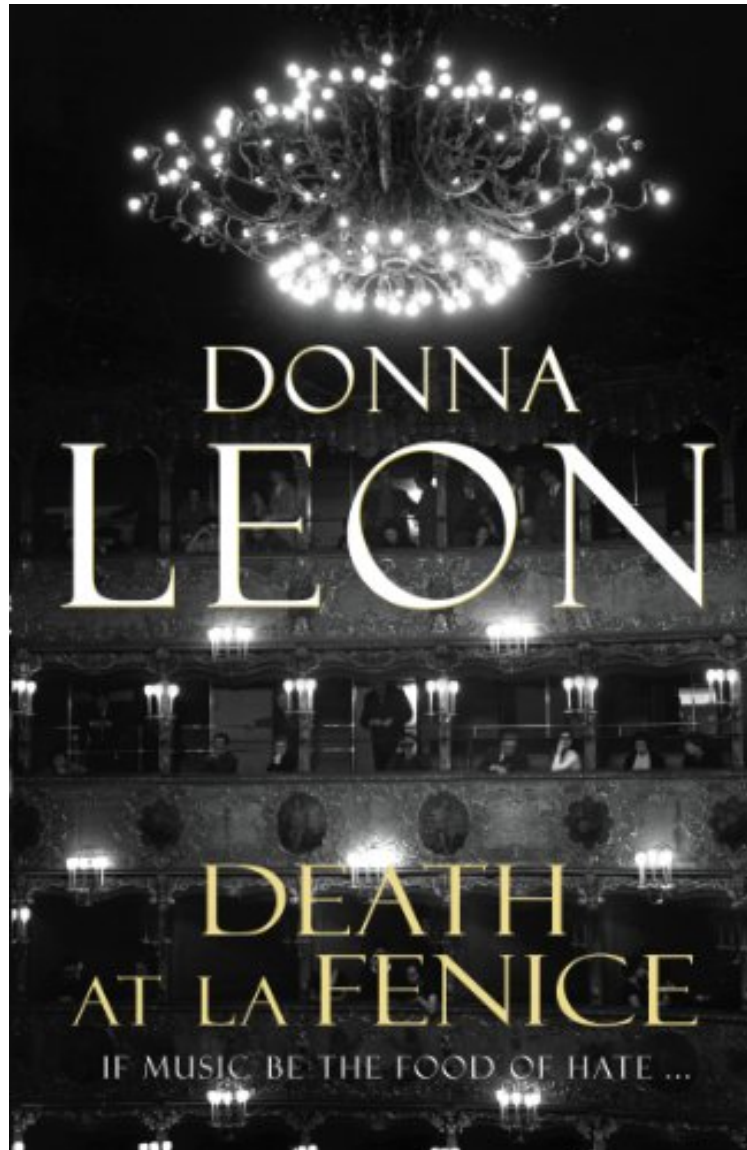


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## Death at La Fenice: (Brunetti 1)

*Von Donna Leon*

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**Von Donna Leon : Death at La Fenice: (Brunetti 1)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Death at La Fenice: (Brunetti 1):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen8 von 8 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Leon debuts with outstanding thriller!Von Billy J. HobbsVenice is for lovers, or so they say. It is also the setting in this thriller, the first of a series by Donna Leon, titled "Death at La Fenice." La Fenice is the name of Venice's famed opera house and in this novel, death is the event de jour, as a well-known German conductor Helmut Wellauer is found dead

