

THE POET, THE COUNT AND THE PEDDLER

A GRIPPING AND GRITTY TALE OF INTRIGUE, WONDER, AND LOVE

ONCE IN A WHILE SOMEONE FIGHTS BACK!

Leaving an oppressed and poverty stricken Sicily, nine-year-old Mario Ferrara and his family begin a new life in what they believe is the Promised Land. However, the American dream soon becomes tainted. Living in New York's Little Italy affords the Sicilian immigrants opportunity but brings with it a struggle against discrimination and injustice.

Decades later, an Italian witch-hunt spearheaded by a relentless congressman sows seeds of rebellion in Mario's heart. He becomes exasperated by the riots and violence of the turbulent '60s, a time when growing discontent due to racial turmoil culminates in a fierce civil rights movement and anger over a deadly Vietnam war gives rise to a mass movement in opposition to the government.

Tormented by the chaos of the times and driven by a strong sense of heritage and his love of *la famiglia*, Mario takes on the fight against the power, greed, and corruption in business, government, religion, and society. This revolutionary man's tenacious persistence threatens his life and all he holds dear—his family and his friends.

A vindictive prosecutor, a manipulative businessman, and a ruthless cardinal tied to the Vatican Bank are out to destroy him. His efforts to right wrongs drag him deeper into an abyss of conflict. Disorder and betrayal lead to a tumultuous murder trial rising out of prejudice and fear.

His dreams transport him to the depths of hell and to the wonderful, mystical and fantastic lands he had heard of in childhood. These journeys reshape his rebellious idealism in mysterious ways.

Never giving up his quest for liberty, Mario "the peddler" passionately dares to challenge the very fabric of society's traditions, institutions, and belief systems. Is he a quixotic figure, fighting windmills of his mind, or a dauntless hero, fighting a very real battle?