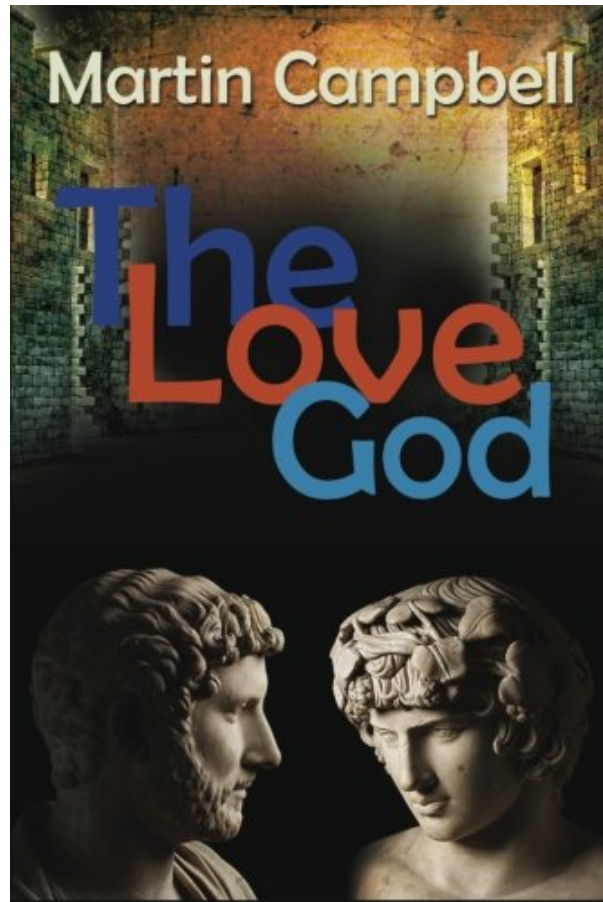
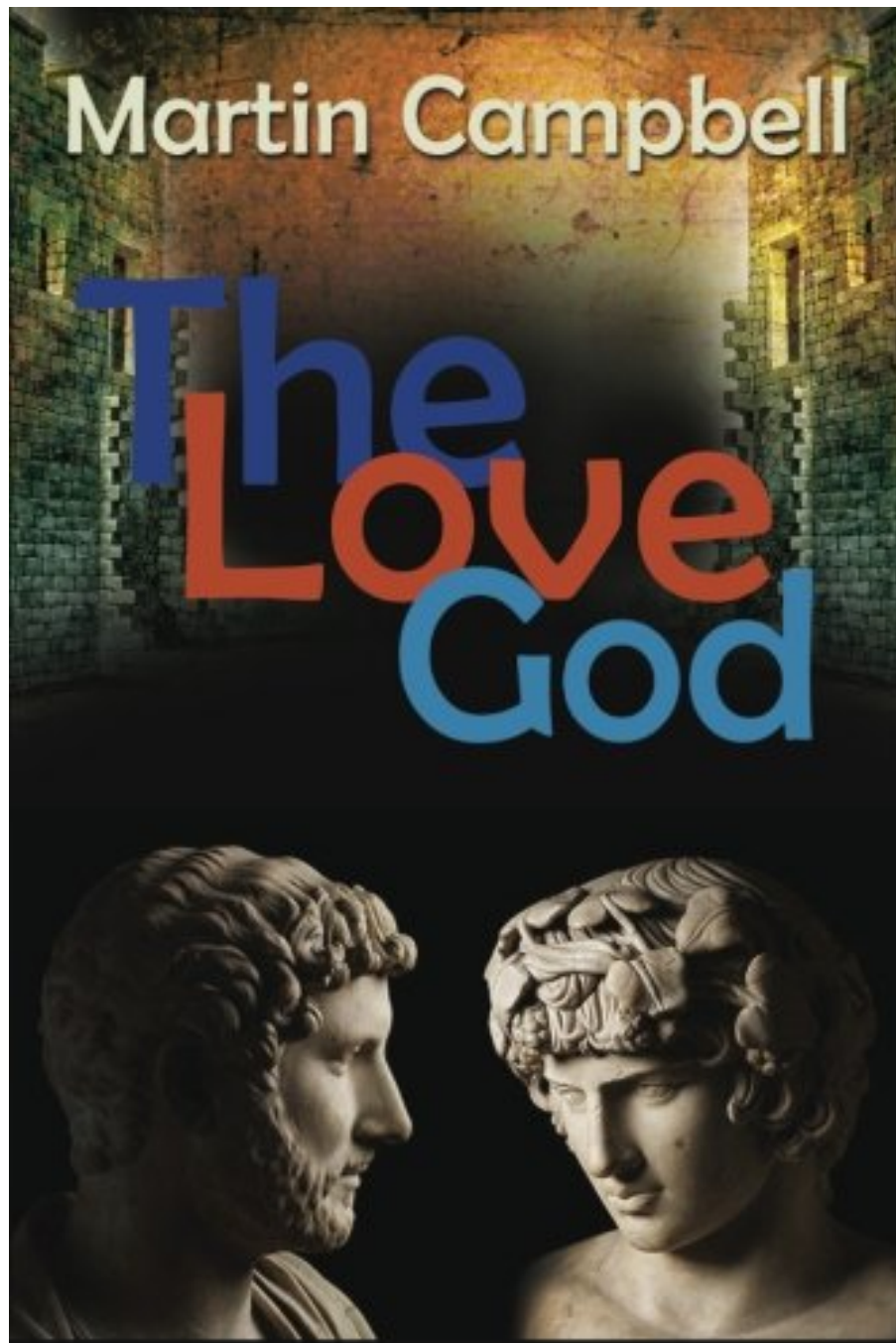


