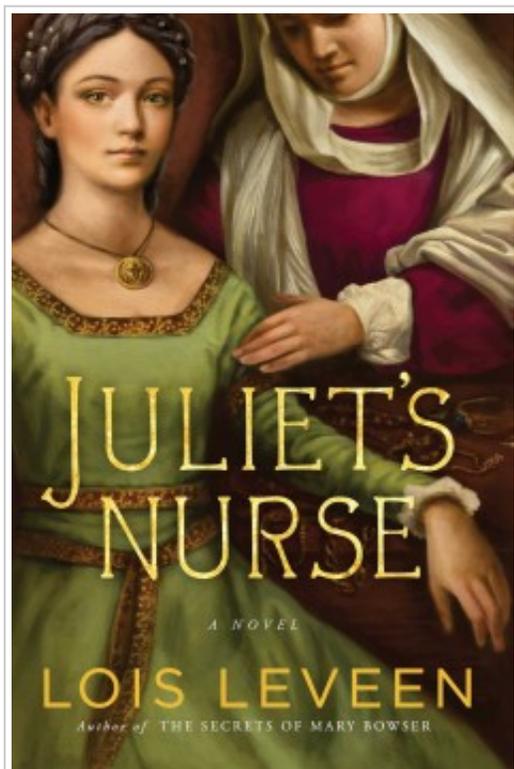


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Juliet's Nurse

by Lois Leveen

Price: \$25.99(Hardcover)

Published: September 23, 2014

Rating: 0.0/5 (0 votes cast)

From the Publisher: An enthralling new telling of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet—told from the perspective of Juliet's nurse.

In Verona, a city ravaged by plague and political rivalries, a mother mourning the death of her day-old infant enters the household of the powerful Cappelletti family to become the wet-nurse to their newborn baby. As she serves her beloved Juliet over the next fourteen years, the nurse learns the Cappellettis' darkest secrets. Those secrets—and the nurse's deep personal grief—erupt across five momentous days of love and loss that destroy a daughter, and a family.

By turns sensual, tragic, and comic, *Juliet's Nurse* gives voice to one of literature's most memorable and distinctive characters, a woman who was both insider and outsider among Verona's wealthy ruling class. Exploring the romance and intrigue of interwoven loyalties, rivalries,...

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What We Say

Have I ever read a novel about a wet nurse? I don't think I've ever seen them portrayed in depth even as a secondary character. It immediately seems an odd fact since author Lois Leveen mines such rich material from the situation. She chooses one of the most famous wet nurses in history: the Nurse from "Romeo & Juliet." That rich, secondary character in one of Shakespeare's most popular plays comes fully to life here. And truly being a wet nurse is a very strange situation. In this case, the Nurse is a woman whose own child dies at birth the same night Juliet is born. Though obviously still in mourning, she is whisked away to the home of one of the wealthiest families in Verona and soon finds herself quite naturally developing the deepest affection for the child she raises from that moment onward. Drawing on details hinted at or left unexplored in the play, Leveen fleshes out this woman and her world, from her earthy and charming bee-keeper husband to Friar Laurence to the childhood behavior of Juliet, her devoted cousin Tybalt, the obnoxious Mercutio and more. Yes, these details amusingly refracture the tale as we know it. But in truth, the novel is at its strongest in the first half when the tragedy is far in the future. As the book reaches its finale and the shadow of Shakespeare's work looms larger, "Juliet's Nurse" feels less fresh. Still, much of it is original, strongly written, funny and quite fascinating. I'll never see a reference to a wet nurse again without wondering about her story. -- Michael Giltz

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What Others Say

"Lois Leveen's richly detailed, fascinating novel offers a wholly original and intriguing take on one of Shakespeare's most beloved plays through the imagined life of Juliet's faithful nurse, whose secret loves and tragedies rival the young lovers' own." - **Jennifer Chiaverini, author of Mrs. Lincoln's Rival**

"With the largest number of lines in Shakespeare's play after the two lovers, wet nurse Angelica takes center stage in Leveen's (The Secrets of Mary Bowser, 2012) second novel, which begins 14 years before the fateful five days spanned by the drama... Leveen's enthusiastic historical novel pushes the classic teenage romance aside to give greater weight to a mother's love and losses." - **Kirkus Reviews**

"Wise, thoughtful, and utterly irresistible. A powerful story not just of youth seduced by love and destruction, but also of maturity left to pick up what is left and carry on." - **Eva Stachniak, Internationally bestselling author of The Winter Palace and Empress of the Night**

"A beautifully written and sometimes chilling novel that's deliciously sensual and fittingly dark. Juliet's Nurse not only seems true to the classic but illuminates..."

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