



Cara Massimina: A Novel (Duckworth and the Italian Girls)

Tim Parks

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The first Duckworth novel is "Better than *Silence of the Lambs* . . . Macabre fun orchestrated with immaculate precision. It's a killer" (*Los Angeles Times*)

Morris Duckworth teaches English to the pampered rich of Verona, and Morris is not pleased. Living a meager existence in a squalid apartment, he regards his privileged students with envy and disdain, first wreaking revenge by petty theft, and then, like all good criminals, graduating to grander larceny. When one of those students, a beautiful but vapid heiress named Massimina, falls in love with him, Morris can almost smell upward mobility. However, after the girl's mother—much to his chagrin—unequivocally forbids her from seeing him, he hits upon a perfect scheme: he convinces the besotted girl to run off with him, then sends ransom notes to her family. Following a frightening logic, Morris's subversions become deeper and darker. Soon events are spiraling with eerie momentum into a nightmare of deception and violence.

The first novel in what has become the Duckworth in Verona trilogy, *Cara Massimina* is a comic thriller that will leave readers laughing out loud in mortified delight.

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