.

Redfox5 says

A good solid historical fiction set in Italy after the second World War.

Caterina's family is left smaller and poor after the defeat of Italy in the hands of the allied troops. When an American solider starts asking questions about her dead father's involvement in the stealing of Italy's art. She sets out to clear her father's name.

Bit of a mystery in this one and a touch of romance, all in a beautiful setting. I always like reading about people who were on the wrong side of the war, through no choice of their own and how this affected them. Would recommend for fans of historical fiction.

booksofallkinds says

****MORE THAN 5 STARS****

There are not enough words to describe the magnificence of this gripping tale but I will try to do it justice. Caterina Lombardi is doing the best that she can for her family in her home of Italy in the aftermath of the War. Her beautiful Sorrento and Naples may have been pillaged and bombed but its spirit and wonder still remain, ensnaring the hearts of the Allied soldiers who are trying to reinstate the land to its former glory. Like her flawed but stunning homeland, Caterina is determined to protect her secretive family during these dangerous times, but as she is drawn into a dangerous investigation, her life and her treasured memories will never be the same again. This stunning novel captivated me immediately, and its poetic prose describing this unique country and culture will transport you to a different time and place. Caterina and Jake are characters full of depth, strength, and honour, and their unusual relationship makes for a compelling read. **THE LIBERATION** by Kate Furnivall evokes the kaleidoscope of human emotions, from betrayal to love and loyalty, while telling a story of family, sacrifice, danger, and strength. This book is amazing and I highly

recommend it to all fiction fans!!

*I won a copy of this novel from TBC on FB

Linda says

This book was such a drag to read. It was beautifully written but I felt it was a good 100 pages too long. The characters were interesting but the whole book was based on a missing table.
