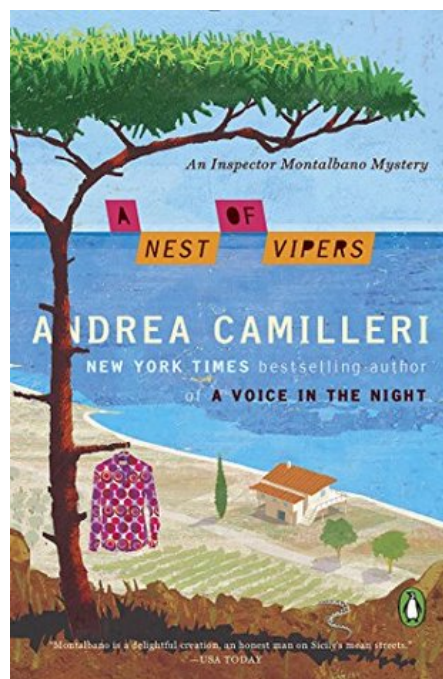




A Nest of Vipers

Andrea Camilleri , Stephen Sartarelli (Translator)

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In the latest installment of the *New York Times* bestselling Inspector Montalbano mystery series, Montalbano investigates the death of wealthy accountant Cosimo Barletta in a case involving a string of mistresses and family secrets.

Inspector Montalbano enjoys simple pleasures: delicious food, walks along the water, the occasional smoke—yet these are just the backdrop to his duties as a detective.

His latest case is the killing of the wealthy Cosimo Barletta. Thought to be a widower living out a quiet life by the sea, Cosimo's sudden death, by gunshot to the neck, opens up his past to scrutiny. What Montalbano uncovers is Cosimo's trove of salacious photographs, used to extort young women, and a history full of greed and corruption. Montalbano, though resolved to find the killer, muses on where justice lies—in his pursuit of a suspect or with one of Cosimo's innumerable victims getting the revenge they deserved?

"The novels of Andrea Camilleri breathe out the sense of place, the sense of humor, and the sense of despair that fills the air of Sicily." —Donna Leon

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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From Reader Review A Nest of Vipers for online ebook

Skip says

Very weak effort by Camilleri. A man is found by his son shot to death at his breakfast table, but he was already dead from being poisoned when he was shot. As Inspector Montalbano investigates, his son and daughter reveal that he was disliked by most, and loathed by the rest so the list of suspects is long, including a number of women in their 20s being blackmailed for sexual liaisons. Unfortunately, the killers were way too obvious, and there was little mystery in this one, other than the vagrant on the hill. Even Catarella's butchering of names and language generally is growing a bit old now.

Skorofido Skorofido says

Λοιπ?ν το?το το βιβλ?ο μ?νο και μ?νο για τον τ?τλο του, δικαιο?ται ?να δεκ?ρι. Συγγραφ?ας που β?ζει τα φ?δια στον τ?τλο του (γιατ? στο DNA μου κυλ?ει και κ?τι απ? οχι?), χα?ρει της εκτ?μησης μου και του το ανταποδ?δω.

Ε?μαι λ?τρης του Μονταλμπ?νο, του αστυνομικο? ?ρωα του Καμιλλ?ρι. Ε?ναι τ?πος μεσογειακ?, καλοφ?γ?, με μοναδικ? σπ?τι με βερ?ντα που βλ?πει στη θ?λασσα, που παρ? τα 58 του χρ?νια ?χει ακ?μα αρραβωνιαστικ? και που λ?νει τις αστυνομικ?ς του υποθ?σεις καταβροχθ?ζοντας μπαρμπο?νια και πετρ?ψαρα στου ?ντσο.

Διαβ?ζω τα βιβλ?α του ?χι για το αστυνομικ? σασπ?νς, ο?τε για το ψυχογρ?φημα του δολοφ?νου αλλ? για να ζω τη ζω? του Μονταλμπ?νο στη Σικελ?α.

