

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-United States, 2021-May-12— /ToStories/-Multi-genre fiction author Patricia M. Muhammad discusses her third historical romance novel, *Ardor's Prestige*.

A duchessa and presumably a duca meet. Their gazes captivate one another. She cannot deny his handsome countenance. He could only admire her beauty and intellect. Their chance encounter was of unusual circumstance. Yet each hoped it would not be their last. Salacious gossip, false rumours and envious maidens seek to sever the natural bond that the duca and duchessa have already acknowledged. Leandro may be protected from the potential harm that these poisonous utterances have made. He endeavours to have the same for his heart's desire. Yet this does not relieve Leandro from his father's admonishment. He has heard the false tales and seek to safeguard his royal legacy. Leandro pleads to his father to listen to what he knows to be true. This has become the temporal burden of Anastasia, an innocent courtier caught between the sting of bow and arrow aimed at her from aristocrats who are unable to accept the felicity of others. With crooked words as their sharpened blade, they hope to puncture and destroy the beautiful adoration shared between Anastasia and Leandro. His father believes for a while that his concern for his son outweighs Leandro's perceived rebelliousness. Anastasia and Leandro have vowed to be together. Leandro reveals all of what he is to the king's court for his betrothed's sake. They are wed despite the woeful machinations of the envious, both male and female. It was they who erroneously believed that they had a say in the matter. Yet, the hand of Providence proved otherwise. Those who conspired against the two innocents whose hearts are genuine and their bond pure, must now recoil into the darkness of their own emptiness. They now observe from afar as the duchessa and her prince have their fill of an ordained and joyous future. So who was Duchessa Anastasia and how exactly did she meet Leandro?

It began one day when Duchessa Anastasia's family decides to take holiday in another country. Though the young maiden has recently become of age, Anastasia will not be alone. The senior houseservant, Sienna, will keep close watch of the rebellious maiden. Aside from the other maidservants, she is keenly observed by her cavalier servente, Giorgio. He admires and has a deep affection for her. This has no bearing upon how she feels. Giorgio knows that it can never be. The duchessa has often and sternly reminded him of such. She views him as just another one of the servile adornments that her mother and father placed within the House of d'Alessi. The duchessa has an encounter with a dashing nobleman one night after stealing away from the d'Alessi mansion. Both are hesitant to disclose much of their identities. They only state their second names, wondering about the motive of the other. Later on, Anastasia ponders her encounter with the patrician as he does the same. False rumours have now spread regarding a maiden's indiscretion with a higher-ranking courtier. One day in the marketplace, Giorgio hears of this and pummels the verbal offenders. They mock him when they realize that Giorgio yearns for the duchessa. Even they know that his desire for her, though they know not Anastasia by name, is futile.

On another occasion, Anastasia leaves the mansion and walks along the open thoroughfare near the waterways. She senses someone watching her. The duchessa hopes it is Leandro, the aristocrat she encountered that one clear night. Anastasia slips into the estuary, in need of help. Giorgio appears. She is embarrassed and holds herself for modesty sake. Though her servente wraps a textile around her, Anastasia senses that

Leandro is still near. She and her fellow ennobled encounter each other again and realize that they have been inevitably drawn to each other. She and the aristocrat begin a formal courtship. Leandro finds her with surprising quirks about her which only causes for him to further adore her. One day at the mansion, Duchessa Anastasia witnesses the royal guard seize her servente on the allegation of treason by order of the Crown. She looks to a fresco, hoping that its image could somehow hear her plea to save the humiliated Giorgio. He now stands before her in the grips of dutiful royal officers, too weak to defend himself. Duchessa Anastasia, however, does not allow for this incident to interfere with what has already been deemed for her. As time passes, the duchessa and the "duca" continue their courtship. Giorgio is eventually cleared. The season of Carnevale is at its peak. The king confronts Leandro, a high-ranking courtier, about his relationship with Duchessa Anastasia. He explains that his and the duchessa's feelings for one another are true and that the rumours circulating regarding their circumstance are but a false attack. The duchessa had yet to know of what Leandro's place was in the king's court. This is how he knew no barrier, except for the illusory ones that the envious ones sought to erect, had not existed between him and Anastasia. The king is hesitant, but eventually decides to trust Leandro. The ennobled use their masques to hide their indulgence and the smirks which hint at their wicked connivances against the innocents. The duchessa arrives at the grand ball and meets with her intended. While inside, the duchessa thought the masque was a splendid accessory to shield others from her bashful nature. Leandro convinces her to eventually remove her masque just as he did. They need not hide who they are to one another or to the patriciate. They venture to one of the gardens where she accepts his proposal. Another, younger servant who accompanied the duchessa seeks to inform her of what she has learned of Giorgio's predicament. Capriana has an accident and injures herself. She is taken into a chamber and the host has the apothecarist administer a sedative. While she rests in the dark, away from the chatter and decadence, someone enters her room to murder her. Giorgio followed the culprit and intervenes. The esteemed Leandro orders the perpetrator seized. He and the duchessa seek to protect Capriana until the following day. Leandro reveals his status within the king's court to Anastasia. He was a much greater esteemed courtier than he initially revealed. Leandro was not a duca, but the prince. The king and queen stand proud of who their son has chosen for his bride. It is not until the day of their nuptials that Prince Leandro and Duchessa Anastasia learn who colluded with the murderer and framed Giorgio. Not even Anastasia suspected who it could be. Despite all of their machinations and doubt, Prince Leandro is wed to Duchessa Anastasia. They now begin the next chapter of their lives.

Ardor's Prestige is available for purchase as an ebook from these online retailers:

Amazon ASIN: B08HYK8589

Barnes & Noble: 2940164898397

Smashwords: 9781005616496

Tolino Media: 9783752117806

Thalia EAN: 9783752117806

Kobo ISBN: 9781005616496

Google Play: GGKEY:99HQFZDJLLN E

DriveThru Fiction: N/A

Apple Books: N/A

Lulu: N/A

About the Author: Patricia M. Muhammad is a multi-genre fiction author who often incorporates interracial relationships and multi-racial characters as a part of her storylines. She has written 20 novels. Patricia is currently based in the United States.

Connect with Patricia:

Social Media: @pmmuhammadbooks

Press: permissionsp@gmail.com