



Book Review: The Forgotten Garden

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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"The Forgotten Garden" written in 2008 by Kate Morton, is a fictional mystery that tells the tale of a woman from her childhood through to her death and the characters who she encounters.

The story begins when the main character, Nell, is a young girl. She is hiding on a ship in obedience to the woman who instructed her to do so. When she arrives in Australia she finds herself alone and, when the dockmaster decides that she has been abandoned, she is taken in as part of his family. Her memories of this are blurred and she even forgets the fact that this is not her birth family.

Everything is good and she seems happy until she reaches her twenty-first birthday. At that time, the dockmaster decides to tell her the truth about the fact that she is not really his daughter and with that disclosure, Nell's world is rocked. She not only loses trust but also acquires an independence that she would otherwise have not have had. The worst part, however, is that she cannot remember enough of her youth to fill in the parts of her past that trouble her.

The only clue to her past is in the tiny white suitcase that had accompanied her across the ocean, from England to Australia. Within that case is a volume of fairy tales which ends up being the link to Nell's family. Nell makes an attempt to find her roots by travelling to Blackhurst Manor on the Cornish coast where the Montrachet family lived. What she finds, however, does not answer her questions but does form the foundation for a further search that her granddaughter makes after Nell's death.

When Cassandra finds out that her grandmother had purchased a house in England, she decides to make a visit there to see if she can unravel the mystery that she has been struggling with about the family origins. And her trip does not go unrewarded for she not only finds important information but also meets individuals who help her to put the pieces of the past together. You will enjoy travelling with Cassandra as she crosses the ocean as well as a lifetime of secrets in order to discover the details that affected all members of her family for the rest of their lives.

Kate Morton is an internationally best-selling author and this book helps us to understand why she has achieved this recognition. Her imagination captures ours as we move through the pages with emotions that include fear, confusion and hope.

"The Forgotten Garden" and the house that is on the same property is described as part of a physical maze but the story itself is also told in the form of a psychological maze. It provides an interesting and curious journey that leads to a beautiful place. The 549 pages have all the elements that make a good mystery - unique characters and a complex plot that is revealed to the reader one piece at a time.

At the end of the book is a Readers Club Guide with "Suggested Discussion Points".

If you are looking for a captivating mystery that spins a yarn about how choices of one generation affect the future of following generations, then "The Forgotten Garden" is an excellent choice. It is well-written and told in a manner that keeps you not only interested but begging for more.