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One of the greatest historical love stories the world has ever seen is not one that is taught in schools. Across much of the pre-Christian Roman Empire sexuality was expressed very differently, but even in Ancient Rome romance can be a dangerous thing when it is with the wrong person. Antinous is handsome, athletic and intelligent, but being the son of a Bithynian fruit trader, his ambition to get to Rome is very distant indeed – that is, until the great Emperor Hadrian appears in his home city of Claudiopolis and their eyes meet across a crowded square. That one look sparks a world of historical romance intrigue for the young Antinous, and he is taken to Rome to be inducted into the Paedagogium, where the noble sons of the city are trained for their future lives. But he can never quite shake his dreams of intimacy with the greatest man in Rome. Hadrian is equally intrigued by the young Bithynian. When the time comes for a tour of his empire, the emperor chooses Antinous as an advisor, and together they set off on the dangerous voyage to the cold lands of the North. Shipwrecked off the coast of Britannia and staying in the royal palace of the Atrebate king, the two men find themselves lost as historical romance gay lovers with passion not seen since the time of Alexander the Great and his general, Hephaestion. But their intimacy and Antinous' growing influence over Hadrian has aroused the ire of the most powerful woman in the Roman Empire: Hadrian's wife. Scorned in public and determined to uphold the traditions of Ancient Rome romance gay lovers feel for each other is swept aside in a plot to remove the low-born Bithynian from his new-found position of power.

- Sales Rank: #711688 in Books
- Published on: 2014-08-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.45" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 642 pages

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Brilliant Novel About Antinous

By Ernest Gill

This is the most brilliant novel about Antinous to appear in half a century ... right up there with Marguerite Yourcenar's landmark MEMOIRS OF HADRIAN 60 years ago. Martin Campbell traces the life of Antinous from the moment his tousle-haired head emerges from his mother's womb under auspicious stars in Asia Minor to the moment his head sinks beneath the swirling waters of the Nile on a starry evening in Egypt. Antinous comes to life as a young man of breath-taking beauty who is filled with conflicting passions and loyalties. He is a young man who at times is naive, yet at other times worldly wise with an ability to see the world as it is ... and to describe it with at times brutal honesty to the most powerful man in the world.

