



The Proof

Cheryl Colwell

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Shrouded in mystery, a precious relic known as Il Testamento, or The Proof, circulated among the early Christians for centuries. Before their deaths, its guardians hid it from their adversaries, leaving only a crude map of its location.

For centuries, it lay in darkness. Until now. Reports of its existence have resurfaced, inciting an ancient rivalry between a ruthless group that seeks to destroy it, and a secret association that lusts for its power.

Summoned to Siena by a grandfather he has never met, Gabriel Dolcini is thrust into a dark maze of danger. And into his divine destiny.

The Proof Details

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From Reader Review The Proof for online ebook

James says

"The Proof" is a well-written, interesting story with flashbacks into the Middle Ages of an Italian family's history. There is also a hint of romance to help hold the reader's attention. Some people might classify this novel as Christian fiction, but I think that would be valid only from a Catholic perspective. I note that some other reviewers have down-rated the book because of its being "preachy" at times, but I did not find that aspect to be a negative factor at all. I felt that excellent points were made in those sections, especially regarding the tendency of Catholicism to worship relics rather than Christ and the near certainty of hierarchical religions becoming corrupt. Christ is the only Head of the Church, and humans are almost always corrupted by power, whether political, financial, or religious. The author has done an excellent job of research, and I thoroughly enjoyed the story. I look forward to reading more of her works. She provided a Cast of Characters in the book, a helpful tool not often seen in fictional works. I appreciated this feature, which helped me keep the rather complex storyline straight.

Gayle Pace says

MY VIEW

I found THE PROOF to be a very interesting story about the relic, THE PROOF. I loved the mystery of the map of its location which was left by the guardians of the relic. I found the resurfacing of the relic interesting as the rivalry started all over again. The one side wanted to destroy it and the other side, a secret association wants the power it can give. Gabriel Dolcini is into a dark dangerous maze. This led him into a destiny that he isn't sure of. I found it rather disturbing, even though I know of it, that Catholics worship ruins and the relics found in them. Shouldn't God be the one that is worshipped?

There was so much truth in the corruption that occurs by power. It doesn't matter what kind of power, financial, politics or religion. Power takes over people. It changes them and sometimes that change is a very dark, ugly person that comes from it. A person can't be head of a church. Christ is Head of the Church and only Christ. It appears to me that we have such a split in the religions, one is overwhelmed with power and their growth of the thing they worship. I'm not usually much on reading books on religion, but I did find this book fascinating and interesting. The author must have done a good deal of research for this book. I thought the book would be a "Preachy" book. I was wrong. It was more of a lesson. I thought the Cast of Characters was a good part of the book. It helped to keep everybody straight in your mind. If you wanted to, you could go back and see the relationships of the characters. I would recommend this book to anyone who love historic settings, mystery, suspense and adventure then this book will entice you.. I felt the book's cover added to the intrigue of the book. It draws you into it.

I was given a complimentary copy of THE PROOF from the author Cheryl Colwell and the publisher through BookCrash for my view of the book. No other compensation was received.

Donald White says

Is the story of an ancient Christian relic actually true? What is the nature of this relic, and where could it be found? How did a West Coast art professor become thrust into a tumultuous world of religion, conspiracy, and secret societies? When the stakes are highest, can Gabe trust those closest to him? And will he ever overcome the guilt of his childhood tragedy? Religious intrigue, international scope, ancient clues, power and faith, you'll find all this and more in a story that spans centuries. My friend Cheryl Colwell wrote a book that should make Dan Brown and Umberto Eco jealous. I highly recommend *The Proof*.

Rayleigh says

All that I can say is, "It's already over?!?!?" I could not put this book down from the time I started it, to late last night! This book is a great size too! It is tall and thick!

