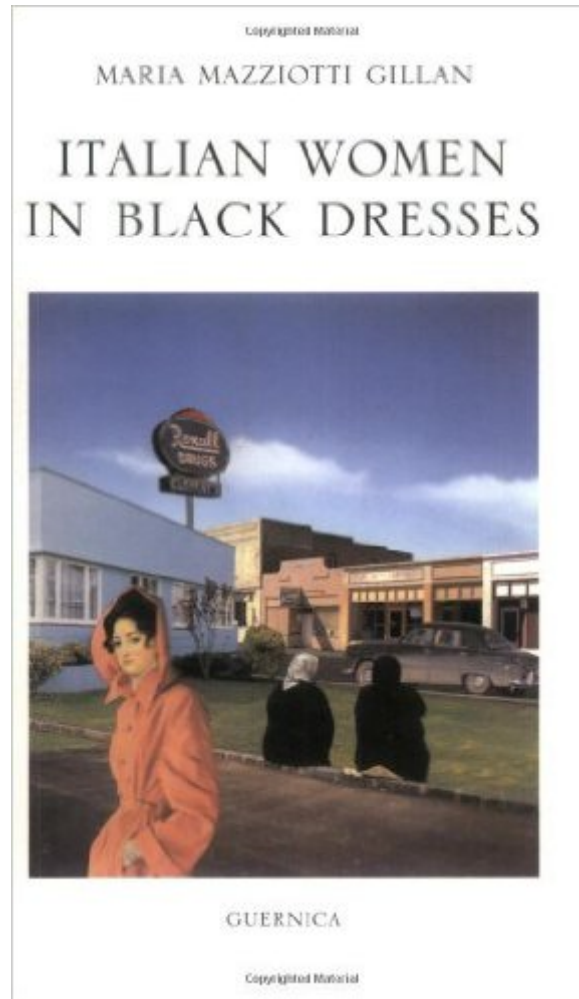


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# Italian Women In Black Dresses (Essential Poets Series 116)



## Synopsis

Written to read like a memoir, this collection of poetry details the life of a family across generations and provides a moving and haunting portrait of the Italian mother who is the center around which this family revolves. But this is much more than a story about ethnicity; it transcends any single identity and explores instead the many ways in which people learn to identify themselves.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is such a brilliant, risk-taking moving book, I can only recommend that you read it immediately. You won't be sorry. Here we have poems about growing up, incidents in high school and grammar school. the life of an ethnic Italian neighborhood policed by the old ladies in their black dresses. The book traces this woman's life through girlhood, the books she read like Nancy Drew and the stars she admired like Doris Day to a time when her husband of many years becomes critically ill with Parkinson's Disease. I don't know how anyone could put this down without wanting to return to it again and again. Beautiful!!!! Also read Maria Mazziotti Gillan's other books. She is a poet who transforms the ordinary, sees below its surface, and allows us to see as well.

This is a wonderful poetry book for all lovers of poetry not just for a particular ethnicity. The poems were fresh, reminiscent of childhood, grandmothers, ethnic neighborhoods and life in the 50's. It is one I will keep reading repeatedly. I purchased this book on the recommendation of another poetry

lover and will thank her for the recommendation.

Though this poetry is provincial in form and content, it has a heart and its content often transcends its craft. Still, it's the sort of poetry that the average reader who is not in love with the craft and knowledgeable about it will enjoy. What it lacks in sophistication, it often makes up for in feeling and insight into the human family in its everyday life--especially the Italian American family of New Jersey. A pleasant and easy read, if not terribly original in style.

These poems hit me in the heart. The narrator's handful of vomited "black blood" of her dying mother. It's hard to go on into the book after taking that in, and contemplating my own life. The poems offer gardens to survive these abyss moments... as does life one hopes... I love how these poems move; one in couplets, one in stanzas, one in prose paragraphs, tumbling after one another, one in full memoir story, and so on. It is a full meal, a deep read that will trigger your memories. Memory rules here. forever, Annie Annie Lanzillotto author of "L is for Lion: an Italian Bronx butch freedom memoir" SUNY Press and "Schistsong" BORDIGHERA Press [www.annielanzillotto.com](http://www.annielanzillotto.com) L is for Lion: An Italian Bronx Butch Freedom Memoir (SUNY series in Italian/American Culture) Schistsong (Via Folios) Blue Pill Carry My Coffee (Live) Eleven Recitations

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