



# Roma Victrix

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**Roma Victrix** Russell Whitfield

**The second adventure in the visceral female gladiator trilogy that began with *Gladiatrix*, featuring an unforgettable heroine**

Four years have passed since Lysandra's epic but inconclusive battle with her hated rival Sorena in the arena of Halicarnassus, after which both combatants were granted their freedom. Now Sorena leads a vicious troop of horsewomen. Into her hands falls the young tribune Gaius Minervius Valerian, and she ponders whether to deal him a slow and painful death, or release him to journey back to Rome in shame as the sole survivor of the empire's most humiliating defeat for half a millennium. Meanwhile, Lysandra has become accustomed to easy living and suffered an insidious addiction to alcohol that, together with her unabated hubris, is sapping both her self esteem and friendships. But now the Emperor Domitian has called for a command performance at Rome's newly built Flavian Amphitheatre. Lysandra is invited to fight Rome's adored Gladiatrix Prima, the beautiful and deadly fighter known as Aesalon Nocturna, the Midnight Falcon. Her record is devastating: 30 bouts; 30 wins—no draws or losses. Lysandra has to face up to all that she is and all that she must become as all roads lead to Rome.

## Roma Victrix Details

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Author : Russell Whitfield

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# From Reader Review Roma Victrix for online ebook

## Robin Carter says

Its been 3 years since the release of Gladiatrix, so this sequel is VERY eagerly anticipated. As debuts go, it was a real breath of fresh air, something new for the Roman part of the Historical fiction genre.

So what agony has Russ been through with Lysandra in the last 3 years? has he beaten the book 2 blues and knocked it out of the park again?

Yes would be the simple answer...way way out of the park!

Roma Victrix sees the return of a more mature Lysandra, a woman who has achieved greatness and settled down to life serving her goddess, the days of slavery and living life on the edge of death are behind her she is now mistress of her own house.

But with responsibility comes boredom and also the potential to not be the perfection she was in the arena, Is our Gladiatrix cut out for life as an administrative business woman, and what toll will this life take on the harsh taskmaster that is the Spartan Woman?

Fortunately for Lysandra he fighting skills captured many admirers over the years and they want to try and draw her back to glory and the arena, the greatest of these being Domitian, Emperor of Rome who wants to pit the Greatest Gladiatrix of the east against Romes champion Gladiatrix in a spectacle that will leave only one unbeaten and only one victorious.

The story that Russ weaves is a much wider tale than Gladiatrix and I think it makes for a better book, the inclusion of the story of Valerian, and his trials against the Dacians, and his subsequent road to recovery really add to the tale, and its so well woven into the overall plot the disparate threads slowly pulling together with each character pulling another into the main thread until everyone is back together for the finale, and what a finale, the last 100 pages can only be described as a rocky training session that builds in intensity until we hit the arena and all of a sudden its Balboa v Creed / Lysandra v Illeana in a knock down no holds barred all action fight that leaves the reader breathless at the end...and what an ending! truly inspired and unafraid.

No book survives just on main characters though and there are also some great sidekick characters in the story, Murco and Cappa reminding me a little of the relationship between Simon Scarrows Macro and Cato and Settus who reminds me a little of Pullo from the series Rome, all of these characters are blended with Russ's own unique style and delivery. They are just a sample of the great characters in this book a book that must be read if you are a fan of Historical Fiction.

I'm very intrigued to see what Russ writes next, as I see it there is much more to come from this guy. (Parm)

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## Îshta says

Pugnate!

Fortitudo.

Contemptio mortis.

Cupido victoriae.

Dopo troppo tempo di attesa (2 anni), ritorniamo nell'antica Roma.

Troviamo la più matura Lysandra di Sparta, Gladiatrix Prima dell'Asia Minore, una donna che ha raggiunto la grandezza e la ricchezza nell'arena; decisa a perseverare nel servire la Dea Atena con la sua Deiopolis.

La gestione del Tempio, durante gli anni successivi alla conclusione del primo volume (La Gladiatrice) la trasforma, la rende morbida e sempre più attratta e controllata dal Dio Dioniso (vino).

Qui Ritroveremo vecchie conoscenze che si incroceranno stupendoci.

Tutto ciò sarà parallelo alla storia di Illeana, meglio conosciuta come Aesalon Nocturna, prima gladiatrice dell'anfiteatro di Roma.

Sarà richiesto uno scontro fra le due titane dell'Arena dall'imperatore romano Dominiziano, mentre all'esterno un grande, conosciuto e temibile nemico sfida l'Impero di Roma.