As for the storyline, it was absolutely gripping and amazing! I loved the suspense and the characters, and everything! You never knew who to trust, and those closest to the main characters turned out to be enemies while enemies became allies! The end was totally unpredicted and *The Proof* is full of plot twists that will keep you on the edge. As I read this, it kind of reminded me of *The Spanish Civil War Trilogy* by Tricia Goyer and the movie *National Treasure*, kind of the same storyline, kind of. Anyone who loves historical fiction dripping with suspense will love this book and I am so going to buy the rest of Cheryl's books!!

*Awesome Note!: I got my book in the mail and found an unexpected surprise.....Cheryl autographed my book for me! I was so excited and now that I've finished the book, it is one of my most prized books!!!!

Things I Would Rather Not Mention.....

Even though this book is amazing, there are a few things I need to mention in order for this review to be completely honest. One, the graphic detail of certain murders(yes, there are several) would be hard on anyone under 13 and maybe even some 13-year-olds'. Two, this book had a few issues that made it kind of hard to read, such as failing to indent paragraphs and left out quite a few quotation marks, making it hard to know who was talking and causing me to reread a page a couple of times. This is not a major issue and does not make me change my opinion of the story itself, but some people might find this very annoying.

"I received this book from the publisher for the purpose of this review. All comments and opinions are my own."

Jennifer Clausen-greene says

Amazing story, filled with mystery and suspense. Could not put this book down. I love conspiracy and secret society books, they are fascinating and captivating. This book did not let me down once. It draws you in with the cover to pique your curiosity and keeps going from there. I love getting these books and researching the truth from the fiction within, really gets the blood going. Plus you learn some more about history that you never knew.

I loved the characters. You could tell how much time and effort were put into breathing life into them. You

got attached, you could relate, your heart broke for them. Just really great character development that made the book with strong family bonds that you cannot ignore.

The maps-really need I say more. No secret society/conspiracy is complete without some great awe inspiring ruggedly drawn maps that frustrate you, inspire you and lead you all at once. Plus the story is set in Italy so you get this wonderful imagery throughout that makes you feel like you were transported within the story.

Easy book to recommend to art lovers, history buffs and all those that love a great mystery and conspiracy.

I received a free copy of this book/Ebook/Product to review. I was not required to write a positive review nor was I compensated in any other way. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the FTC Regulations. I am part of Bookcrash Review Crew

Phillip Cole says

Gabe Dolcini travels to Italy to visit his grandfather and gain contacts in the art world. He hopes to earn enough money to pay off a loan, but he ends up in a tangle of mystery while searching for a historical artifact, love, and forgiveness in Cheryl Colwell's *The Proof*.

Most people will be able to find something they like (probably more than one thing) in the book. It has mystery, suspense, intrigue, art, history, and several other elements that draw the reader in. On top of it all, Christ's death and resurrection, along with God's forgiveness are very evident in the story.

Colwell did an excellent job in creating a story with characters that can be related to. Gabe's feeling of guilt, anger, resistance to forgive others, all of them make him seem more real, more like we are in our lives.

The action stayed constant through the story, and there were many twists that changed the direction of events and kept me wondering what was coming next. Some might find it a little slow to start, but all the events that happen in the beginning reappear later on, and have a role in how the story unfolds.

I think Colwell has written a great book that is not only entertaining, but also shares the gospel with the reader.

I received a free copy from the publisher as part of BookCrash, but that in no way influenced my opinion of *The Proof*.

Janice Spina says

The Proof is an enjoyable and adventurous read that kept me on the edge of my seat. The protagonist, Gabriel (Gabe) Dolcini is a starving artist who strives to do all he can to make a living with the paintings. He enters a competition but receives second place much to his and others' surprise. When he receives a letter from his grandfather, whom he never met, to come for a visit to Siena, Italy he jumps at the chance to start a new life. He is tormented by his past and the death of his sister while on a climbing trip which his father blamed on him. Gabe was just a young boy at the time and suffered from a fear of heights during the climb. He blamed himself for not reacting soon enough to help his sister when she fell to her death.

