

Moffett's Wife by Alan Wallach

SYNOPSIS

The story takes place in Milan, Italy. Marcella Algani marries American Jason Moffett some time after her husband dies suddenly and prematurely. Her son Michele, a graduate engineer, taken as a partner into her father's business, is very successful. In a few short years, the company's revenue and profit increases dramatically. When Michele's partner, Gianni Brambilla is run down with Michele's car intentionally and killed, Michele is charged with the crime and convicted. Marcella, frantic that Michele is in jail, is frustrated that no real attempt was made to find the killer or any motive. She knows Michele is innocent and had no motive and that his conviction was unreasonable. She makes up her mind to take things into her own hands. Convinced that the killer is someone close, within her circle of acquaintances, Marcella hatches a plan to fake an emotional breakdown leaving her in an apparent catatonic state. She plans to listen to everything going on around her and hopefully hear something carelessly said or done which will give her some clue as to who killed Brambilla and why.

With the help of her sister Francesca, caring for the catatonic Marcella and Alberto DeSanctis, a brilliant forensic scientist who is a classmate and close friend of Michele, Marcella's plan succeeds beyond anything they expect, and exposes an enormous plot and corruption which endangers their lives. The climax occurs when Marcella, thought to be totally non-communicative appears unexpectedly in court to testify against the criminals.