Roma Victrix ti cattura in un vortice di emozioni, battaglie, donne forti e sensuali da cui è estremamente difficile uscirne senza rimanerne colpite.

Ci saranno punti di vista diversificati e un più ampio scenario di azione, il tutto combinato ad una maggiore introspezione dei personaggi e una buona dose di storicità e di finzione.

Un lungo e difficile viaggio che porterà ad un'unica scelta: vita o morte?

L'epilogo è inaspettato e scioccante . . . fa fremere dalla voglia di leggere il terzo e ultimo capitolo di questo splendido romanzo.

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### **Tara Chevreton says**

This is the sequel to Gladiatrix, a book I absolutely loved. This brings back some of the main players.. I say some because well, some of them died in book one.

There's Lysandra. She was once the greatest gladiatrix in the arena and is yet unbeatable. However, years have gone by and she is now getting "soft" and rather lost in her cups. She's got a weakness for the drink. She also doesn't fight as much as she used to and has become a paper pusher. When she receives a summons from Rome to fight the new, unbeaten, gladiatrix prima, she decides she needs to do it because she the "heady drug of victory was stronger than wine." She's tough, arrogant, but sometimes makes a fool of herself.

For full review, please click on the link: <http://www.bookbabe.blogspot.com/2011/...>

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### **Lance Greenfield says**

#### **Shocking!**

Lysandra fights on.

The hot action of *Gladiatrix* continues as Lysandra of Sparta, having retired to transform her ludus into a temple, is invited by the Emperor Domitian to travel to Rome for the ultimate fight. Although a free and very rich woman, Achillia (Lysandra), eventually accepts the invitation, but realises that she must exercise every ounce of self-discipline to pull herself away from the wine glass to become the finely-tuned, unbeatable gladiatrix which she once had been. It is a long, and difficult journey.

Meantime, the Roman armies are fighting, and losing battles in in the northern extremities of their empire. Lysandra's old foe, Sorina of Dacia, and her entirely female unit, are some of the most fearsome soldiers that the Romans encounter. To survive and be captured by these vicious warriors, is shown to be a fate worse than death. There is no mercy.

There is plenty of shocking violence, and a fair share of sex, but the storyline is gripping, and the characters are strong and very believable. The descriptions of the fighting are always detailed impossible to leave before their gory conclusions.

It is easy to form attachments to the characters, but unwise to do so, as you will suffer pangs of grief as your favourites lose their lives. Death is inevitable in both the field of battle and in the gladiatorial arena. They are games where coming second usually means the end of your life. I much prefer playing field hockey, where all I have to suffer is a week of disappointment before my next match.

Once again, Russell Whitfield has produced an historical fiction which is action-packed and smouldering hot.

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### **Xbrittydx says**

I liked this book but I found my self wondering what the hell Russell Whitfield was thinking when he was writing it. I mean what was going on with Lysandra? It was very different than the first. I liked the direction of the story and the introduction of the new "badass" gladiatrix she needs to defeat. The ending kind of pissed me off though! Im impatiently waiting the next book to see how this all plays out!!!! I need to know!

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### **Tim says**

Picking up from shortly after the end of the previous book (*Gladiatrix*) *Roma Victrix* seems a more complex work. The author, having established all the background to the era and the phenomenon of female gladiators, is able to explore the relationships within the story and give some thought to what drove these women to fight and die in the arena.

Russell Whitfield writes excellent combat scenes but is also able to craft some pretty erotic scenes.

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### **Jason Golomb says**

Russell Whitfield returns to Ancient Rome in this very strong sword, sand and sandals epic, "*Roma Victrix*", sequel to his debut "*Gladiatrix*". As in the original, Whitfield combines a steady diet of character depth with heaping spoonfuls of historical fact and fiction as well superb fight sequences, which together puts flesh on the bone of the lesser known, but historically-documented, female gladiator.

The core of Whitfield's sequel revolves around Lysandra and her gladiatrix alter-ego, Achillia, the Gladiatrix Prima in Asia Minor. After establishing herself as the best in the East, Lysandra builds a temple to Athene, the Greek Goddess to whom she's dedicated her life. Born in Sparta, Lysandra wears her heritage like a suit of virtually impenetrable armor. It provides her with motivation, pride, a religious foundation, and an emotional wall of protection. Lysandra is consistently grasping to hold onto her very strict and unemotional Spartan upbringing in the face of an emotional landscape of secondary characters, her own burgeoning battle with alcohol, and her exposure to the myriad of cultures throughout the Mediterranean.

