



Matoula's Echo

Richard Romanus

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“It’s Greece’s Dr. Zhivago but with a better story. And it would make a great movie”.

-- **Kurt Russell**, actor

Matoula’s Echo is the epic story of a Greek girl’s journey to womanhood at the brink of World War II. This is the first of four books by Writers Guild of America Award nominee Richard Romanus, author of *Sketches of Skiathos*, *Evangelistria*, and *Act III*, a memoir.

It’s the bitter winter of 1940. Greece is on the brink of world war and the Axis powers are poised to invade. All the able-bodied men of Metsovo have left the village to defend the border. Their only means of survival are the supplies the village women smuggle them on foot. It’s a grueling nighttime journey over harsh, snow-bound mountain passes that only the strongest can survive.

Tall, gangly, near-sighted 17-year-old Maria Christina burns to join the resistance, but her physical awkwardness keeps her at home, doomed to an early spinsterhood.

When Maria Christina’s radiant and charismatic older sister Matoula dies on a midnight supply run, the opportunity to become a woman she’s always dreamed of is thrust into her hands.

But not without a price.

As the war rages on—and deadly civil strife is set to erupt across Greece—Maria Christina struggles to measure up to Matoula and raise an infant daughter left motherless by her death. Her grief turns to shame when her long-kept secret passion erupts into an affair with the worldly Yiannis, Matoula’s widowed husband, a doctor from Athens.

But for Maria Christina the most perilous journey of all is the one she still has to make when she’s forced to flee Metsovo and the civil war to begin a new life thousands of miles away in New York City.

Matoula’s Echo is a sweeping coming-of-age story that moves from the hard-scrabble villages of war-torn Greece to the sleek and cosmopolitan post-war New York City. Atmospheric and gripping, Romanus’ writing illuminates the impossible decisions war forces upon us, and the price and meaning of survival.

Praise for this novel.

“A phenomenal achievement, not only because it tackles the great themes – war and civil war, heroism and sacrifice, love and loss, joy and misery, inner conflict and struggle merely to survive – but because it handles them so adroitly.”

-- Dr Darcy Powers, Professor of English at the University of Denver

“A spellbinding love story set in the thick of the modern fight for a free Greece. It has come along at the very moment when Greece - and all of us - need it.”

-- Flo Conway, author

“Romanus has given Greeks a new heroine who is more than mythical - and best of all one of their own!”
-- Jim Siegelman, author

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