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Diorio's "Return to Bella Terra" (book review)

Gary R. Averill

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Book Reviews



Diorio, M. (2016). *Return to Bella Terra*. Merchantville, NJ: Top Notch Books. 244 pp. \$14.99. ISBN 9780930037246

This is the third book in the Italian Chronicles series. One does not need to read the other two since she fills in the missing information. This is not a romance though at times she does overdo the emotional words used. This is about Maria, who after eight years in America has to go back to Sicily to see her dying mother. It is set in the early 20th century. It is a story of forgiveness and letting go. She has to deal with the regret of coming to America; possibly losing the family farm and her son; her son connecting with her rapist, his father; and, her son wanting to go back to Sicily to marry a woman whose mother she does not like. The underlying theme is that no human can do this alone, it must be done with Christ. Her description of Christian regeneration is incredibly well done though for those who have not gone through the process may find it unbelievable. It is easy to see that the author has drawn on her experience as a biblical counselor and life coach. She also has questions, on forgiveness for example, for group discussions at the end of the book. Ms. Diorio, PhD, MFA is an award-winning author who has written books on God (children and adult), literature, and romance among others. This book is based on her paternal grandfather and others who came to America to start a new life. It is fiction but under all the words it is an easy to read self-help book that takes a hard look at issues Christian women face.

Reviewer

Gary R. Averill