Στη «φωλι? της οχι?ς», το πτ?μα αν?κει σ'?ναν ?κφυλο λογιστ? που δεν ?φηνε ο?τε θηλυκι? γ?τα παραπονο?μενη και οι πιθανο? δολοφ?νοι πολλο?.

Επειδ? ?μως μου αρ?σει να ε?μαι και ακριβοδ?καιο, η λ?ση του μυστηρ?ου στο τ?λος μου ?φησε ερωτ?ματα αναπ?ντητα και μια πικρ?λα στο στ?μα γιατ? ?ταν καταπιαν?μαστε με κ?ποια θ?ματα σοβαρ?, πρ?πει να παραμ?νουν σοβαρ?. Αν ?ταν ?λλος συγγραφ?ας με το δολοφ?νο που μου π?σαρε, θα τον ε?χα ξεφων?σει, αλλ? ?χουμε και τις αδυναμ?ες μας... Τ?σα τηγανιτ? μπαρμπο?νια φ?γαμε μαζ? στου ?ντσο, τ?σες σαλ?τες με μ?δια και χταποδ?κι μας φ?λεψε η Αντελ?να, τ?σο σικελι?τικο κρασ? ρουφ?ξαμε στη βερ?ντα με θ?α τη θ?λασσα... του την χαρ?ζω αυτ? τη φορ?... Βαθμολογ?: 6/10

<http://skorofido.blogspot.gr/2016/10/...>

Sandra says

Una delusione. In questo libro, scritto da Camilleri nel 2008 e pubblicato solo ora, manca molto: manca una trama sostenibile, mancano le indagini di Montalbano, il giallo si risolve praticamente da solo senza che il commissario si dia troppo da fare. Non solo: oltre a mancanze c'è anche molto di troppo: ci sono troppe macchiette ripetute che non fanno neanche più sorridere, come il giudice Tommaseo che fa pena, anche Catarella non ha più smalto, c'è Livia sempre uguale a sé stessa, antipatica più che mai, l'unico personaggio che mi è piaciuto è stato Augello, che in questa storia emerge come un bravo investigatore.

Non parlo della trama perché svelerei troppi particolari, mi limito a dire che è prevedibile e poco credibile, come già hanno scritto altri che l'hanno letto prima di me. Per il futuro l'unico Montalbano che frequenterò sarà quello televisivo.

Ivonne Rovira says

I have enjoyed Andrea Camilleri's Salvo Montalbano series for decades, awaiting on tenterhooks for the English translation of each gem. Even so, I'd forgotten how laugh-out-loud funny Camilleri can be without (usually) falling into slapstick silliness. *A Nest of Vipers*, the 21st novel in the series, provides the taut mystery readers have come to expect while still providing lots of humor.

In this novel, a ruthless, womanizing businessman is found murdered at his beach house. There are so many secrets involved in this Cosimo Barletta's businesses, sexual proclivities and family that I dare not say much more. Even though most readers will guess the final secret before the end, they won't care because the writing and plotting are so excellent. Recommended.

Alex Cantone says

I first encountered Inspector Montalbano through the TV adaption screened by SBS with actor Luca Zingaretti in the lead role. In "A Nest of Vipers" the deceased, Cosimo Barletta, is a loan shark and compulsive womaniser who chases, beds and secretly photographs young attractive women. We learn that his wife drowned years earlier and there is friction between his adult daughter and son over the will, compounded by the news that the autopsy showed the deceased to have been poisoned then shot.

This is the fourth book in the series I have read, and has lost none of the charm of the others. Montalbano is *commissario di pubblica sicurezza* in the fictitious Sicilian town of Vigàta. He lives alone, has a housekeeper who is a superb cook (he loves his food) and a fiery long-term girlfriend Livia, who flies in from time to time from Genoa, both women hating each other. Montalbano despises the *carabinieri* and the townsfolk include a sprinkling of unsavoury characters, with a fair amount of chicanery going on and links to mafiosa. Naturally the suspect list is long and complex.

