



## The Family

By Mario Puzo

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### The Family By Mario Puzo

“Dazzling, passionate, a masterwork that ranks with Puzo’s best.”  
—Nicholas Pileggi, author of *Wiseguys*

“One of his most satisfying works....A thoroughly entertaining posthumous present from one of the masters of popular fiction.”  
—*Booklist*

Mario Puzo’s final masterwork. A sweeping epic saga of corruption, greed, treachery, and sin, *The Family* is the ultimate crowning achievement of the #1 *New York Times* bestselling novelist who gave the world *The Godfather*, arguably the greatest Mafia crime novel ever written. In *The Family*, Puzo—whom the *Washington Post* calls, “A serious American talent”—plunges reader into the colorful tumult of the Italian Renaissance, immersing them in the roiling intrigues and deadly affairs of the remarkable family whose name has always been synonymous with power, corruption, poison, and murder: the infamous Borgias.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Before his death in [1999], Puzo (*The Last Don*) had begun work on a novel featuring the 15th-century Borgias, whom he regarded as "the original crime family." There are obvious parallels between the Borgias and the Corleone clan immortalized in *The Godfather*, but the resemblances are mostly superficial, at least as they are presented in this limp historical romance. The story opens with Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia manipulating papal elections in 1492 to become the new Pope Alexander. Determined to establish a family dynasty, he appoints his son Cesare cardinal in his stead and, after a strategically engineered episode of incest between siblings Cesare and Lucrezia, begins ruthlessly eliminating rivals and marrying his children into alliances with the offspring of noble families of France and Spain. But Cesare would rather be a soldier, and Lucrezia would rather marry for love; these conflicted desires contribute as much as risky political power plays to undoing the Borgias in a single generation. Though Gino (Puzo's companion, author of *Then an Angel Came*) is credited for the posthumous completion, Puzo's true collaborator is history, and it proves a difficult partner. Obligated not to deviate from known facts, the narrative whizzes methodically through highlights of the Renaissance, embellishing events with snatches of imagined dialogue, purple prose ("For love can steal free will using no weapons but itself") and cameos by Machiavelli, Michelangelo and da Vinci. Overwhelmed by the vast pageant of events, the characters never achieve dramatic stature. Puzo's diehard fans will surely put the novel on their summer hit list, but they may feel, in Sonny Corleone's words, that "this isn't personal, it's business." Major ad/promo; simultaneous HarperAudio and Large Print edition.

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From Library Journal

Much will probably be made of this last novel by the celebrated author of *The Godfather* and a slew of other gangster novels. After Puzo's death in [1999], this historical fiction was completed by Carol Gino, his companion. The subject is the misunderstood family Borgia, who were sometimes malevolent, always maligned, and mostly political part Clintons, part Kennedys, part Sopranos. Spaniard Rodrigo Borgia becomes Pope Alexander VI and moves into the Vatican with his mistresses and children. Alexander deeply loves yet still controls his offspring, including the ambitious and handsome warrior Cesare, who wants to shed his cardinal robes to lead the papal army in conquest of central Italy; the sweet but flawed Lucretia, whose incestuous relationship with Cesare raises eyebrows; and lusty Juan, who carries on with the wife of little brother Jofre, who in turn becomes murderously jealous. Most of the melodramatic murder and mayhem comes straight out of the history books, but the characters lack depth, with their motivations only mildly explored. This late 15th-century family's story is more soap opera than serious treatment of the troubled dynasty that influenced the Renaissance.

- David Nudo, formerly with "Library Journal"

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From [Booklist](#)

When Mario Puzo died in 1999, he had spent 15 years or so, on and off, working on this novel about the Borgias: Rodrigo, who became Pope Alexander VI, and his famously villainous offspring, Cesare and Lucrezia. Puzo put a lot of work into the story, and it shows: this posthumously published tale is one of his most satisfying novels in a long, long time, far superior to most of his recent work. The saga is lush, full of detail, with characters who manage to be larger than life while seeming entirely realistic. The dialogue is slightly ornamented but never clumsy, and the plot is appropriately epic in scope, mixing fact and fiction seamlessly. Families, of course, were Puzo's signature theme, and in the fifteenth-century Vatican he finds a

family as complex and multitextured as the Corleones. The book was completed by Puzo's companion, novelist Carol Gino, but its tone is pure Puzo, start to finish. A thoroughly entertaining posthumous present from one of the masters of popular fiction. *David Pitt*

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