![Mussolini, Benito [Credit: H. Roger-Viollet]]()

BENITO MUSSOLINI

the Fascist Dictator

**by**

**Marguerite dar Boggia**

 Benito Mussolini was the dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1945. The American politicians were amazed at how quickly he established stability and prosperity in Italy. Even George Bernard Shaw, the playwright and writer admired him

 The victors of war and historians give their version of world events. They omit relevant facts. I hope to give a more coherent and accurate view of the events that led to the power of Mussolini, since my husband took part in the civil war that brought Mussolini to power at a time when Italy suffered political chaos and disarray due to the ravages of World War I.

 2Mussolini's father was a teacher and also a socialist. At the age of eighteen Mussolini obtained his certificate for teaching. He became a teacher. His reputation as a young sexual blade cost him his teaching contract. At the age of 26 he married Rachele Guidi. He had five children with her.

 He was idealistic. He believed Italy should be a republic and education should be universal. He disliked the Italian establishment of the Roman Catholic church and Italian monarchy. He joined the Italian Socialist Party and became the editor of their newspaper: "Avanti". He believed in war to achieve victory and its 'spoils'. The socialists believed in neutrality. They parted company.

 After the war in 1919-1920 general strikes and political unrest spread all around the country after the fall of the lira (dollar) in 1920. The communists were seeking control hoping to establish a government similar to Russia's. They were unorganized. They were burning the wheat fields. They were really vandals. They would enter a restaurant and refuse to pay because they believed in 'sharing and sharing alike'. My husband's father owned such a restaurant. One of these men after having eaten, threatened his father with a knife, just as my husband happened to enter the restaurant. My husband calmly lifted the heavy wooden door bolt and knocked the knife out of the hand of the attacker. That was when my husband at the age of 16 in 1920 gathered hundreds of men from the hills and created his own army. They joined the political group called "I Fasci di Combattimento," which Mussolini established in 1919. My husband said they were singing: "When we were children, our parents put us to bed. Now, we put our parents to bed." If they were caught by the communists, they were threatened to be boiled in oil. It was a vicious civil war. One of his men wanted to kill a priest who spoke against Mussolini. My husband saved the life of the priest by warning the priest's Mother to send her son out of town. The civil war lasted about one year. When my husband learned that the local politicians were favoring their relatives, he stormed their offices and threatened them: "We put you in power, and we can take you out of power!"

 The Fascist movement gained strength and momentum over the scuttlebutt of a Communist take-over. Mussolini promised his supporters a republic, but being practical, he settled for the monarchy. That was when many republican idealists deserted his cause, including my husband.

 During a parliamentary crisis in 1922, Mussolini marched on Rome without resistance or bloodshed. He valued strength and power. King Victor Emmanuel III appointed Mussolini Prime Minister. Mussolini's opponents were eliminated, as he controlled the press. He had complete control of the government.

 To raise the value of the lire, he told the CEO's of corporations that **their profits would be limited to only 10%.** That Italy would restore the glory of ancient Rome and would again become an EMPIRE. They appreciated that idea. If the corporations refused, then the government would take over the corporation. They acquiesced. He spoke to the heads of the unions. They were urged to cooperate in order to make Italy economically, politically, and socially great once again. He stressed power, the greatness of Italy and nationalism! He was exceedingly vain. He compared himself to Caesar.

 He cleaned the swamps that caused malaria. He favored the people and made certain that mothers had enough milk for their children. He raised the value of the lire in a few years. The people benefitted. The politicians in the U.S. were amazed and admired him. He was a semi-benevolent dictator. At one point when Hitler was about to take action against a country, Mussolini threatened Hitler.

 Italy had entered World War I on the side of the Allies, but after the war, when they were dividing up the 'pie' Mussolini felt that Italy was not promised the territories in Africa that were agreed upon. This really aroused his leonine PRIDE and Scorpio RESENTMENT. Some Scorpios have a long memory and tend not to forgive. *It was this dishonorable treatment that was the beginning of a festering wound that would sever his affiliation with the Allies and the later rapprochement with Hitler.*

 In 1930 Italy built a military base in Somalia on the border of Ethiopia. In 1934 a border dispute arose between Abyssinia (now called Ethiopia) and Italy. Mussolini was threatened with sanctions by the Allies. He justified invasion of Ethiopia to "suppress the practice of slavery". **Leaders always have an excuse to give to their people for a war.**

 In 1896 the Italian army suffered a defeat at the hands of an African army. This humiliation was too much to bear for Mussolini's inflated ego and national PRIDE. The Ethiopia border dispute propelled by revanchist sentiment, was an attempt to wipe away the shame of the earlier defeat against Ethiopia. **The arrogance and pride of superiority is the scourge of sanity. It can only lead to disaster and hopefully to lessons learned.**

 On Oct. 3, 1935 he gave a radio speech to his people declaring that "when Italy joined the Allies, it cost Italy six hundred thousand dead and when peace was being discussed around the table only the crumbs of a rich colonial booty were left for the Italians to pick up". He urged his people to fight for justice and victory. He was a magnetic and dynamic orator. His charisma and leonine fighting spirit, persuaded the people. They agreed with him. Every nation was against him for the war. It lasted seven months and cost a hundred thousand lives. **Such is the price of arrogance and pride.**

 Starting in 1935 he had a ten year love affair with beautiful Carla Pettaci.

 His enormous popularity began to wane after he aligned himself with Hitler in 1940. On July 23, 1943 the Grand Council met, dissolved the Fascist Party, deposed Mussolini and handed the reins of government to the King and to the head of the Army. On 4/28/45 Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Pettaci were executed. True glory and nobility are only of the Soul, which is love...and love of ALL humanity.

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