Roberto Tiraboschi was born in Bergamo, Italy. He is known as one of Italy’s most stylish screenwriters and playwrights, having worked with Nobel laureate Dario Fo and on screenplays for Italian directors, including Marco Peeruccio, Silvio Soldini, and Liliana Cavani. His novels have enjoyed success with both critics and readers. The Eye Stone (Europa, 2015) was his English debut.

Katherine Gregor translates from Italian, Russian and French. Her published translations include Stone Goddess by Luigi Pirandello, Eugene Onegin by Alexander Pushkin, The Whales Know by Pino Cacucci, and The Battle of Shadows by Andrea Japp. She also writes plays, fiction and a regular blog, scribedoll.wordpress.com.

In a medieval Venice ravaged by famine and orgiastic revelries, the protagonists of The Apothecary’s Shop explore the depths of the city and the paths to the supernatural in their search for a missing child.

The young Costanza, scion of the noble Grimani family, has disappeared. Edgardo, the family scribe, vows to return the girl to her family—an ambitious enterprise given his failing eyesight. Physical ailments and emotional torment hinder Edgardo in his search, for as he undertakes this perilous investigation, images of his own lost love—Kallis, a slave from the Far East who disappeared in a storm years earlier—are resurrected.

Help arrives in the form ofabella, the only female doctor in Venice. From her, Edgardo learns of occult medical practices and of Sabbatai’s Apothecary, where the city’s most desperate citizens seek heretical remedies and concoctions to soothe their suffering. It is here that the secret of Costanza’s disappearance may lie.

Venal physicians and legitimate healers, unscrupulous relatives, mystics and apothecaries, wealthy nobility and the wretched poor, undertakers, Eastern merchants, African slave traders, each plays a role in this ingeniously constructed mystery set in the busy and licentious trade port of Venice.

The Apothecary’s Shop is an erudite literary thriller in the vein of Umberto Eco’s The Name of the Rose and takes readers on an astonishing voyage into a city both distant yet familiar.