



The Midwife of Venice

Roberta Rich

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Not since Anna Diamant's *The Red Tent* or Geraldine Brooks's *People of the Book* has a novel transported readers so intimately into the complex lives of women centuries ago or so richly into a story of intrigue that transcends the boundaries of history. A "lavishly detailed" (*Elle Canada*) debut that masterfully captures sixteenth-century Venice against a dramatic and poetic tale of suspense.

Hannah Levi is renowned throughout Venice for her gift at coaxing reluctant babies from their mothers using her secret "birthing spoons." When a count implores her to attend his dying wife and save their unborn son, she is torn. A Papal edict forbids Jews from rendering medical treatment to Christians, but his payment is enough to ransom her husband Isaac, who has been captured at sea. Can she refuse her duty to a woman who is suffering? Hannah's choice entangles her in a treacherous family rivalry that endangers the child and threatens her voyage to Malta, where Isaac, believing her dead in the plague, is preparing to buy his passage to a new life. Told with exceptional skill, *The Midwife of Venice* brings to life a time and a place cloaked in fascination and mystery and introduces a captivating new talent in historical fiction.

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