



Garden of Lamentations

Deborah Crombie

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Scotland Yard detectives Duncan Kincaid and Gemma James are drawn into separate investigations that hold disturbing—and deadly—complications for their own lives in this powerful mystery in the bestselling series.

On a beautiful morning in mid-May, the body of a young woman is found in one of Notting Hill's private gardens. To passersby, the pretty girl in the white dress looks as if she's sleeping. But Reagan Keating has been murdered, and the lead detective, DI Kerry Boatman, turns to Gemma James for help. She and Gemma worked together on a previous investigation, and Gemma has a personal connection to the case: Reagan was the nanny of a child who attends the same dance studio as Toby, Gemma and Kincaid's son.

Gemma soon discovers that Reagan's death is the second tragedy in this exclusive London park; a few months before, a young boy died in a tragic accident. But when still another of the garden residents meets a violent end, it becomes clear that there are more sinister forces at play. Boatman and Gemma must stop the killer before another innocent life is taken.

While his wife is consumed with her new case, Kincaid finds himself plagued by disturbing questions about several previous—and seemingly unrelated—cases involving members of the force. If his suspicions are correct and the crimes are linked, are his family and friends in mortal danger as well? Kincaid's hunch turns to certainty when a Metropolitan Police officer close to him is brutally attacked. There's a traitor in the ranks, and now Kincaid wonders if he can trust anyone.

As Gemma begins to see a solution to her case, she realizes she holds a child's fate in her hands. Can she do the right thing? And can Kincaid rely on his friends, both inside and outside the Scotland Yard force, to stand beside him as he faces the deadliest challenge of his career?

Garden of Lamentations Details

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From Reader Review *Garden of Lamentations* for online ebook

DJ Sakata says

Favorite Quotes:

Pathologists are insatiably curious. That's why we do it, most of us. Although maybe there are some who just like really bad smells and have no people skills.

Don't say you don't want to speak ill of the dead. The dead are dead and it won't hurt them.

Lisa Su, Gemma decided, might have been pretty if not for what seemed a perpetually angry expression. Her eyes protruded slightly, as if pushed out from the pressure within.

My Review:

I was stunned when I noticed I was reading an author for the first while picking up book number seventeen in a series. I had not contemplated such a vast amount of books in one series since my Nancy Drew years. While I am certain I would have had an easier time beginning the tale had I read the previous books, prior experience was not necessary as the story was more than steady on strong dancers legs and quite capable to stand-alone. The plot was complex, ingenious, and brilliantly crafted. Ms. Crombie must be wicked smart and at least a tad twisted to have such a profound facility for evil genius lurking about her headspace. I doubt her neighbors ever fully relax or dare to disturb her peace. Her writing was hypnotic, packed with peculiar and intriguing characters, and densely detailed with a treasure trove of fascinating and multi-faceted story threads knitting themselves into vivid imagery. I covet her mad skills.

Jaclyn says

Garden of Lamentations is the seventeenth book in Crombie's long-standing series. Fans of the series won't want to miss the latest books; however, as a fan, I will admit to feeling less excited about this addition to the series.

What I did like about *Lamentations* is that it brings readers back to characters that are familiar and propels the series forward with Duncan's investigation into potential corruption in the Scotland Yard. The previous book did touch upon this, but in *Lamentations* this is taken further. Parallel to Duncan's unsanctioned detective work is Gemma's investigation into the murder of a nanny of which there is a connection to a friend of the family. The fact that there are two mysteries running in the is not generally something that would be a detraction, yet in the case here, I felt that it brought the two leads further apart. A big part of the draw of this series is how Duncan and Gemma work together and it feels like it's been so long since these two have actually worked together on a case. The fact that Duncan and Gemma were working two very different cases and practically didn't interact throughout the book was rather a disappointment to me. I love that the series has grown to incorporate other characters like Doug, Melody, Hazel and so on, but the core characters and their own family could have used more page time.