A pleasant and easy read, Camilleri has built a long career in movies and TV, so the emphasis here is on dialogue and gestures rather than lengthy descriptive passages, and technology is low key / unobtrusive. Personally I would have liked greater detail on the countryside and architecture of the area, but he handles unpleasant themes sensitively, without resorting to shock the reader. Recommended.

Manuel Antão says

If you're into stuff like this, you can read the full review.

Human Interconnectedness: "A Nest of Vipers" by Andrea Camilleri

Why is Catarella allowed to have any part in the operation of the station? He'd be an encumbrance even if moved to toilet-cleaning duties. Why does Montalbano never seem to have any means of communicating with the rest of the force on him? It's not that he can't get a signal since he's never shown to try! Why does he appear to operate outside the rest of the force in his own time and to his inclinations? He's more like a private eye than a policeman. Catarella is almost certainly a "raccomandato", i.e., someone who got his job thanks to connections rather than going through a rigorous interview and testing process (in Portuguese would be harder to translate; I don't there's a noun for that; for the action, yes; it's called "meter uma cunha", meaning literally "to pull strings for somebody"). It happens an awful lot. But Catarella does crack computer codes, week in week out, so he's good at something!

If you're into Mediterranean Crime Fiction, read on.

Baldurian says

M: "Pronto, signor Camilleri? Montalbano sono."

C: "Ah, carissimo, mi dica."

M: "Questa mia ultima indagine... ecco... non le sembra un po' raffazzonata?"

C: "Ma, come si permette!"

M: "Ecco vede, il finale si capisce dopo neanche metà romanzo, certi personaggi indossano magliette con la scritta 'DEUS EX MACHINA, PIACERE', le parti di contorno alla vicenda sono ormai le stesse da Il cane di terracotta e chi più ne ha più ne metta."

C: "Beh sa, l'avevo scritto nel 2008 e la qualità era obbiettivamente bassina ma, visto che l'età avanza, ormai me ne frego e corro a pubblicare il pubblicabile, altrimenti alla Sellerio i bimbi non mangiano."

M: "Ah, perfetto. L'importante è saperlo. A risentirla."

C: "A presto carissimo, e stia pronto ad una nuova entusiasmante serie di sciarratine con Livia!"

D - E - L - U - D - E - N - T - E

Rosalba says

Si era trattato d'amuri. Era possibbili adoperari 'sta parola? Se arriniscivi a superari il disgusto, la nausea, l'orrore, e arrivavi alla sostanza, forse sì.

Anche questa volta Camilleri, pur affrontando un argomento molto delicato, è riuscito a trascinarci e coinvolgerci fino alla fine, ma su quel tipo d'amore ho dei serissimi dubbi: chi ama non viola l'innocenza, protegge. Inutile ribadire che amo tutti i personaggi di questa serie, con i loro pregi e i loro difetti, indistintamente.

Vasilis Kalandaridis says

ἡχώ διαβᾶσει ὅλα τὰ βιβλία?κια τοῦ Camilleri με ᾠρωά τον Montalbano,δεν υπᾶρχει λοιπὸν λᾶγος νὰ σκᾶφτομαὶ καὶ νὰ δηλᾶνω ἀν μου ἀρᾶσουν ? ᾠχι.Προφανῶς τὰ λατρεῶ,εἶναι μὴ ἀνᾶσα γιὰ μᾶνὰ αὐτᾶς οἱ ἱστορᾶς.Το βιβλίο?κι εἶναι ἰδανικὸ γιὰ παραλᾶ.

Nancy Oakes says

Not among Camilleri's best in this long-running series, but still worth the read for Montalbano fans.

