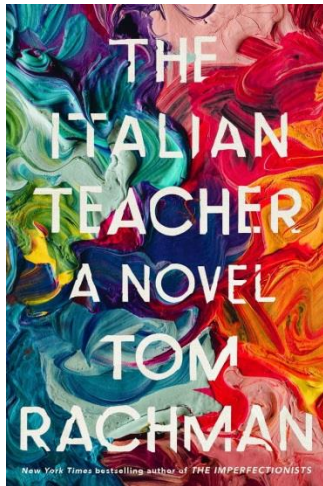


Spotlight on Books



If you are like me, it may take some patience to finally get invested in Tom Rachman's novel *The Italian Teacher*. However, fans of Robertson Davies will likely have less difficulty as I found their styles to be quite similar.

The titular Italian teacher, Pinch, is an awkward man whose insecurities are perhaps beyond the typical given that he has lived his life in the shadow of a world famous artist whose parenting skills are sorely lacking. *The Italian Teacher* raises some provocative questions about art but it is the father/son dynamic that ultimately held my attention.

It helps that Pinch is so richly developed. Wholly realistic, he's a flawed, if not occasionally a frustrating character.

The settings, too, ring authentic and engaging (especially the scenes set in Italy) and while it is a complete story of a life, time jumps keep the action well-paced rather than monotonous.

John Mutford, Library Manager

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