in his dressing room, shortly before he was to conduct "La Traviata." Of course, the show must go on. Of course, the police must be called. And we are introduced to Guido Brunetti, vice-commissario of police in Venice. He's also a brilliant detective. With suspects galore, Brunetti finds the early going to be confusing and not all what the "facts" may seem. In Brunetti, Donna Leon has created the quintessential police detective. He is a man whom we are proud to call an acquaintance as we follow his trail in all the Leon books. She describes him: "He was a surprisingly neat man: tie carefully knotted, hair shorter than was the fashion; even his ears lay close to his head, as if reluctant to call attention to themselves. His clothing marked him as Italian. The cadence of his speech announced that he was Venetian. His eyes were all policeman." Leon, in addition to being a first rate novelist, has been an American English teacher aboard, and healthy international sales have made her vision of Venice well known. She seems to love the city, but with an attitude that shows her feet are on the ground. She lets Brunetti characterize the city: "And then he was at the water's edge, the bridge to his right. How typically Venetian it was, looking, from a distance, lofty and ethereal but revealing itself, upon closer reflection, to be firmly grounded in the mud of the city." One of the chief suspects is diva and prima donna soprano Flavia Petrelli, who certainly has motive, and is high on Brunetti's list. Flavia, along with her American archeologist and companion Brett Lynch, present more than a conundrum to Brunetti. (We are re-introduced to them in a later book *Acqua Alta*.) This is no easy crime for the commissario to solve. Leon creates, certainly, one of the best police procedurals of the last decade. Her books are hard to come by in the U.S., but she has a large following in international circles, especially in Germany and in England. While it is not necessary to read her books in order, naturally, her progression moves more smoothly when done so. "Death at La Fenice" is pure symphony and not a note is to be missed. Billyjohbbs@tyler.net2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Crime and Justice Von Donald Mitchell Most of us think of crime and punishment as being linked. Donna Leon makes the case for justice following crime instead of punishment in this interesting debut novel in the Guido Brunetti series. Where in most mystery novels, the story focuses on the crime or the investigation, *Death at La Fenice* instead develops the victim's character as its primary focus. Many fictional detectives consider knowing about the victim to be essential, but few mysteries pretty much focus on that one element to the exclusion of most other elements. I like character development, but I thought this approach was a little flawed in that without tapes, documents, and other character-created evidence you cannot really learn very much about a person who isn't alive during most of the story. I liked the way that Venice played a role beyond being simply context by helping to define the story and the crime. As someone who loves Venice very much, a good part of the joy of this book came for me in references to locations I have visited. Guido Brunetti is a most appealing detective. He's more like the private eyes in noir stories than he is a Venice police commissario, but that's all to the good. His family situation, being married to the daughter of a Venetian count, Paolo, also makes for amusing complications which are nicely developed in this story. The crime is also offbeat enough to arouse interesting speculations among curious readers. During a performance of *La Traviata*, the opera's conductor, the world-famous Helmut Wellauer, is found dead after the second intermission. While hundreds had access to kill him, who had motive? It turns out that many had good motives. So how do you boil it down to find the criminal? That's quite difficult. Donna Leon plays fair and gives you all the clues you need to figure out what actually happened. From there, you'll have to decide what you would do. Those who love opera will also enjoy the references to what makes for good opera and the politics behind the performances. If you like to think of bureaucracies as inept and filled with incompetents, you'll enjoy meeting Guido's boss, Vice-Questore Giuseppe Patta. The relationship between Patta, the buffoon, and Brunetti is filled with much good humor that plays on Patta's strong inclination to do no work and to receive all credit for any successes. The book's main drawback is that Wellauer is someone you won't have much sympathy for, and you'll enjoy even less learning about his bad habits. I'm sure that many crime victims are equally undesirable, but the novel labors a bit more than it might have with a victim about whom you could feel more neutral. There are many fine novels in this series, and I do recommend you read this one. After all, you want to understand the context for the series don't you? Ah, Venice! 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Death goes to the opera! Von Billy J. Hobbs In "Death at La Fenice" Donna Leon, an American author and former English teacher, begins one of the most exciting police procedural series around today. She is an immense success in Europe, where her works are now in great translation (and demand). Ms Leon not only writes about Venice but actually lives there. Her love for the city shows--and she pulls no punches as she gives us this ages-old city a sign of true love. She also introduces us to one of the most exciting police detectives in modern fiction. In Vice-Commissario Guido Brunetti we find a brilliant mind, a sensitive soul, a man determined to follow a moral, just, and honest road (in Venice yet!). *La Fenice* happens to be the name of Venice's world-renowned opera house, an excellent setting for this introductory novel. An internationally recognized German conductor, Helmut Wellauer, is found dead in his dressing room, shortly before the performance "La Traviata," which he is to conduct. With deliberate pacing, Leon sets us up for the story to follow. Enter Brunetti. And with an introduction like this, who can reject him! A chief suspect is operatic diva soprano Flavia Petrelli. Because of their differences of artistic opinion, she has the motive. Flavia and her American archeologist and companion Brett Lynch pose as a puzzle to Brunetti. With her command of the story, Leon leads us to an exciting conclusion--but perhaps this conclusion is not so important as the fact that she has introduced us to Brunetti, his wife Paula, and his children. Brunetti's relationship to and with the city of Venice is energizing and

readers who care to follow this book will find Leon's objectives convincing. Plus, she writes a very good story!

**Kurzbeschreibung** The twisted maze of Venice's canals has always been shrouded in mystery. Even the celebrated opera house, La Fenice, has seen its share of death ... but none so horrific and violent as that of world-famous conductor, Maestro Helmut Wellauer, who was poisoned during a performance of La Traviata. Even Commissario of Police, Guido Brunetti, used to the labyrinthine corruptions of the city, is shocked at the number of enemies Wellauer has made on his way to the top - but just how many have motive enough for murder? The beauty of Venice is crumbling. But evil is one thing that will never erode with age. **Pressestimmen** "Praise for Through A Glass, Darkly: Venetian life, and Brunetti's model marriage, are as entertaining as the working out of the whodunit. A joy from start to finish." (Evening Standard) "One of Venice's greatest contemporary chroniclers... The smells, flavours, sights and sounds all come flooding to life. Even though the first crime doesn't happen until well over halfway through, but this doesn't dampen its page-turning appeal... Once again, Leon has her finger on the pulse." (Henry Sutton Daily Mirror) "Operatic brilliance... Donna Leon appears to have the knack of keeping her Venice-set Brunetti books as fresh as paint. Through A Glass, Darkly, like all her work, has the exuberance of a Puccini opera." (Independent) "A wholly absorbing read." (Sunday Telegraph) "Praise for Blood From A Stone: 'The fabulous Donna Leon' Antonia Fraser in the Spectator" **Werbetext** The first instalment in the critically acclaimed crime fiction Commissario Brunetti series by bestselling author Donna Leon.