Following a magnificent staged battle royale that pits Achillia as warrior-general, leading a phalanx in battle against Barbarians in a sweeping book-opening scene, Lysandra steps off the sand arena and into the marble temple as she builds a deiopolos to her Goddess Athene. A life of temple management and prayer makes her soft and she increasingly finds herself drawn to and controlled by wine. Her propensity to dabble in the Dionysian propels Lysandra down a path where she finds herself literally and figuratively lost.

Young Varia returns to play a key role in this book as Lysandra's protege. Despite her most Spartan emotionless ethic, Lysandra's overprotection and love of Varia pushes her away. Varia's departure and later reemergence provide the emotional force for the story while keeping the connective threads of the novel tied together. The first of two complementary parallel plot lines follows Ileana, better known as Aesalon Nocturna (Midnight Falcon), the Gladiatrix Prima of the Flavian Amphitheatre in Rome. Emperor Domitian requests the presence of Achillia, queen of the sands in Asia Minor, to fight Aesalon Nocturna, goddess of the sands in the Colosseum. Naturally, it's never a good idea to deny a request from the Emperor.

The other primary plot thread follows the reintroduction of Tribune Valerian in Dacia at the Battle of Tapae. The battle is magnificently drawn by author Whitfield who's at his best when describing military strategy, the mechanisms of war and fighting, and the actual fight scenes themselves. This Battle of Tapae goes horrendously wrong for the Romans as an entire legion and thousands of warriors are destroyed. Valerian, a practical and sound-minded lifer in the Roman army, is taken prisoner and, let's just say, not treated very well. He returns to Rome facing the brunt of the blame for the disaster in Dacia. He's a broken man. And while I don't want to give away a strong plot point, his redemption is one of the nicer aspects to this multi-threaded book.

Numerous other characters are introduced (or re-introduced from "Gladiatrix") throughout the story. Murco and Cappa are ex-Praetorian guards hired to watch over Lysandra as she travels to Rome. En route, they serve as the protective older brothers to a sister who's really in no need of protection and never accepts it anyway. Their roles are small, but their relationship with Lysandra is comfortable and the two bodyguards brought a smile to my face as they reappeared throughout the story. Also returning is Lysandra's spiritual guide in Telemachus, as well as a number of new gladiators and gladiatrices, and Lysandra's equally as arrogant Spartan countryman, the gladiator Kleandrias who becomes her trainer.

Whitfield has developed a strong story arc tracing Lysandra's fall from grace, while building tension and excitement that melds rhythmically with the sub stories of Ileana, Varia and Valerian. It's a very "Rocky"-themed story that provides the skeletal framework for the well-fleshed and muscled story.

For several segments in the last third of the book, Whitfield writes his scenes from multiple perspectives, with each character's narrative slightly overlapping another's to provide differing angles and views of the same action. This very film-like structure is not easy to convey, but Whitfield handles it masterfully. Likewise, he does a terrific job quick-cutting between the two prima gladiatrices' ultimate training sequences that set up the much-anticipated battle at the Flavian Amphitheatre. The story's pace is torrid as each gladiatrix is pushed to her max in preparation for their Colosseum battle before Emperor Domitian.

Roman and Greek ideals of sexuality also play an important thematic role in "Roma Victrix". Female homosexuality, and male homosexuality to a lesser extent, are frequent topics of conversation. Lysandra has a passionate love affair with a fellow gladiatrix in the first book and her lovers' death plays an important role in Lysandra's emotional makeup. In addition to the obligatory amount of well-oiled, sweating and topless gladiatrices, Whitfield has written an intensely erotic scene with two female and two male gladiators (I'll not give away who exactly), as well as a rather gruesome rape scene which becomes an important event throughout the story. Is it overdone? Not in my opinion.

Whitfield's greatest triumph in both of his books is in his ability to differentiate the military and gladiatorial battles. It's difficult to create a fight that makes sense, reads realistically and feels as bone crunching and sword slicing as one might imagine the real thing. It takes unique talent to craft richly textured and believable fight and combat scenes across a 400+ page landscape and have each feel as unique as the first.

Russell Whitfield has created a realistic and engaging re-creation of the ancient Roman Empire. He's done so by developing interesting characters wrapped around a multi-threaded story that effectively brings the reader into the world of Gladiators, Gladiatrices, and Roman politics and war. Could anyone argue that those are the key ingredients that drive the world's ongoing fascination with the historic world that we love?