When Gabe arrives in Italy he realizes that his grandfather has more on his mind than just getting to know his estranged grandson. He is embroiled in an adventure that can prove to be dangerous to both of them. It involves a map, letters dating back to the days of the Knights of Templar and Christ and a religious relic called Il Testamonte, the proof. There are many twists and turns and unsuspecting villains that kept this story moving at a fast pace.

The Proof was a thoroughly enjoyable read that touched my heart and left me feeling emotional to say the least. It was a lovely story by a creative and talented author. I look forward to reading more from Cheryl Colwell.

Laura says

The Proof by Cheryl Colwell is a never-ending ride of puzzles, intrigue and danger that will keep you guessing until the very end.

Gabriel Dolcini is a tortured artist in debt. Haunted by the memories of his sister's death he accepts an invitation from his wealthy grandfather in Italy. A man he has never met.

But his grandfather is the keeper of a precious relic known as Il Testamento, or The Proof, circulated among the early Christians for centuries. Before their deaths, its guardians hid it from their adversaries, leaving only a crude map of its location.

But now reports of its existence have resurfaced, inciting an ancient rivalry between a ruthless group that seeks to destroy it, and a secret association that lusts for its power.

Now, Gabriel is thrust into a dark maze of danger. And into his divine destiny.

The Proof is a well-written novel despite twists and turns that at times had me wondering how the author figured it all out, because I was frequently lost. Still, she did a very good job of keeping me interested and there were only a few things that threw me off.

At the beginning of the book there is a list of the characters which at first I found strange because you don't often find that in novels. But then I realized the wisdom in it. The cast of characters was long - too long, making the book confusing and hard to follow. Just when I thought I had a handle on things, someone else was introduced. However, to be fair, this book needed that large cast of characters. It wouldn't have worked otherwise. But this, combined with the mystery surrounding the relic, had me frequently re-reading pages to keep track of everything. Not an easy thing to do with an eBook. However, the author still managed to weave a tale full of excitement and suspense.

It was unfortunate that she did not invest in a good proofreader, as quotation marks were often missing around dialogue making an already confusing book even more so. In addition, the love story between Gabriel and Livia seemed a bit contrived. Perhaps it was because of the mystery of Livia. You never really get to know who she is or trust her, therefore her interaction with Gabriel isn't really believable. Or perhaps because at that point in the story, there was just too much going on already. However, despite that, she still managed to keep me glued to the pages until the very end.

The book reminded me of Dan Brown's The Da Vinci Code, full of twists, turns, murders and puzzles to

solve. With one very different aspect - the author brilliantly manages to include the importance of faith in Christ.

If you love mysteries with a lot of action you will appreciate this book. I give it 4/5 stars.

Lisa Cobb Sabatini says

I won The Proof by Cheryl Colwell from Goodreads.

The Proof is a quest story. The object of the quest is an unspecified religious relic that one family has taken upon itself to protect at all costs, even though the current members of the bloodline don't know where it is nor actually what it is; they know only that this relic proves their faith. Like any good quest story, there are others who are searching for this relic, and their reasons are suspect, if not outright evil.

In addition to the family members who are the self-proclaimed guardians of the relic, there are two other factions whose members will use any means, including murder, to obtain the relic. The members of these factions are culled from the police force, political hierarchy, and the clergy of the very faith involved. The novel showcases the tendency of religious leaders to manipulate the faithful, and for followers of one ideology to stop at nothing in their efforts to force their beliefs on others. The story also exposes how easily power corrupts and the dangerous climate created by those who believe they are chosen by God for any purpose.

As the quest unfolds, there are a handful of visions and other magic among the protagonists, and a great deal of callous brutality among the antagonists. Yet, the antagonists are extremely one-dimensional. The story would be that much richer if the motivations of the antagonists are more fully explored.

The quest has a good amount of intrigue, of successes and missteps, and Colwell does a good job of creating doubt in the reader's mind about who is trustworthy. In the end, however, I wondered who among the "good guys" was truly good. Lovers of quest stories will enjoy the tale, especially Christian readers. Non-Christian readers should prepare themselves for an ending to the current-day portion of the book that is more sermon than satisfaction.

