

## THE WINEMAKERS

**Logline:** Beneath the glamor of a burgeoning wine empire in post-war Napa Valley, deceit, lies, and forbidden secrets threaten to destroy a family and everyone they love.

**Genre:** Serial Drama/Romance/History

Adapted from *The Winemakers* by Jan Moran with Dallas Jones, screenwriter known for CUJO.

**Tagline:** Tangled vines and bitter lies. *Falcon Crest* meets *Mad Men* in a stylish family drama.

**Background:** Story is adapted from Jan Moran's 2016 novel published by St. Martin's Press US/UK, Germany's Goldmann/Random House (a 2017 lead title), and other publishers in Italy, Russia, Poland, Turkey, and Lithuania. Ideal Audiobooks publishes the audiobook read by Earphone award-winning narrator Erin Bennett; it is nominated for a 2018 Audie award.

**Synopsis:** To escape a tragic, secretive past during the Mussolini reign in Italy, the Rosetta family flees Tuscany to stake a claim to a Napa Valley vineyard in the final years of Prohibition. Now in 1956, after the boom-and-bust cycle of World War II, Napa vintners fight to create a legacy of American wine on the world stage, while at Mille Étoiles Vineyards, the Rosetta family faces dangerous threats and harbors secrets that could ruin them all.

While hiding her husband's murderous past, Ava Rosetta struggles to guide the vineyard and elevate Napa wines, while her high-spirited, passionate daughter Caterina—a wine-blending savant—has inherited Ava's talent for crafting wine and guarding damaging secrets. Against their strict Catholic faith, Caterina conceals a fact that could ruin her: An illegitimate daughter whose father, Santo, abandoned Caterina without explanation, leaving her with nowhere to turn.

Devastated, Caterina journeys to their ancestral vineyard in Tuscany to seize the chance to start a new life. There for the first time, she meets her unknown extended family and discovers devastating secrets: Could her father Luca still be alive, or did her mother murder him? Was her mother's love interest, Raphael Casini, once a Mussolini Black Shirt with a past? Why did her lover Santo leave, and why does her mother insist on keeping them apart? Could the shocking claim that Santo is her half-brother be true?

Dire events force Caterina to return to save the family wine empire and search for the truth that could destroy them all. Pressed with the financial collapse of the vineyard, Caterina and Santo present their special blend of Cabernet Sauvignon at the world's finest wine competition in Paris. Amid a controversial win, they return not to celebration, but to turmoil.

On the news of their victory, Luca surfaces after two decades and in a legal power play threatens the estate before turning his wrath on the family. Ava suffers a crisis as her relationship with Raphael, the vineyard's mysterious caretaker, threatens her faith.

In a climax of fury, deep within the vineyard's wine cave the two women struggle against Luca's rage—culminating in his death. In the end, grace blesses the family when Santo's deceased mother's diary reveals the truth: Luca lied about an affair with Santo's mother in order to destroy her marriage, and Santo is not Caterina's brother.

**Reviews:**

“We were spellbound by the thread of deception weaving the book’s characters into a tangled web and turned each page anticipating the outcome.” – *The Mercury News*

“Readers will devour this page-turner as the mystery and passions spin out. VERDICT: A solid pick for fans of historical romances combined with a heartbreaking mystery.” – *The Library Journal*

“As she did with fragrance and scent-making in *Scent of Triumph* (2015), Moran weaves knowledge of wine and winemaking into this intense family drama.” – *Booklist*



## Character List

**Ava Rosetta** – Head of the family. A fierce, accomplished woman with polished determination, a survivor. Constrained by her Catholic faith, yet flawed in her desire for love. Ava may have killed one husband, only to take up with Raphael, another man with a mysterious past. Her efforts to conceal her family's past to ensure her daughter's future soon meet with consequences.

**Caterina Rosetta** – Heir apparent of the Mille Étoiles Vineyards. Daughter of Ava. Passionate, creative, driven for excellence. A savant wine master. After her childhood friendship with Santo escalated one evening, he disappeared, forcing her to take drastic measures to protect and conceal her out-of-wedlock child at all costs.

**Santo Casini** – Love interest of Caterina. Romantic who dreams of a better future. Successful viticulturist. A strong man desperately in love with Caterina. Though Ava threatens him with damaging information linked to Tuscany, and the truth might forever ruin his chances with Caterina, he must find a way to forge on.

**Raphael Casini** – Older cousin to Santo, love interest to Ava, vigneron. Patient, pragmatic man who exudes wisdom yet hides a shameful past. Is he really capable of doing anything to protect Ava from the consequences of the lies they've spun?

**Juliana Cardona** – Caterina's best friend and Nina's daughter. A savvy, outgoing firecracker and wine publicist with client Henri Laurent. Torn between her friendships with Caterina and Santo, Juliana has her own tragic past: An army fiancé killed in S. Korea days before shipping home to wed.

