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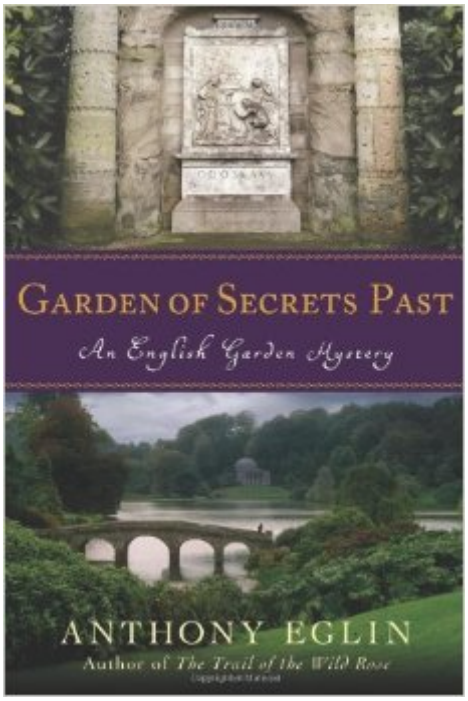
Garden Of Secrets Past: An English Garden Mystery (English Garden Mysteries)



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Synopsis

Can Lawrence Kingston unearth the key to a deadly secret hidden by a mysterious ancient garden inscription in the newest English Garden Mystery? Codebreakers have tried for centuries to decipher the enigmatic inscription on a strange monument in the garden at Sturminster Hall, but no one has ever succeeded. When a murder occurs on the garden grounds, the intellectual puzzle becomes all too real, and Dr. Lawrence Kingston--retired professor of botany and reluctant sleuth--is called in to investigate. Other than a scrap of paper bearing a random sequence of letters found on the victim, the police have no meaningful clues. Convinced that the crime must be linked to the seemingly unbreakable centuries-old code, Kingston begins hunting for clues that will help him unmask the murderer’s identity as well as the arcane mystery of the monument. But he quickly finds himself swept along in the dangerous undertow of a centuries’ old family conflict and a second murder, by poisoning. What could be so valuable, so important to justify such extreme measures and complex codes to keep sacrosanct for over two centuries?To unlock the garden’s dark secret, Kingston must delve into the brilliant minds of three famous men to fathom what part each may have played in masterminding the riddle: an Admiral hailed as father of Britain’s navy, the author of England’s most celebrated poem, and Great Britain’s first Prime Minister. But as Kingston’s investigation into an England’s past leads him closer to a killer in the very dangerous present, his own prospects for survival start to look less and less assured.

Book Information

Series: English Garden Mysteries (Book 5)
Hardcover: 304 pages
Publisher: Minotaur Books; 1st edition (August 16, 2011)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0312648367
ISBN-13: 978-0312648367
Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 1.1 x 8.3 inches
Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces
Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (21 customer reviews)
Best Sellers Rank: #1,000,800 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 inÂ Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Gardening & Landscape Design > English Gardens #3911 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > British & Irish > Historical #6212 inÂ Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > British Detectives

Customer Reviews

Book Review: Garden of Secrets Past by Anthony EglinMinotaur Books, 2011I have been a big fan of Anthony Eglin's books since reading the first English Garden Mystery, The Blue Rose. He caught me immediately with his protagonist, Lawrence Kingston, who was a learned and avid gardener as well as a bit of a sleuth in the traditional English model. I considered Lawrence Kingston a bit of a garden-digging Hercule Poirot. Sure, he doesn't get things right all the time and he is often a bit naive about the personal danger he places himself in, but he loves the hunt like a faithful hound who never strays from the scent. Of course, in these books the scent is more likely to be from a beautiful rose or fragrant lily than that of a fox.In Garden of Secrets Past, Eglin steps up the mystery several notches with the inclusion of even more shady characters, a secret code and a bit of a love interest for, no longer young, Kingston. He also expands our knowledge of Kingston's relationship with his his friend, Andrew, who looks staged to become a sidekick in the vein of Poirot's Captain Hastings or Miss Marples various friends and relations that accompany her on her mysteries.While the gardening information is a bit light in this episode of the English Garden Mystery series, the mystery is top-notch. Sure, the story revolves around a major garden, but we don't get lessons in Water Lily propagation or the reasons why a blue rose is basically impossible. It mattered little in the end, though, as the mystery pulled me through the book quite quickly. Despite reading it on a vacation in Sicily, between family visits, long meals and excursions, I finished the book in about 4 days.

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