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## **Lia says**

Asia Minore. Lysandra è assorta in profondi pensieri. La pila di carte sta crescendo nel tempio consacrato in onore degli dei, lì dove un tempo si ergeva il vecchio ludus. Lì dove si aveva la necessità assoluta di allenarsi ora è urgente il lavoro per gli scribi. Forte e abile, Varia, non è più una schiava-bambina, la gladiatrix prima l'ha addestrata e liberata ma non crede sia pronta per combattere. Il litigio con la giovane, di pochi momenti prima, unito al rimorso per le scartoffie ancora da controllare, le ha tolto il vigore. Nella sua Deiopolis, il tempio dedicato alla dea Atena è un rifugio, verso il quale Lysandra, alla fine di quella faticosa giornata, si reca consapevole del fatto che soltanto l'eccitazione delle più difficili vittorie possa essere paragonata all'estasi provata sentendosi in comunione con la valorosa Pallade Atena...

Il sequel de La gladiatrice è all'altezza delle aspettative. La determinazione ed evidenziazione del personaggio di Lysandra, la gladiatrice di Sparta, insieme alla ricostruzione romanzesca delle campagne militari nelle terre dei Geti e dei Daci sotto la dinastia imperiale flavia, sono i punti di forza della narrazione, la quale, nella parte dedicata al tribuno romano Gaio Minervino Valeriano, è sapientemente caratterizzata da una giusta dose di suspense, interpretando Whitfield lo shock delle imboscate e la paura delle pur veterane truppe nel cuore della Dacia: «Lontano da casa e nell'abbraccio misterioso delle selve dell'Europa orientale, anche il meno impressionabile dei soldati poteva cominciare a vedere demoni fra le ombre. Valeriano doveva ammettere che la foresta provocava una sensazione di irrealtà; una strana malevolenza sembrava permeare la nebbia, come se il suolo stesso si infuriasse davanti alla presenza degli invasori occidentali». Gli spettacoli gladiatori, cionondimeno, sono ancora al centro della scena e la gladiatrix prima dell'Asia Minore, alla luce delle torce, ammalierà sempre. La quotidianità del ludus, però, cede il passo all'avventura e agli incontri. Da sottolineare l'ingresso di nuovi personaggi vicini a Lysandra e del nuovo volto di Illeana. Ritornano, del resto, anche due personaggi, Varia e Telemaco, decisivi nel cammino in salita della spartana: «Se Lysandra di Sparta doveva trovare la pace, sarebbe stato solo al servizio della sua dea. [...] Anksy le aveva chiesto una volta dov'era casa sua e, mentre Morfeo l'abbracciava, Lysandra si era resa conto che non era a Sparta e neanche in Asia Minore. La sua casa era l'arena: l'unico posto in cui si sentisse davvero viva. Il suo destino era combattere per Atena». Un'inattesa, infine, sorprendente conclusione, che ci terrà sospesi fino alla pubblicazione del terzo volume della saga.

<http://www.mangialibri.com/node/11193>

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## Vincenzo Bacci says

This is the second book of a trilogy following the life of a Spartan gladiatrix from slavery to glory to settlement to fall to rebirth.... Background historical, main characters fictional, clearly just to be enjoyed without worrying about some stretching from real facts (a battle of two armies of female gladiatrices seems quite unlikely). The plot moves well, with different lines intersecting. As in the first book, frequent fights and violent actions, but also introspection and sex. I like the gladiatrix because she is strong but shows evident weaknesses as well. An unusual ending, in a way surprising, but you can easily guess what could come next. Highly recommended for the genre fans. Waiting eagerly for the third installment.

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## Vilmarys says

I am still at a loss as to what to say. The sequel to Gladiatrix was even better than the first. Roma Victrix was very different and I definitely did appreciate the changes. The main character Lysandra was still arrogant and cocky but in a way that made you love her and chant her name with the rest of the crowd watching her fight. I cannot wait for Imperatrix, the third installment of Gladiatrix. Lysandra's story cannot end there!

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## Nona says

wow I literally spent the last half hour immersed in the final pages of Roma Victrix, rereading the epilogues not wanting it to end. I first picked up Gladiatrix because of the cover and devoured it quickly, falling in love with Lysandra the Spartan and the trials she faced and conquered as any Spartan would of course. As soon as Roma Victrix graced the local book store shelves I ran out to buy it knowing as any fan of Whitfield that I was going to spend some late hours reading. I didn't read it right away though, wanting to but savoring the anticipation, glad I did, it added to the strong emotional tilt a whirl I sent myself through!