**Nina Cardona** – Juliana's mother and Ava's confidante; the strict Mexican housekeeper at Mille Étoiles. Shunned the conventions of the old country for a life of freedom; when her philandering husband returned to Mexico, she refused to follow.

**Luca Rosetta** – Father to Caterina, husband to Ava. Manipulative charmer, violent, takes Machiavellian pleasure in torturing Ava, whom he blames for everything in his life.

**Henri Laurent** – American vintner of French heritage, who settles in Napa in a shroud of mystery. Worked for the French Resistance during the war, widowed with two little girls. Attracted to Juliana, yet their mutual tragedies inhibit their relationship.

**Vino** – Santo's white Italian Maremma sheepdog. Playful, friendly, mischievous, and loyal. Constant companion to the Casini family.

## **First Season Episodes**

### **EPISODE 1: Pilot. The World Erupts**

While Italy is in the grips of Mussolini, a pregnant Ava is forced to marry Luca Rosetta, a man in love with a married woman, Natalie, who dies in childbirth. Luca blames Natalie's husband and murders him. After Luca's arrest, his mother Violetta bribes police for his release on the condition he leave Italy. Luca and Ava immigrate to America. There, against the backdrop of the burgeoning Napa wine industry as American vintners fight for their place on the world stage, the Rosetta family struggles continue two decades later. Daughter Caterina's irreconcilable secret threatens her relationship with Ava when she returns home to Mille Étoiles vineyard with her illegitimate child, whose father she refuses to reveal. The winery is threatened with foreclosure when Ava can't produce her husband Luca's death certificate. A major earthquake destroys equipment needed for the pending harvest and traps Caterina and her former lover Santo in the wine cave, where fire ensues.

### **EPISODE 2: Great Escapes**

Vineyard manager Raphael and Ava rescue Caterina and Santo and race the unconscious pair to hospital. Santo's unknown fiancé transfers him to another hospital in Davis. Ava insists Caterina give up her child Marisa for adoption; refusing, Caterina embarks on a journey to Italy with her young daughter to claim an inheritance from her grandmother Violetta.

### **EPISODE 3: Hidden Secrets**

In Italy, Caterina meets hostile relatives at the reading of her grandmother's will and discovers devastating family secrets. She hears a rumor that her father is alive. In Napa, a priest chastises Ava for her forbidden relationship with Raphael. Ava and Raphael struggle to replace damaged equipment and resolve the poaching of workers in time for harvest.

### **EPISODE 4: It's the Law**

Bank begins foreclosure on vineyard to Ava's distress. Luca's death certificate is still missing and the bank mounts a search for Luca. Caterina discovers disturbing family history in Italy.

### **EPISODE 5: Judgement in Paris**

While Caterina is in Italy, her publicist friend Juliana devises plan to save Mille Étoiles by entering Caterina and Santo's special wine in a Paris competition. Santo breaks up with fiancé, then joins Caterina in Paris. Caterina gets wine accepted into competition and confronts Santo about their relationship. Caterina hears gossip about an affair her father Luca had with Santo's mother, which might make them half-siblings.

**EPISODE 6: Murder and Blackmail**

An American journalist covers Mille Étoiles wine win in Paris. Ava stops writer from publishing story about possible incest relationship between Caterina and Santo, who rekindle their love in Paris. Luca surfaces and attacks Ava, determined to claim Mille Étoiles after his mother Violetta cut him from her will.

**EPISODE 7: Blood Relations**

In Italy, Caterina and Santo explore her inherited villa, where Caterina is devastated on finding evidence of her blood relationship to Santo. Hostile relatives set fire to villa, and Santo and Caterina barely escape. Working with rival vineyard owner Clyde, Luca files suit to wrest control of Mille Étoiles from Ava.

**EPISODE 8: Confrontation**

In Italy, Caterina desperately searches for evidence to refute her blood relation with Santo. While Caterina and Santo grapple with their relationship, she reveals that he is the father of her daughter Marisa and introduces them. Santo has his doubts. Traumatized and with Mille Étoiles in peril, Caterina returns home to Ava's acceptance. The family defends Mille Étoiles in the court against Luca's takeover. Caterina confronts her father Luca for the first time.

**EPISODE 9: Religious Dictates**

After losing the vineyard in court, Luca threatens Ava and Mille Étoiles. Santo accuses Caterina's ex-boyfriend Ted of fathering Caterina's young daughter. Priest refuses to christen Marisa due to illegitimacy and possible incest parentage. Raphael expresses disbelief of old rumors to Santo and chastises him for his ignorance. Santo pleads with Caterina and she accepts him, breaking tradition, but decides they can't marry in the Catholic Church.

**EPISODE 10: Drowning**

Caterina discovers Santo's mother's diary, which contains the answer to Santo's true parentage. In the wine cellar, Luca attacks Ava and Caterina, forcing them above an open vat of fermenting wine. Ava and Caterina fight back, but all three are thrust into the vat where CO2 threatens to overwhelm them.