

A Taste of Italia

Italia Maria DeRose carried with her an alluring grace and air of self-confidence that belied her tragic orphan status. It was on one particularly chilling, fog-drenched afternoon that Italia's parents, her only living family, were killed in a terrible automobile accident. Their Fiat Tempra had turned a sharp bend on a stretch of country mountain road much faster than it should have. It was a brand new addition to the small DeRose family and Italia's father wanted to stretch its legs on the open road. His line of sight had been interrupted as he casually navigated the family wagon around a series of tight bends, so he did not see the massive lumber-hauling truck coasting along just ahead. The impact was horrendous, crunching the once jutting nose of the Fiat flat.

Seatbelts kept all three passengers safe - that is until one of the hulking lumber logs snapped loose from its straps and hurled through the windshield. Italia's father got in the way of its determined trajectory and his head popped off his neck like a cherry off its stem. His caved-in face stuck stubbornly to the end of the log and flew over little Italia's own head, clearing it by mere inches. She cried as blood from the base of her father's severed head splattered her rosy-cheeked face and pretty white dress. Her mother screamed hysterically, but that only lasted until the mammoth log swung around on its own momentum of death and smacked the side of her face. Her neck broke with a sickening snap and her head flopped down like a flaccid dick.

The family wagon had reared up and swung sideways and its rear end dangled dangerously over the mountain cliff. Italia tried to reach over and open the door on the other side to get out, but retreated her hand when the car crept even closer to tipping over and careening the hundred feet or so down into the dense, foreboding forest below. She remained motionless and

terrified for hours, huddled in the car's corner, drawing in on herself for little warmth and shivering helplessly as afternoon wound its way into unsettling evening.

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“Are you alright, babe?” A man's voice brought the twenty-five year old Italia out of her haunting childhood memory.

“Yeah, I’m fine,” she said while bent over on a stainless steel carving table and getting pumped doggie style in the backroom of Tony’s Primo Meats.

“I only ask because you were shivering...” The man was young, handsome and hung like a *Paco Cavallo*.

“I said I’m fine!”, she snapped. “Shut up and fuck me!”

He obeyed and entered, as did a burly, balding man with more dark hair above his fat lip than on his rash-red pate. On each of his great shoulders he carried a good-sized crate marked SWEET ITALIAN SUASAGE - Sorrento, It.

“The shipment came in early, *amore mio*,” the heavyset man said gleefully as he began lowering the crates one at a time onto the floor. “Thought I’d make us some lunch and give it a try...” He looked up briefly to see what his wife, the lovely Italia, was up to and the second crate slipped from his beastly fingers, splitting wide open. A dozen jars burst open and pickled sweet sausage spilled out amid a sea of brownish-yellow brine. These would later be gathered up and sold at half-price, of course.

While the handsome man was fumbling to corral his third leg, the burly man grabbed him by his scrawny neck, dragged him into the meat freezer and raised him up onto a meat hook. Its dagger-like barb dug deep into the fucker’s flesh, but his screams were quickly cut off by the closing of the air-tight door.

The burly man picked up a menacing cleaver from a nearby chopping block with the grace of the practiced butcher that he was. His face red with rage, he found his cheating wife huddled in a corner, shivering, just as she had done as a child. This time it would not keep her alive.

The next morning, the heavysset man, wearing a large apron stained red with gore, whistled cheerfully as he placed a small sign above a sizeable tray of heart-shaped meatballs. The tray was proudly displayed front and center of the meat shop's display case and the sign read: Polpette Speciale di **Italia** - *Fresh Ground!* They were quite delectable morsels and sold like mad.