Normally I would have nothing but praise for one of Camilleri's novels, but this time around I think that Camilleri didn't go his normal distance. To be sure, the things I enjoy about this series are still here -- the camaraderie between Salvo and his colleagues, the jokes built around the prosecutor and the doctor, the lovely feel of this little slice of Sicily and Salvo himself -- but despite the somewhat horrific story which unfolds, this is definitely not up there with the author's best books in the series. First of all, I cottoned on to what was going on long before Salvo figured it out which is never good; second, there's the introduction of a somewhat enigmatic character whose purpose isn't quite clear until the end, where he provides a sort of verbal *deus ex machina* that gives Salvo a bit of a nudge in the right direction. Considering that Camilleri had actually written (but not published) this novel in 2008 after writing *The Potter's Field* (2007) which later won him the International Dagger Award, well, it could have been a much stronger book than it actually turned out to be.

Still, the truth is that once I became aware of where this story was headed, my stomach was churning, so it did provoke a strong reaction; I was also quite impressed by one of the main themes in this book in which Montalbano spends time pondering, as the back-cover blurb reveals, "where justice lies," and in this case, readers are left with an outright serious conundrum. And now that I'm actually thinking about it, the way in which Camilleri sets up the question within the titular "nest of vipers" is very nicely done. It's too bad I can't explain this thought in more detail but careful readers will understand.

I am pretty much unyielding (okay, downright persnickety) about reading books in series order, so my advice is to not let *A Nest of Vipers* become your starting point in this series -- each book builds on the previous so you'll miss way too much if you don't read them in order. And while it may not be Camilleri's best, this book is still well worth reading, especially for die-hard fans of the series among whom I count myself.

for more (containing a bit about plot but not too much and for sure no spoilers),
<http://www.crimesegments.com/2017/09/...>

Paul says

A Nest of Vipers – Another Montalbano Classic

Time spent with a Montalbano mystery is always a journey of pleasure, pain and comfort. Pleasure because the stories are so well written, the characters outstanding, the pain, being the actual crime, and the pleasure the comedy and food. Seeing his constant worries about aging and his relationship with Livia, and his relationship with food which is better than that with his colleagues.

Montalbano is called out to murder of a man killed in his own kitchen on a Sunday morning, having been found by his son. Little does he know he is opening a Pandora's Box on dysfunctional families and this family happen to be the poster family on dysfunctional.

Livia also on a visit has 'adopted' a local tramp, that Montalbano has assisted, and she gives away clothing to him. She also makes regular visits to him and worries about him when he comes down with the flu. She

even tells Montalbano to visit him, when she has gone home to make sure he is well. Montalbano eventually has an interesting conversation with the tramp, as he has decided to move on, that opens Montalbano's eyes.

All the usual characters appear in this thriller along with Mimi's constant wanderings with other women, Fazio's diligence and Caterella stamping around. With plenty of visits to Enzo's, and the descriptions of the food always makes my mouth water.

Once again, this Montalbano has been brilliantly translated into English, and the translator, Stephen Sartarelli needs congratulating on his fine work.

The only thing, when you finish one Montalbano you just hope there is another on the horizon.

Richard says

I just love the Montalbano series which with A Nest of Vipers came of age; the twenty-first outing for the majority of these characters.

Set in Sicily by Andrea Camilleri and wonderfully translated by Stephen Sartarelli. Full of wonderful locations, delightful food and great communication. It is no wonder these books translate so easily for the successful TV series, but they can not fully capture the wit and clever humour that masks the horrors of the crimes committed or the motivations of the killers. As a police procedurals they are of the highest standard as a mysteries they have depth and many points of interest and plot strands that fully involve you in the stories. Here a man is reported as shot and murdered when his son arrived at his father's home early one Sunday morning. That the investigation throws up a growing list of suspects means that motives abound and the victim clearing had not led a particularly good life.

From Chapter 4:

"In plain words, the number of people motivated by hatred for him probably reached three figures.

