

Patricia M. Muhammad  
presents

# *The House of Marchesi*

Getting to Know Some of the Characters:



Duchessa Lilliana is of the ennobled, the esteemed House of Montanari. She has beauty, an unassuming personality who has recently become of age. Lilliana has dark eyes with ebony hair to complement. She has yet to understand the threats that lie external of her—especially from within the very home she thought she could trust. The duchessa is talented in playing the viola and has learned other crafts expected of a young lady of a respectable home. She is observant and inquisitive, yet knows when silence is better than speech. She is of a good height, not excessively tall as to turn away the interest of a potential suitor. The duchessa often wears a gold charm bracelet which was a gift from her father. This maiden is especially close to her protective father and enjoys horseback riding on the steed that Duca Emmanuele gifted for her on her birthday. One day while riding she is thrust from her horse and lands onto the estate of an unknown courtier. This begins her new journey, where she finds where her true home lies.

Duca Emmanuele is Duchess Lilliana's father. He is stoic, stately and protective of all three of his children, but especially Lilliana. The Montanari patriarch has dark hair. His daughter can attribute her unassuming nature from the example that her father provided for her since she was of tender age. He is observant, and eventually notices the behaviour of others if at all a threat to his children. He is wealthy, but treats his servants with kindness. Duca Emmanuele can be stern when necessary, even with Duchess Roesetta, who oft-times requires such reproach. When his daughter becomes missing, he searches the horse stables and the nearby grounds of the estate and finds a gold charm. He clings to it as a symbol of hope that his daughter is safe



Duchessa Rosetta is Duchess Lilliana's mother. She has a curt tongue, is astute and enjoys curating flowers from the gardens of the Montanari estate. Rosetta has a penchant for the most exquisite of jewels—even if they aren't her own. Oft-times she is off-putting to both Duca Emmanuele and the House's loyal servants though she heavily relies on them all. Rosetta is a manipulator and would do anything to achieve her selfish ends of attaining a higher status within the Milanese king's court. She withholds several secrets—and it becomes her undoing.

Duca Alessandro is the lord of the House of Marchesi and an esteemed patrician of the king's court. He has medium-dark wavy hair and gray piercing eyes. The duca is muscular with a broad chest and strong hands. His dress is impeccable, though he declares it a normal course of his aristocratic life. The courtier becomes the caretaker of Duchessa Lilliana after servants discover her injured and unable to move on the Marchesi estate. Alessandro uses his capable hands to fulfill his duchessa's repeated request to have him hold her face to him. He is kind but assertive. Duchessa Lilliana was the only one who was ever able to allow for his tenderness to show forth, because she could only be the intended recipient. Alessandro is protective of who Providence has unexpectedly gifted him with. Though he is highly intelligent and astute, he is also practical and accepts what other service those in his employ offer to protect both he and the duchessa. The duca hails from an extensive royal lineage which he is reminded of once his destined guest inquires to learn more of him.



The House of Marchesi is a fine estate populated with vineyards, orchards and gardens. It is a manor in which servants have dutifully maintained its upkeep for both the grounds and the interior of the mansion. Embedded in some of its architecture are frescoes that garner Duchessa Lilliana's attention. It has multiple levels and staircases. From the master bedchambers, nearly the entire canvas of the visible night sky adorned with stars could be seen. The Milanese mansion contains chambers and objects, such as oil paintings, that pull at Lilliana's memory. The House of Marchesi becomes the planning center of both Montanari and Marchesi servants as it is used to safeguard both Duca Alessandro and Duchessa Lilliana. The lord of this manor

intends for it to be permanently filled with the only one who has captured his heartfelt affection, Lilliana.



Noemi is a maidservant of the House of Montanari. She is devoted to this esteemed family and just as the others, labours to maintain its reputation. She exhibits similar concern as the master of this House, Emmanuele, when Duchessa Lilliana's absence has become extended. Noemi takes it upon herself to investigate the matter in the best manner she is capable. She observes the remaining members of the Montanari estate as well as her fellow domestics. Someone's odd behaviour has taken her aback. Noemi never thought she had to question whom she could trust within the House that she has served for several years. She enlists the assistance of another maidservant, but only after she decides to trek on her lonesome the vast Milanese countryside, searching for a clue as to Duchessa Lilliana's whereabouts. On this journey she finds a gold charm—and some unexpected help from a very proud street vendor.

Gabriella is yet another maidservant of the House of Montanari. She is diligent in her chores and does not enjoy disorder, whether it is any of the chambers of the mansion or unexpected conduct of her fellow servants. Gabriella is devoted to the house's namesake as well, but does not have much tact and notices Noemi's odd behaviour. She has the uncanny ability to startle and annoy Noemi, though Noemi often overlooks *her* behaviour because she understands that it is unintentional. It is she whom Noemi finally enlists to assist her in investigating Duchessa Lilliana's absence—and a crime that had been implemented against the innocent duchess long before her horse riding accident.



Pascal is the boastful pomegranate street vendor who sells his wares in an old wooden crate attached to an impatient, matted-hair donkey. He serves the countryside of the houses of the Milanese court as servants from each purchase his fine produce to incorporate into their masters' menus. Noemi encounters Pascal when she begins her foot journey searching for any hints of where Duchessa Lilliana may be. Upon her initial encounter with the pomegranate vendor, Noemi assumes that he has been touched by madness. She soon realizes that he is only especially proud of his what he refers to as the best products that many have purchased. Surprisingly, Pascal has pertinent information regarding the duchessa's location. But first, Noemi must navigate through the vendor's airs and his riddled speech to know where the lost duchessa is. Pascal will have a surprising change in his occupation when all has been resolved.

The Milanese Crown consists of a king and queen and several advisors and counselors. However, their Majesties are the source of royal declarations and investigations into matters involving members of the king's court. When Duca Emmanuele learns of the plot against his daughter, Duchessa Lilliana, he implements an integral scheme apprising others, a royal petition that reaches the hands of the king and queen. The Crown accepts the matter as serious and sends forth royal investigators so that they may gather their own evidence against the accused. The king and queen not only consider it a matter offensive to the royal house from which Duchessa Lilliana originates, but also as an affront to the integrity of the entire king's court. Their Majesties secure their parchment with the royal seal and when the time became ripe, adjudicated the matter with all earnest. One of the conspirators against Duchessa Lilliana and consequently Duca Alessandro is executed on the very day of the grand ball.

