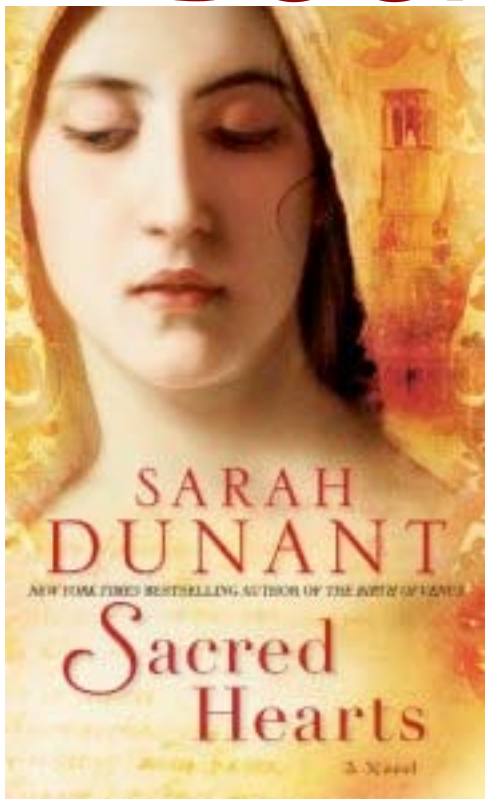




**BAYVARIAN  
BARBARIAN**  
BREWING CO.

# BattleAxe's BOOK OF THE MONTH



## **Sacred Hearts**

**by: Sara Dunant**

Dunant (*The Birth of Venus*) revisits 16th-century Italy, where the convents are filled with the daughters of noblemen who are unable or unwilling to pay a dowry to marry them off. The Santa Caterina convent's newest novice, Serafina, is miserable, having been shunted off by her father to separate her from a forbidden romance. She also has a singing voice that will be the glory of the convent and—more importantly to some—a substantial bonus for the convent's coffers. The convent's apothecary, Suora Zuana, strikes up a friendship with Serafina, enlisting her as an assistant in the convent dispensary and herb garden, but despite Zuana's attempts to help the girl adjust, Serafina remains focused on escaping. Serafina's constant struggle and her faith (of a type different from that common to convents) challenge Zuana's worldview and the political structure of Santa Caterina. A cast of complex characters breathe new life into the classic star-crossed lovers trope while affording readers a look at a facet of Renaissance life beyond the far more common viscounts and courtesans. Dunant's an accomplished storyteller, and this is a rich and rewarding novel.

429 West 3rd St. Wmspt | 322-5050 | [www.bavarianbarbarian.com](http://www.bavarianbarbarian.com)