Deb says

If you want an amazing, suspenseful, good read you must pick up and read The Proof by Cheryl Colwell.

I really wasn't sure what to expect when I got this book. I was afraid that it would be a let down to read but boy oh boy was I wrong. Cheryl Colwell knows how to spin a story and make you want to go along with her on that roller coaster ride. She has a way of painting a picture with her words that makes you feel like you could step right into the palazzo or library right along with Gabe and Louis, or the cave when they are looking for the relic. You feel Gabe's hurt when he has been betrayed by those he thought he could trust as well as Louis' pain when he thinks Gabe has rejected God. One plus to this book is how Cheryl Colwell takes you back to when the relic is first given to the Dolcini ancestor to take back and to protect. It adds an extra depth to the story that makes you understand how important the quest and relic are. This book keeps you intrigued and captivated to the very end and the twists in the plot and then the ending is a surprise and one that you will not see coming. I loved the book and would recommend it to all who love a good thriller and mystery.

That is not all this book is though. Yes it is a mystery thriller but it is also a book of Faith, forgiveness, redemption and love. Gabe is fighting the demons and hate from his past. He has made some really wrong decisions and now self doubt, self loathing and hatred for how his father abused him and treated him has driven him to Italy and his Grandfather. Gabe finds a Grandfather that loves him but also wants him to help him on the family quest to find the relic that the family was entrusted to keep safe centuries ago. Gabe gets caught in the middle of this quest and all the danger that goes with it. He is also taken back when his Grandfather shows him forgiveness and love, he can't really comprehend this until he lets go of his anger and hate. It is also about Gabe's quest to end his anger, hate and let go of the hurt so he can truly love and accept God's forgiveness and love.

This is definitely a book you won't want to miss reading. I highly recommend it and give it 5 Stars. People who like a thriller that involves the Templar's, Dead Knights, the Soci and true Believers in God mixed with a quest, love, Faith and mystery then you have to read this book. One plus to this book is how Cheryl Colwell takes you back to when the relic is first given to the Dolcini ancestor to take back and protect. I adds an extra depth to the story that makes you understand how important the quest and relic are.

If you would like more information on the book or author check out these sites.

cherylcolwell.com
inspiredfictionbooks.com

I was provided this book by Inspired Fiction Books through BookCrash.com for my honest opinion and review.

Lia Burres says

After the relic lay in darkness for well over 800 years, there has been many looking to find the same relic. Different associations had been searching for it since the time it had gone missing. One called the soci, one called Primo Counsel and one other that had been created from the beginning to keep the relic hidden. The Templar had originally been enlisted to take it to the main church for it to be kept.

There were hired henchmen sent to retrieve the relic from the very beginning. Antonio was the only one that was left of the main protectors and was sure that it would come to an even more horrifying fate. Letters were sent to his wife, other letters were passed back and forth. Paintings were made.

800 years later, the letters were found in a centuries old family home. It belonged to a family that was the blood line of Antonio, one of the original protectors. Between all of the letters and three totally different paintings, one man sent to find his long lost grandson that he'd never met. When things added up, clues were put together and things made for a very wild ride to help with finding and retrieving the relic.

In conclusion of this book, I found it one of the most wonderful reads that had to do with the Knights Templar and it all began with the death of Jesus Christ. The relic was of the Alpha and the Omega. The book brought some light into a wonderful book, mixed with fiction and nonfiction alike.

I have to give this book a large 2 thumbs up and all the highest ratings it could possibly get. I highly recommend anyone that loves Christ, Knights Templar, and any theories that were part of the Bible when the Masons and all had began.

Ruth says

This book definitely keeps you guessing! Every time I thought I had this story figured out, I was wrong. Anyone who enjoys reading historical or suspenseful fiction will enjoy this book.

