



The Savage Garden

By Savage Garden

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From the author of the acclaimed national bestseller *Amagansett* comes an even more remarkable novel set in the Tuscan hills: the story of two murders, four hundred years apart-and the ties that bind them together.

Adam Banting, a somewhat aimless young scholar at Cambridge University, is called to his professor's office one afternoon and assigned a special summer project: to write a scholarly monograph about a famous garden built in the 1500s. Dedicated to the memory of Signor Docci's dead wife, the garden is a mysterious world of statues, grottoes, meandering rills, and classical inscriptions. But during his three-week sojourn at the villa, Adam comes to suspect that clues to a murder are buried in the strange iconography of the garden: the long-dead Signor Docci most likely killed his wife and filled her memorial garden with pointers as to both the method and the motive of his crime.

As the mystery of the garden unfolds, Adam finds himself drawn into a parallel intrigue. Through his evolving relationship with the lady of the house-the ailing, seventy-something Signora Docci-he finds clues to yet another possible murder, this one much more recent. The signora's eldest son was shot by Nazi officers on the third floor of the villa, and her husband, now dead, insisted that the area be sealed and preserved forever. Like the garden, the third-floor rooms are frozen in time. Delving into his subject, Adam begins to suspect that his summer project might be a setup. Is he really just the naïve student, stumbling upon clues, or is Signora Docci using him to discover for herself the true meaning of the villa's murderous past?

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The Savage Garden By Savage Garden Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Two murders committed 400 years apart form the core of British author Mills's outstanding second novel (after *Amagansett*, which won a CWA Dagger Award). In 1958, Cambridge undergraduate Adam Strickland, who's studying a curious Tuscan Renaissance garden for his art history thesis, is equally intrigued by both the garden of the Villa Docci estate and its elderly owner, Signora Francesca Docci. Built by the villa's first owner, Federico Docci, in 1577, the garden was intended as a memorial to his wife, Flora, who died when she was only 25. In the course of his research, Adam begins to sense that events, both past and present, are not as clear-cut as they appear. In particular, he discovers that there are several versions of the death of Signora Docci's oldest son, Emilio, who was shot by the villa's German occupiers at the end of WWII. Adam is hailed by all when he comes up with a novel theory explaining Flora's death in 1548, but when he begins to speculate on Emilio's demise, he finds himself in serious danger. This engrossing literary novel, like *Amagansett*, deserves to be a bestseller. (May)

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From [Booklist](#)

Mills' second novel carves out new territory for the British author, whose superb debut, *Amagansett* (2004), told the story of a Basque fisherman on Long Island. This one, though still set in the post-World War II era, takes place in Tuscany, where Adam Banting, a Cambridge architecture student, is doing research on a famous Renaissance garden. But as he digs into the history and iconography of the garden, he comes to believe that the seemingly tranquil bower offers a road map to how its original owner murdered his wife. Similarly, as Adam learns more about the family who now owns the garden, he follows the trail of a more contemporary murder. This sort of jumping between historical and contemporary crimes has become commonplace, even clichéd, in highbrow literary thrillers, but Mills uses the technique effectively, generating tension on both fronts and introducing some dizzying plot machinations. Adam is a bit too callow to hold our attention the way the robust Basque did in *Amagansett*, but there is plenty here to captivate those who like high culture mixed with high crime (fans of Iain Pears, for example). *Bill Ott*

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Review

"A romantic and gracefully executed literary puzzle."

—*New York Times Book Review*

"A sumptuous tale of multiple mysteries, family intrigues and hearty Continental flavor that demonstrates Mills has earned a prime place at the crime fiction table."

—*Baltimore Sun*

"Alluring, mysterious."

—*New York Times*

"Outstanding."

—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

"In his first suspense novel, *Amagansett*, Mark Mills displayed a literary voice that was thoroughly embracing. The same is true in *The Savage Garden*."

—*New York Daily News*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jose Murry:

Playing with family inside a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with close friends is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try matter that really opposite from that. 1 activity that make you not experience tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition details. Even you love The Savage Garden, you are able to enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't understand it, oh come on its identified as reading friends.

Troy Munoz:

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Susan Dixon:

With this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more important than other. Do you want to become among it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time very little but quite enough to have a look at some books. One of several books in the top listing in your reading list is usually The Savage Garden. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Mountains can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking up and review this guide you can get many advantages.

Miriam Normandin:

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