Ok so we all know, or should know from Gladiatrix, that Lysandra is a very strong headed handmaiden of Athene. After the epic battle Sorina and Lysandra put on for the emporor they each went their own ways, Sorina went home to plan out her vengeance on Rome and Lysandra built her temple to Athene and had not fought since growing soft. She was Gladiatrix Prima. Meanwhile there is another Gladiatrix Prima rising to the fame of Roma Victrix and the emporor, who loves a good show decides to pit these two fierce women against each other. The road to the arena that they will fight in is full of blood, death and loss for both of them but in the end two will enter the Gate of Life and only one will be considered Roma Victrix.

Oh my gosh I love these books and can't get enough! I yelled and ranted at the drunk Lysandra and cheered her on in training and cried when those she loved were lost. I equally urged Ileana on and cringed at her lethal edge in the arena (I always bet on Lysandra though). I have to say also that I thought and almost hoped that meeting a fellow Spartan maybe Lysandra would find a worthy male but see why they had the relationship they had... and who knows right? I can really go on and on about this book but really all there is to say is that Russell Whitfield has done an amazing job with Lysandra. Bravo!!

P.S. I saw there is an up coming third installment, Imperatrix, I'm wasting away in agony at the thought of how long I'm going to have to wait. See this is the problem with being an addict and there is no temporary



fix for this kind, lol.

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### **Ruby Ridge says**

I really loved Gladiatrix and this is the follow-up. Once again Russel Whitfield has hit it out of the park. The action flows and keeps the pages turning at a fast pace. Love Lysandra and her story, Aesalon Nocturna also is a worthy opponent. The side stories are setting the scene for the final novel of the trilogy. Hell of a book.

Why four stars not five for a book this good - this is my protest at the unnecessary sex that really seems to have been put in at the publishers insistence. In #1 this was an integral part of the story and necessary, in this book it really feels like an add-on. Why do publishers insist on this? Well, I know why but it detracts from the story.

Read this book!

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### **A.J. Armitt says**

I have to confess that I've only just read Gladiatrix after it was recommended to me, and I was thrilled not to have to wait three years as some others have had to read the sequel.

Gladiatrix for me, was a 5 star novel, Roma Victrix is even better (if that's possible!)

The characters are more rounded and better developed, the fight scenes grittier, and the women even sexier than before.

Lysandra is a real gem. Invincible, yet vulnerable; her pompous but naive belief that the Spartan way is always best, is not only amusing at times, but an insight into what made these people such fierce and formidable warriors. She is easily one of my favourite characters of all time!

I thoroughly enjoyed the parallel story lines concerning Valerian, Varia and Ileana; their trials and tribulations gave the book more depth and at times I found myself conflicted as to whom I wanted to cheer for.

Bravo Russell, and please don't make us wait too long for the follow up. :)

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### **Julia says**

Roma Victrix aún no ha sido publicado en español, cosa que ansío, por lo que he tenido que leerlo en inglés y debo decir que el estilo de Russell Whitfield es más que magnífico en su idioma original. Si la traducción de su primera novela era trepidante y se leía rápido, Roma Victrix te atrapa en un remolino de emociones, batallas y mujeres fuertes y sensuales del que es extremadamente difícil despegarse.

Nos encontramos nuevamente con Lysandra y con unos pocos personajes que sobrevivieron a la primera novela, y Whitfield nos muestra como una persona puede madurar y cambiar tanto en unos pocos años. Pero lo genial de su trabajo es que no nos entrega una nueva Lysandra por completo, sino que un Fénix en su

vejez, que deberá inmolarse antes y sufrir el calor de las llamas antes de renacer como la criatura magnífica que sabemos que es.

La continuación mantiene los elementos que hicieron a Gladiadora uno de mis libros favoritos y le agrega nuevos elementos y personajes que ayudan a Roma Victrix a transformarse en uno de los mejores retratos que he leído sobre el misterioso y casi desconocido mundo de las gladiadoras.

Con solo dos novelas a su haber, Russell Whitfield ha logrado transformarse en uno de mis autores preferidos. No puedo esperar por la publicación de Emperatrix, no dudo de que será aún más épico que los dos anteriores.

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### **Paisley Smith says**

A fantastic sequel to Gladiatrix. Whitfield carried Lysandra's story further, introducing us to new characters and reacquainting us with beloved characters from Gladiatrix. I'd have to say these two books were my favorites of 2011. They are keepers on my shelf and I hope Mr. Whitfield is furiously writing a third. I would love to see this series come alive in a premium channel series. LOVED IT!!!!

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