Gabe Dolcini never had the ideal family life. When his long-lost and infamous grandfather contacts him and says he can get Gabe's art on the Italian market, he jumps at the opportunity, hoping to leave some things in his old life behind. However, he quickly learns there are ulterior motives and that he can never truly leave his past. He is at first forcefully pulled into a century's old plot to find II Testamento, a supposed artifact that is proof of the reality of Jesus Christ. Gabe's life in the United States was a little on the boring side, life in Italy with his grandfather is anything but. Dangerous is more like it.

Gabe needs to make a lot of decisions throughout the book, such as who he can trust, how far he will go on this quest, killing to save his family, and whether he believes that Christ really exists and came to earth to be crucified for sinners, including himself.

His journey takes him to a point where he has to learn forgiveness for not only other people in his past, but also forgiveness for himself.

Special thanks go out to Inspired Fiction Books and author Cheryl Colwell for providing me with a copy of this book. I look forward to reading more of this author's work.

Beverly says

Cheryl Colwell's novel has multiple elements that make it a fascinating book to read. There is the time-honored foundation of historical fiction based on intrigue and fact in real history; there is the element of mystery--an unknown artifact has been referred to in freshly discovered ancient documents, something revered by early Christians, sought for by old and modern organizations for monetary reasons and fabled powers. The tale contains letters of ancient quests and trusts, a family in danger, murder, double-cross, and even a little romance. The suspense is thick, emotions run high among dysfunctional family members. Once you begin to read it, you won't want to put the book down.

Gabriel Dolcini's world was tightly focused on himself. The only family he had left was his mother and an unknown eccentric grandfather. Gabe had dedicated the past decade to perfecting his skills as an artist. He spared no expense to learn from the greatest masters. But in one fell swoop his house of cards collapsed. He became destitute and his mother's home was in jeopardy. A few months ago he'd received an invitation from his grandfather to visit him at his palazzo in Siena, Italy. He had no choice but to go and accept charity at his paternal grandparent's hand in spite of his mother's vehement objections.

One in Italy, Gabe saw that his grandfather was wealthier than he'd realized. He allowed the man to sponsor an exhibit of his art work in the palatial family home. From Gabe's point of view, things were beginning to

improve markedly for him as an artist. Many patrons viewed his work and claimed it to be brilliant. But then, shortly after the show, he learned of his relative's true motive for the invitation. His grandfather wanted Gabe to join him in some kind of ancient quest that most believed was just a myth. Louis Dolcini told him how a 12th century ancestor had been entrusted to carry an artifact from the first century to Seborga where monks would protect it. The quest had never been completed. The ancestral Dolcini had been killed by hired assassins. Louis wanted Gabe to help him finish the task. He had found a map, but had not found the artifact called *Il Testimento*. Gabe was not interested, but eventually got swept up in the intrigue as matters became complicated, their lives were threatened, and factions began coming out of the woodwork. It became difficult for the men to know who to trust. Even other members of the family seemed part of the deceptions around them. Gabe's safe, secure world seemed to blow up around him and he was unwillingly caught up in international intrigue completely out of his experience.

The reader gets drawn indirectly into the history of the Crusaders and the Knights Templar, secret Christian societies, powerful men's grab for more power by attempting to control gullible people through superstitions and secret rites, and modern day societies with the same end in mind. After awhile, it was difficult for me to tell the difference between the bad guys and the good guys. The author keeps us guessing who is trustworthy and not right up to the end. Complete revelation was often withheld to ramp up the suspense. Sometimes I found the large numbers of factions in competition with each other confusing. Violent deaths occurred frequently. At one point, the two main characters, Gabe and Livia, were thrown into a cistern and left to drown. The pace was hard-hitting and fast, especially in the second half of the book.

It seemed to me that there were two components of the spiritual element in this story: religious organizations and their influence on politics, and a more personal aspect of spirituality. I'm not overly enthralled with organized religion and its sub-culture, the in-fighting and its influence on groups of people, but I enjoyed reading about the personal spiritual journeys of the main characters in this book. I would have enjoyed more development and depth in the romance developing between Gabe and Livia. The moment most meaningful for me was when Gabe finally admitted to his grandfather that he no longer needed any proof to believe that God was real.