Garden of Lamentations is a solid addition to the series and it shifts the mysteries from random crimes to ones that are intrinsic to the police work that Duncan and Gemma do. The focus on police corruption is

interesting and will appeal to fans of Louise Penny's latest, *A Great Reckoning*. Luckily the investigation into Scotland Yard is not wrapped in *Lamentations* leaving readers looking forward to more in this series.

Kyla Zerbes says

Not the best of these novels. Both detectives have separate cases going on and barely speak to one another throughout the whole novel, despite living in the same house. All I can say is that this really exemplifies what working women go through vs working men. Gemma is saddled with 90% of the child minding and chores while also having a FT job. That Duncan was trying to protect the family doesn't really make a great excuse and I found it hard to believe that the conspiracy was so all consuming that he kept forgetting to check on his father after his hospital stay. He seemed to care more about his ex-boss. The pacing was also a little weird. The book was dragging and then suddenly was over.

Lobstergirl says

A rancid melding of chick lit and police procedural, with endless children and cups of tea.

Una Tiers says

This goes to my could not finish. The start was a little confusing, then the pace picked up, but then it fell flat again. Not for me but others may enjoy.
Only partly read one time.

Patty says

Garden Of Lamentations

By

Deborah Crombie

This book is in a series that I have read and loved for years. It involves Kincaid and Gemma and all of their children and animals! It's a mixed family that only grows closer and closer the longer they are together. Gemma has her own forensic issues to solve...a murder of a young nanny...while Kincaid is working on finding rotten apples in the department. The book is intense and really good. Readers who love this kind of book should love this one!

They are always beautifully written. They are always intense. They are always a delight to read.

Fondly...Patty

Asheley says

I started this series with *Garden of Lamentations*, which is the 17th installment. I was so nervous to do this, since I usually only start with the first book in the series, but I am really enjoying British mysteries and crime stories these days, so I figured why not? Ultimately I'm glad that I took this leap; I liked this one enough that I want to go back and start from the beginning.

Gemma and Kincaid obviously have an extensive history since this series is named after the both of them: the Duncan Kincaid & Gemma James Series. By this time in the series, the two are married with a young child, Charlotte, that they are parenting after her biological parents were killed, presumably in an earlier installment in this series. In *Garden of Lamentations*, Gemma is investigating the death of a young girl found in a garden in a Notting Hill neighborhood and Kincaid is investigating corruption in the police division, which leads him down a trail of attacks and past murders.

If I am being honest, I have to admit that I expected these two to cross paths with their work more than they did. I was surprised that their cases were two almost-independent storylines. The story read (to me) like two married people with similar jobs who are both working, but on different cases. Of course, there is nothing wrong with this – it just wasn't what I was expecting. I loved that throughout the story, while there was the police procedure and investigation going on, there was also the relationship between Kincaid and Gemma. Their marriage and personal lives sort of hovered over the story. I personally tend to love the domestic, private side of fictional detectives' lives and how their lives intersect their investigations, so I enjoyed it very much when I got glimpses into the inner workings of their family.

I loved getting to know these characters and their network of friends and coworkers. This book has a remarkably British feel to it, down to the verbiage and the setting. I absolutely love that. There is an amazing map in the front of the book that I put to good use. I found the story – especially Gemma's portion of the story – easy to visualize as I followed the clues along with her, tracking down the young girl's killer. I was thrilled that I did not suspect nor figure out the whodunnit in either case – Gemma's nor Kincaid's – which kept me on my toes throughout the entire story and made the reading consistently interesting for me.

Of note: There are tons of references to what I can only assume are things from earlier books – things like earlier investigations, past relationships, friends or coworkers that have died in installments prior to this one, and so forth. While I was able to pick this book up and follow along easily enough, there were plenty of “past things” in the story that I wish I could have known more about. For example, it is mentioned in the story about Charlotte not being the biological child of Gemma and Kincaid and that's okay, but it makes me fidgety about how much I don't know about the backstory. In addition, in the previous book, there was a deadly bombing that some of these characters are still adjusting to emotionally. As a new reader to this series, I didn't know much about this and had to do a little bit of backwards research because it was referenced multiple times. Again, none of these things affected how much I enjoyed *Garden of Lamentations*, but I am itching to go ahead and start back at the beginning as soon as possible because I feel like there are so many of the pieces of this puzzle missing and it drives me a little crazy.

