



Book of the Week

***The Venice Sketchbook* by Rhys Bowen**

Book Review by Maureen Lang, Friends of the Starkville Library Board Member

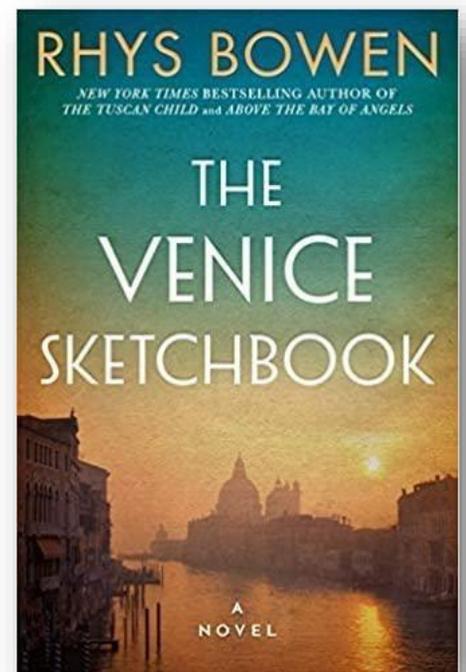
The Venice Sketchbook by Rhys Bowen is a story that tells two tales. One is about Caroline Grant who is trying to adjust to the end of her marriage. She is attempting to get her son back from New York to England, away from her ex-husband, and move them both in with her grandmother. The other story is about Caroline's Great Aunt Letty who seems like a typical, quiet, reserved Englishwoman with not much of interest to tell. Both turn out to be deeply involved with Venice and the Da Rossi family.

When Aunt Letty dies, Caroline is left with all of Aunt Letty's belongings, which don't amount to much, but do include three keys with no explanation given. In deference to Aunt Letty's wishes, Caroline decides to take some of her ashes to sprinkle in Venice. Caroline discovers that Aunt Letty spent time before and during World War II there, and ultimately, Caroline is led there to solve the mystery of Aunt Letty's inheritance.

Throughout the book, the reader gets to know Aunt Letty, or Julietta, as she is known in younger days, and the interesting life she leads. Julietta has several chances to develop her love with Venice, and more importantly, to get to know the handsome, rich, Leonardo Da Rossi, of the patrician family that goes back hundreds of years. She lives for a time as a British alien in a country that is at war with her homeland.

Running parallel to this tale is one about Caroline, how she goes to Venice, ultimately solving the mystery surrounding Aunt Letty, and finds answers that help her in figuring out what is important for her and her son's future. The handsome grandson of Leo Da Rossi, Luca, has a part to play in helping Caroline learn about herself and what is most important to her.

This is a fine story that lets the reader really get to know Venice, both in the past and the present. It is a great way to take a trip to an exotic city without leaving your armchair. It is written so well that the reader can practically see, hear, taste, and even smell all that is an integral part of this most unusual city.



This is a story that encompasses history, culture, intrigue, and love. Give it a try, you won't be disappointed! Buon libro! (Italian for ...Good book !

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