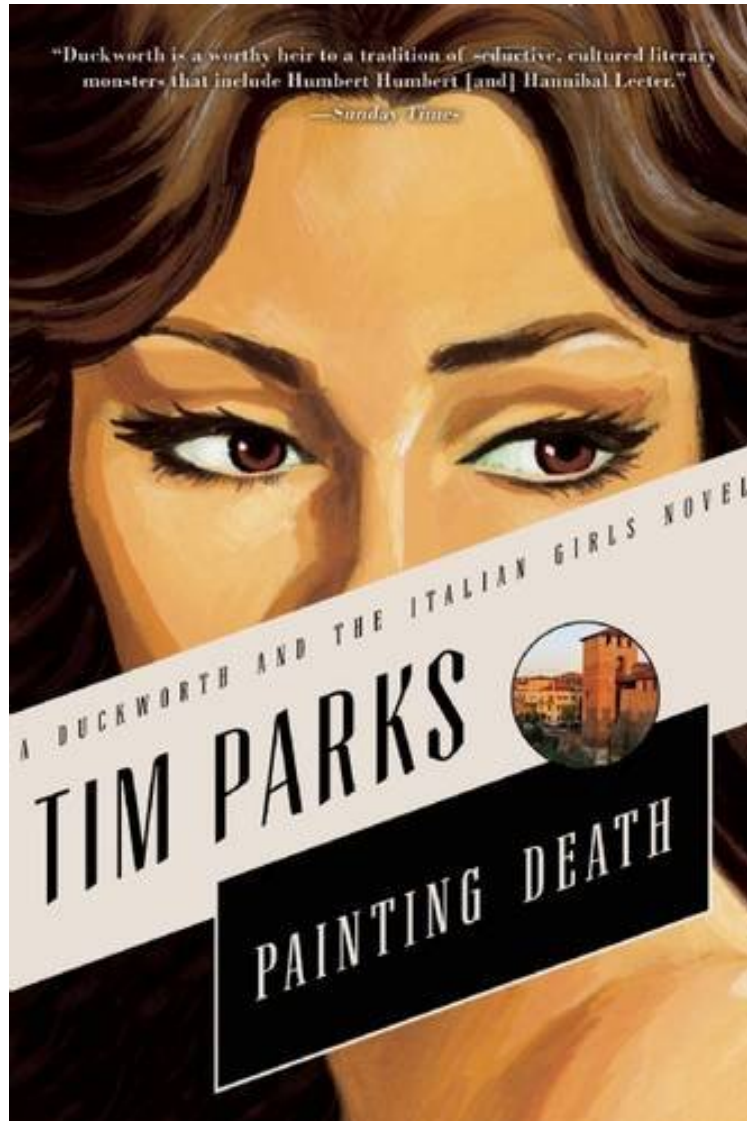


(Download pdf) Painting Death: A Novel (Duckworth and the Italian Girls)

Painting Death: A Novel (Duckworth and the Italian Girls)

Tim Parks

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Tim Parks : Painting Death: A Novel (Duckworth and the Italian Girls) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Painting Death: A Novel (Duckworth and the Italian Girls):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Dying for art?By Jill MeyerBritish ex-pat Morris Duckworth is a man with a troubled past. He has moved from London to Verona, Italy as a young man and has murdered and married his way to a certain success. He's a wealthy industrialist with a rich wife, two kids, a mistress, and a deep love for art. He also has a group of ghosts - seven, I think - who are the murder victims he has dispatched on his way to prosperity. And even though he has murdered them, they are quite fond of him. In the years following their deaths, they have