One of *The Proof's* greatest assets is the personal growth we witness in Gabe's life as the story progresses. The book introduces us to a Gabe who is insecure, self-focused, and intent on gaining self-approbation through his art work. Many of his inadequacies were laid at his feet by his cruel and embittered father. It took the full scope of the book to understand why and how his father became that way in the first place. But once Gabe grasped the whole story of this father's and grandfather's relationship, he was faced with decisions of his own. Would he reach out in forgiveness, or continue on the family legacy of anger, bitterness, and vengeance? Would his new found personal faith in God help him with this struggle?

I have to admit that at one point I set the book down and left it awhile. The complexity of the external issues was not nearly as compelling for me as the internal issues. But I'm glad I finally returned to the book and finished it. I gained a renewed enthusiasm and was swept up by the family dynamics, especially those between Gabe and Louis. It was gratifying to see the love develop between the two. I think this book will be especially appealing to those who enjoy religious politico thrillers and suspense.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received a copy of this book from Book Crash on behalf of the author. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Edythe Hamilton says

Gabriel (Gabe) Dolcini is an Art Professor at U.C. Santa Barbara and has nightmares seeing his sister Angelica killed in a mudslide during a hiking outing with his father for the past twenty-six years. In addition to his teaching profession, Gabe entered an art gallery competition hoping to win the coveted prize money to save his mother's home from foreclosure after he mortgaged it to finance his personal art instruction. Winning second place leaves Gabe in dire straits along with inappropriate conduct with a student allegations brought against him forcing an involuntary leave of absence and a long overdue visit to Italy to meet his rich grandfather Conte Louis Dolcini whom Gabe's father denied communication of any kind.

Louis arranges a private art gallery showing for all the top echelon from art collectors to grandioso museum curators presenting Gabe's artwork, which very well received. Meanwhile Louis has trouble convincing Gabe that his predestined future as a custodian of the "Il Testamento (The Proof)" proving that God lives and Jesus existed awaits him by seeking its recovery using an ancient map handed down by previous generations of Dolcini family members, but Gabe who lost his faith when Angelica has yet to regain it. Eventually, Gabe and his cousin Livia begin the search and face danger from modern day opposition groups Dead Knights associated with ancient organizations Knights Templar who want possession of the religious artifact to rule over multiple religious orders for monetary purposes while the Soci want to destroy the precious item to stop idolatry worshiping.

This novel intertwines fiction and non-fiction facts regarding the Knights of Templar and religious artifacts found believing that the items were in existence during and after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. This Christian fiction novel is very much worth the read as Cheryl Colwell conveys the story in a suspenseful and mysterious tactical approach leading to the last chapter, which brought tears to my eyes.

I received this novel from Book Crash in exchange for an honest unbiased opinion in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission guidelines.

Randy Kirk says

Scene development so clear you can almost reach out and touch the walls,

Cheryl Colwell's new novel, *The Proof*, did just about everything you could ever want a novel to do: Captivating characters who you came to care about and want to know more about; scene development that was so clear you could almost reach out and touch the walls; adventure (even including swords), that kept the pages turning as fast as possible; plot turns and twists that were surprising, yet believable; historic and geographic settings that were like travelogs and time machines in their clarity; and gentle teachings about both truth and character. Did I leave anything out that you hope to find in adventure fiction?

Oh! The writing! In truth that is often the missing ingredient in otherwise delightful Christian writing. Actually excellent writing is sometimes commonly missing in major best sellers like *Killing Jesus*. Cheryl is a seriously good writer. Bill O'reilly take note if you ever consider changing writing partners.

The book is primarily set in Italy, but the adventures take place over 20 centuries as a religious relic is fought over by good guys and thugs. The relic is believed to possess supernatural power, not just monetary value,

setting up the ongoing tension.

If you like mystery, suspense, adventure, and intrigue in historic settings, you can't possibly go wrong with *The Proof*.
