



The Volcano Lover: A Romance

By Susan Sontag

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Set in 18th century Naples, based on the lives of Sir William Hamilton, his celebrated wife Emma, and Lord Nelson, and peopled with many of the great figures of the day, this unconventional, bestselling historical romance from the National Book Award-winning author of *In America* touches on themes of sex and revolution, the fate of nature, art and the collector's obsessions, and, above all, love.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Focusing on the famous love triangle between British envoy Sir William Hamilton, his wife Emma and her lover Lord Nelson, Sontag's intellectual historical romance, a 10-week PW bestseller in cloth, paints an unconventional portrait of 18th-century society.

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From Library Journal

The astringently intellectual Sontag here turns to lush historical romance based on the real-life triangle of Sir William Hamilton, his wife Emma, and Lord Nelson. The English ambassador to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in the late 1700s, the Cavaliere is an exacting collector of antiquities and a frequent visitor to Mount Vesuvius. When his devoted wife Catherine dies, he becomes enamored of his nephew's beautiful if vulgar mistress. Emma gladly marries her benefactor but finds real love when heroic Lord Nelson visits Naples. The story starts slowly, and the Cavaliere's relation as collector to the collected Emma seems too obvious. But as Sontag warms to her subject, the novel becomes rich, expansive, and highly entertaining, right down to the slambang final chapters whose rapidly shifting voices suddenly provide new perspective. Hardly digressions, Sontag's many aesthetic speculations wonderfully enhance the plot. A fine novel of ideas, this is sure to please venturesome readers of historical romance as well. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 4/15/92.

-Barbara Hoffert, "Library Journal"

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From Kirkus Reviews

The first novel in over 20 years by America's preeminent belletrist is a historical tour de force. This tale of 18th-century romance and revolution is certain to charm readers who enjoy the postmodern potboilers of Umberto Eco and A.S. Byatt. After a pretentious prologue about her role as author, Sontag dives into the grand drama of the English nobleman William Hamilton, ambassador to the Kingdom of Two Sicilies, the Bourbon monarchy based in Naples. "Il Cavaliere," as he's called by his hosts, fancies himself "an envoy of decorum and reason" to the grotesque King. Where Sir William delights in collecting art and artifacts, and exploring the great volcano at Vesuvius, the fat King devotes himself to gluttony and impregnating his ambitious wife. After the Cavaliere's frail wife dies at age 44, the melancholic ambassador returns to England, where he grows infatuated with his nephew's mistress, a stunning beauty from the lower classes who mixes charm with vulgarity. Seeking a wealthy wife, the nephew passes his mistress to his uncle, now back in Naples. And soon follows a scandalous marriage between the 56-year-old ambassador and the 20-year-old lady of dubious virtue. A quick study, as well as a much-painted subject, Lady Emma Hamilton becomes the toast of Naples and the Queen's confidante. Her fall into infamy begins when she meets the hero of the age, Lord Nelson, "the saviour of the royalist cause." In outline, this seems little more than the Vivien Leigh melodrama *That Hamilton Woman*. But Sontag adds such historical texture to her saga of sexual intrigue that it all comes to sordid life, full of passion and politics. Her warts-and-all version of history relies on a profound imagining of each character's point of view. At once heady and heartfelt, this is Sontag's best bid for a popular audience. -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Charlotte GambreL:

Hey guys, do you would like to finds a new book you just read? May be the book with the concept The Volcano Lover: A Romance suitable to you? The actual book was written by popular writer in this era. The particular book untitled The Volcano Lover: A Romance is one of several books in which everyone read now. This book was inspired a lot of people in the world. When you read this e-book you will enter the new way of measuring that you ever know just before. The author explained their thought in the simple way, therefore all of people can easily to know the core of this reserve. This book will give you a wide range of information about this world now. To help you see the represented of the world in this particular book.

Christopher McCormick:

Reading a e-book tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With looking at you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. With book everyone in this world can share their idea. Publications can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their own reader with their story or even their experience. Not only the story that share in the guides. But also they write about advantage about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on earth always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write to the book. One of them is this The Volcano Lover: A Romance.

Miguel Lynch:

The book The Volcano Lover: A Romance has a lot of information on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of help. The book was written by the very famous author. The writer makes some research ahead of write this book. That book very easy to read you will get the point easily after perusing this book.

Kimberly Duda:

With this era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability to do something more are more special than other. Do you want to become one among it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to experience a look at some books. One of many books in the top checklist in your reading list will be The Volcano Lover: A Romance. This book that is certainly qualified as The Hungry Hillsides can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking upwards and review this e-book you can get many advantages.

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