In even plainer words, the case was shaping up to be a tremendous pain. There would be hundreds of leads to follow, and they would all prove wrong in the end.

And it wasn't that he was itching to dive headlong into the investigation.

Because it was one thing to send the killer of W good man to jail, and it was something else entirely to put away someone who had killed a stinking scoundrel."

A beautifully crafted story, filled with intense moments and times of real pathos and revelation. The author writes with sensitivity but unrestrained passion not wasting his punches but using words of implication, sketching painful reality rather than graphic pictures to make his observations.

It is these subtle touches that show the author is a true artist and a literary genius.

He also has larger than life characters that go beyond stereotypes but reflect the worst extremes in aspects of society.

You can only love Catarella and his confusion; Adelina, Montalbano's housekeeper, and her dislike for girlfriend Livia.

You can only chuckle regarding Tommaso, the prosecutor, and his predilection for things of a sexual nature. I love the interactions between Montalbano and the doctor who performs the autopsy. Pasquano shares a similar appreciation for food as the inspector. When he disturbs the good doctor on the phone at home during a mealtime Montalbano gets the information he needs but also. 'Do you know what is my highest aspiration in life? To perform your post-mortem.'

These stories stand out as they are so human, where crime interjects with ordinary daily events. The world Camilleri invites you into is a rich and entertaining one filled with suspense but also reassurance. It is both real and make-believe enabling the reader to share the ills of society while being uplifted at the same time as the stories resonate with your mind and very nature.

If you haven't pick up one of these books I urge you to do so; they might not change your life but they will

leave a smile on your face. A Nest of Vipers is a good place to start but there are 20 previous novels to catch up with. So the pleasure seems unbounded.

Roman Clodia says

Opening a new Montalbano is always a delight, like being back with old friends. In this one, Camilleri moves away from the stories of Mafia and public corruption, and instead focuses on a domestic killing and a twisted family.

I have to confess that I'd solved this one way ahead of Montalbano, but the enjoyment of these books goes far deeper than whodunit. With Cat more muddled and muddling than ever, Tommaso in his element with pornographic photos, and Livia coming to stay for a few days, this one is pure enjoyment.

Christina says

καλ? ?ταν ἀλλ? το δι?βασα ?λο για να επιβεβαι?σω ?τι ε?χα καταλ?βει απ την αρχ? και τον δολοφ?νο και το γιατ? ?γινε ο φ?νος

Jeanette says

This one had a truly dark core. A man has been murdered. TWICE! He's been shot in the head while sitting up- the only thing is this. It was a corpse that was shot, because he had been poisoned 15 minutes previously.

It's a Montalbano banquet every day with the food. Mimi does his usual work. Inside and outside of the "job". Fazio is perfect. And the input officer never gets the name right, as usual. Livia is full frontal because she's on a three day visit from Genoa and is in a gym phase perfection on top of it. And she tried to make Silvio pasta herself. That is a FIRST. Of course he was IMMEDIATELY "called away".

But for some reason, as good as these personality cuts are- and they are super fine in print; I still find them BETTER in the visuals than I do in the word forms of Camilleri novels. MUCH is lost in the lack of facial and hand expression, IMHO. And the "looseness" of the station in general. (All of that double door opening and closing ritual, for instance.) Although Camilleri is a genius with the words that DO portray some depth of the nuance. The television series that you can obtain filmed in Italy with English subtitles (he writes approvals) IS AWESOME. I've seen every single one- and some of them are difficult to obtain through loan sources. I think at this point, nearly two dozen. Each is a 80-90 minute Italian production- down to a T duplication of the novels. Plus that BEACH!!

Bureaucracy blocks everything as usual and individual skirting the "rules" triumphs in numerous small and feminine causes, in particular. Everybody constantly lies about where they are eating too, as usual. But eventually the nest of the title is raided through some long ago letters. And emptied by confession and a suicide. This particular family's nest makes the Corleone's look a standard issue bird box in comparison.