Above all, this is a gentle love story between Antinous and Emperor Hadrian, himself a man of contradictory passions and priorities.

Historical facts are excruciatingly accurate ... even the positions of the stars and planets at the moment of the

birth of Antinous have been calculated to precision.

An academic scholar can read this book with satisfaction, noting obscure and arcane references which only the experts in the field of Antinology fully appreciate.

At the same time, however, this is a fun book to read even for those who have never heard of Antinous in their lives and who have no firm grasp of Roman civilization in the 2nd Century AD.

There is intrigue, skulduggery, near-death by lightning, getting lost in a subterranean labyrinth, a storm at sea, earthquakes ... and some fairly hot man sex as well, albeit tastefully brought to the page.

The narrator is the Classical Love God himself: Eros. He shoots his amorous arrows and ensures that Antinous and Hadrian fulfill the destiny which the Fates have in store for them ... despite efforts by certain people in the Imperial Court to thwart the Fates.

But the genius of this book is that there are no black-and-white villains or heroes.

Antinous is a young man with all the problems and drives of late adolescence, and Hadrian is a man with a mid-life crisis of doubt and regret.

Others such as Empress Sabina and her constant companion Julia Balbilla and their coterie of fawning courtiers and freedmen are not really hateful towards Antinous so much as they are simply perplexed by him.

They view him the way some members of the Royal Household might look at the favorite Corgi of the Queen, unable to comprehend her affection for it, her grief when it dies.

They whisper amongst themselves: What hold does Antinous have over Hadrian? Just who does he think he is? And is he a threat to them? What is so different about Antinous that Hadrian doesn't grow weary of him ... as he always has with previous toy boys?

Because they cannot understand how he fits in the scheme of Imperial court life, some really rather wish he would just disappear ... voluntarily or otherwise.

And through it all is the boyhood friend of Antinous who has accompanied him on this long journey with mixed feelings and with growing envy and jealousy.

The boiling emotions all stem from Eros, who winks knowingly at the reader as he shoots one arrow after another with unerring accuracy to ensure that Antinous fulfills his destiny ... to take his place alongside Eros as a God of Love.

The result is a richly entertaining and beautifully written novel which appeals to those seeking authoritative scholarly accuracy as well as readers who just want a riveting and memorable adventure yarn.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Martin Campbell Delivers The Antinous Epic For Which We Have Waited So Long

By Michael D. Miller

I absolutely recommend The Love God to anyone who has even a passing interest in the greatest love story (n)ever told. Martin Campbell, with exquisite research, and remaining true to academia's current take on the Hadrian & Antinous relationship, manages to deliver a page turner that I found to be an urgent read. I had the

good fortune to read the book while traveling in Rome to visit the Obelisk of Antinous and Hadrian's Villa, and could feel 2000 years fall away in the blink of an eye as Hadrian and Antinous were fleshed out for me on the page. (Also, being 3 feet in front of the Obelisk will do that for you - it is uncanny stuff.) We all have our favorite novels for various reasons, and *The Love God* will be prominently placed in first position on my book shelf. *The Love God* will make you laugh out loud, and cry for Hadrian's pain and horrible loss . Mostly, however, *The Love God* will TEACH YOU- do not miss it!

Note to Homolle: YES, it is damn time we speak of Antinous again ;-)

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

It's impossible to not fall in love with Antinoos

By Regis Rodrigues

It's impossible to not fall in love with Antinoos, and all the other so vivid characters. I had discovered Antinous when I was young reading "Memoirs of Hadrian" by Marguerite Yourcenar , and now "The Love God", by Martin Campbell, I'm rediscovering this so fascinating character. like the Mary Renault's novel, this is a great and must-read book for lovers of the Boy God and the ancient history lovers. A sad detail is that while I was reading about the Hadrian-Antinoos and his court trip to the Middle East and Egypt, several temples and constructions that withstood the time and were still standing were destroyed by the so-called Islamic State, a proof that, nowadays, hatred and intransigence mainly religious are even stronger than true love.

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