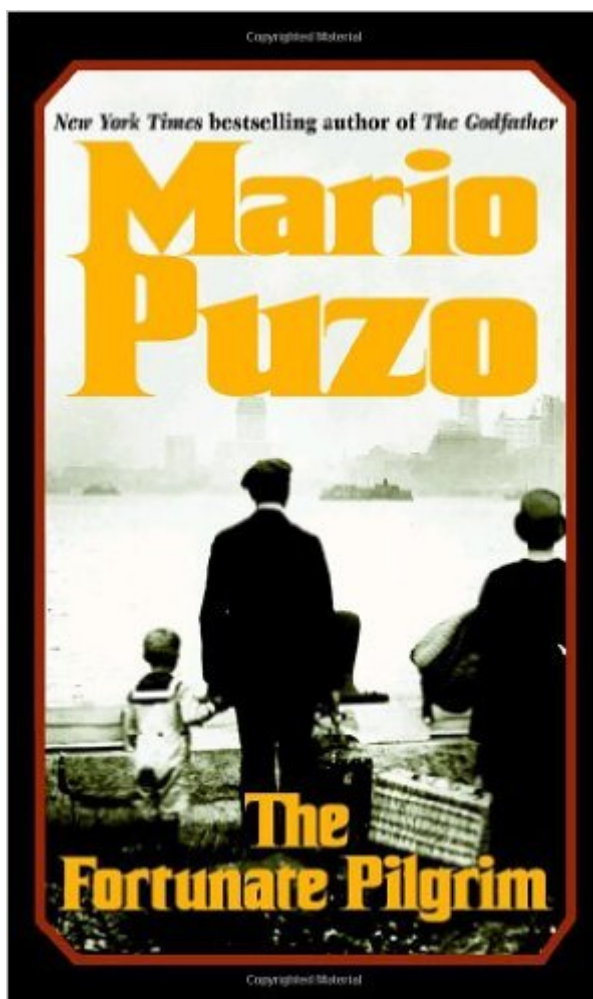


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The Fortunate Pilgrim



Synopsis

Before *The Godfather* and *The Last Don*, there was Puzo's classic story about the loves, crimes and struggles confronted by one family of New York City immigrants living in Hell's Kitchen. Fresh from the farms in Italy, Lucia Santa struggles to hold her family together in a strange land. At turns poignant, comic and violent, and with a new preface by the author, *The Fortunate Pilgrim* is Italian-American fiction at its very best. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mario Puzo feels that this novel, written before *THE GODFATHER* or any of his more popular novels, is superior to them all. In a creative sense, *THE FORTUNATE PILGRIM* is the parent, and the rest of his books are the offspring. In the hands of someone like Puzo, the creative process is a wonderful thing to observe. He relates how he set out to write a novel in which he was the hero and the rest of his family were villains who wanted to stifle his writing career; and how, stalwart young man that he was, he succeeded in spite of them and the stumbling blocks they placed in his path. He was unable to write this version of his life, not even as fiction. Truth and the memory of the strength of the woman who reared him wouldn't allow him to deny the impact she had on his life. Puzo wrote, but not what he had planned, or even what he thought he was writing. At some point he realized that the book wasn't about himself. It was about his mother. *THE FORTUNATE PILGRIM*'s Lucia Santa is the personification of Puzo's mother and this book is her book as surely as if she'd written it herself. When we read about Lucia Santa's life in Hell's Kitchen, a single mother

as we would call her today, as she raises six children, we are constantly amazed at her strength. Her oldest son becomes a Mafia Union Organizer (read strong arm man and collector of "protection" money) against her will. But Lucia Santa prevails. Her daughter spends six months in a sanitorium for her lungs and comes home too assimilated for Lucia Santa's taste. But Lucia Santa prevails. One of her sons commits suicide. But Lucia Santa prevails. One tragedy follows on the heels of another. But Lucia Santa prevails.

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