advised him and, in some ways, comforted him. Morris can rationalise each one's murder and they are a merry group - Morris and his departed. British author Tim Parks introduced Morris Duckworth back in the early 1990's in "Cara Massimina", as a young man-on-the-make in 1980's Verona. Morris is a young man with an undistinguished past in Britain and a seemingly equally undistinguished future in Italy. But circumstances - and luck and the incompetence of the Italian police and judicial systems - turned Morris's life into a success. And as he settles into the last part of his life, he decides he wants to both give back to his adopted city and honor his own peculiarities by putting together an art exhibit about murder. Sounds like sort of a bad topic for an exhibition, but Tim Parks, in his new novel, "Painting Death", brings Morris's life full circle. There are many venal characters in "Painting Death", in particular the Catholic clergy, the local politicians, and the principals in the Veronese art world. The greediness and hypocrisy shown by these characters rival anything in Morris's own murderous past. Morris just wants to give the world a picture of murder - as depicted in great art, from all eras - and then...what, retire? Go live with his mistress? Give up his wealth? Who knows...and readers can supply their own interpretations to Morris Duckworth's motives and actions. Morris Duckworth - as drawn by Tim Parks - is smart, greedy, not used to suffering fools gladly, and, for the most part, lovable. Even his victims love him. They might get exasperated with him, but love him they do. Maybe they think their murders were necessary - who knows. After three books in the Duckworth series, Tim Parks "knows" his characters. He joins them together - the dead and the undead - to give the reader an enjoyable look at a man, a family, a city, and a bunch of paintings, in a modern-day morality play. (You don't have to read the previous books in the series to "get" "Painting Death". I read the first one - "Cara Massimina" - but haven't read the second one yet. But if you start with "Painting Death", please note there are two characters called "Massamina" {or "Mimi"}). One is a ghost of Morris's first love and the other is Morris's daughter. It's a bit confusing...)

Morris Duckworth has a dark past. Having married and murdered his way into a wealthy Italian family, he has become a respected member of Veronese business life. But it's not enough. Never satisfied with being anything short of the best, he comes up with a plan to put on the most exciting art exhibition of the decade, based on a subject close to his heart: killing. All the great slaughters of scripture and classical times will be on show, from Cain and Abel, to Brutus and Caesar. But as Morris meets stiff resistance from the director of Verona's Castelvecchio museum, everything starts to unravel around him. His children are rebelling, his mistress is asking for more than he wants to give, his wife is increasingly attached to her aging confessor, and, worst of all, it's getting harder and harder to ignore the ghosts that swirl around him, and the skeletons rattling in every closet. The shame of it is that Morris Arthur Duckworth really did not want to have to kill again. Tim Parks' acclaimed Duckworth trilogy has been thirty years in the making. In *Painting Death*, he brings it—and his serial-killer alter ego—to a very fitting—and very funny—end. Skyhorse Publishing, as well as our Arcade, Yucca, and Good Books imprints, are proud to publish a broad range of books for readers interested in fiction—novels, novellas, political and medical thrillers, comedy, satire, historical fiction, romance, erotic and love stories, mystery, classic literature, folklore and mythology, literary classics including Shakespeare, Dumas, Wilde, Cather, and much more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home.

"Duckworth is a worthy heir to a tradition of seductive, cultured literary monsters that include Humbert Humbert [and] Hannibal Lecter."—Sunday Times "Hovering adroitly between tragedy and farce . . . a good novel to savour by the pool in Tuscany this summer."—Times (London) "Neatly written, full of calamitous moments in which the comedy is suddenly elbowed aside by genuine emotion."—Spectator "One to relish . . . sharp, funny and satirical, with a wonderfully overblown ending."—Guardian "This is a fiendishly clever pitch-black comedy — if not a work of art then a supremely diverting caper." —The Australian "Painting Death is a book that questions the idea of murder as entertainment while also making murder entertaining. It's supposed to make us squirm and it does."—Herald Scotland "Parks is at his strongest depicting the art world and its intrigues and intellectual snobbery."—Financial Times "In this final chapter of the Morris Duckworth trilogy . . . Think Patricia Highsmith meets Jeff Lindsay . . . as Duckworth's voice provides a strong dose of humor." —Booklist "Admirers of Parks's mainstream fiction should enjoy this black comedy." —Publishers Weekly "Colorful, often amusing, intermittently suspenseful . . . Parks uses the museum intrigue to draw, as he has done in his more serious efforts, a vivid, impressionistic portrait of contemporary Italy." —The New York Times