I'm honestly not sure if this is the end of the series or not, since I'm new to Gemma and Kincaid and their world. I hope not. Now that I'm here and I've looked around a little bit, I want more. It seems that these two detectives have a very loyal fanbase. I think *Garden of Lamentations* is a solid story with great characters and a fabulous London setting, and I'm so thrilled to have found a new author and series to dive into.

I received this book for free from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review. Thank you, William Morrow Books!

Find this review and more like it on my blog, Into the Hall of Books!

Sarah says

I listened to the audiobook and it was a truly fabulous experience, well paced and exquisitely narrated, as usual, by Gerard Doyle. For me, the best thing about a really good book, in print or audio format, is when you can actually picture the scenes unfold in your mind's eye. And this happens to me a lot when I'm reading or re-reading this series.

For anyone who hasn't followed Gemma James, Duncan Kincaid and their family and friends from the start, be warned: this is not really a standalone novel. The author does explain past cases that are referred to in the story (and let's be honest, we all need a reminder!), but it seems to me that it would be more coherent reading the series in order.

Deborah Crombie and Louise Penny are definitely my favourite contemporary crime writers. I can't get enough of them... which is why I am very concerned, like you Claude, that this #17 in the series feels like a concluding novel. No loose ends in the final chapter. Oh no! Please don't let us down Ms Crombie!

Michele says

I enjoyed this but I am really, really glad that (please, pretty please) we are done with Duncan and the corruption in the Met. If I remember correctly that story arc goes back two books and threatened to ruin this series for me. It just wasn't believable and took away from the real enjoyment here which is Duncan, Gemma, their kids, their families, Melody and Doug and a little mystery thrown in for good measure. I have my fingers crossed that Ms. Crombie will remember that for book #18.

Kim says

Tough review to write. I used to love this series and Duncan (Kincaid) and Gemma were some of my favorite fictional characters. Ever since they got more and more kids added to their plate... the stories have suffered.

This latest story shows the rift between Kincaid and Gemma growing larger due to their home life and workloads but luckily in the end things work out ok for them. What were we expecting? Crombie would never split these two up.

In my opinion the story would have been better without the underlying 1993/94 story stuck inside, just references would have been fine. Unfortunately Gemma's side of the "mystery of the month" was way too easy to figure out whodunnit. Kincaid's story was much more juicy here.

I finished it, but I wasn't happy while reading it. Kind of a forced reading. I'll probably read the next one but

maybe by the time it comes out in 2021 or whatever I will have already forgotten about the series.

Ellen says

Other than Louise Penny, Deborah Crombie is my favorite mystery writer. Her Gemma and Duncan Kincaid series continues to develop the personalities of the main characters as well as the supporting characters, including Doug, Melody, Hazel and more. Gemma gets involved in solving a murder, while Duncan appears preoccupied and secretive. His situation involves the danger involved with outing dirty cops involved in a series of murders. Great read!

Diane S ? says

Like a visit to catch up with old friends, that is how I feel about the Kincaid and James series. Both detectives, married to each other, children, pets working out of different stations and not enough time in a day. Been there, done that but my commitments don't include solving a murder or dealing with corruption in the Met. Gemma becomes embroiled in the suspicious death of a young nanny, found in a communal though locked garden. Kincaid, takes off from the last book. Now transferred but still questioning the death of a friend from the last case. Before end of book, he will have many more questions and suspicions.

A tightly plotted book, a perfect combination of family and mystery, characters and police procedural. The secondary cast I have come to know and like as well. This is such a fantastic series, I always look forward to the next.

ARC from William Morrow publishers
Releases February 7th.

Barbara says

In this 17th book in the series Detective Superintendent Duncan Kincaid and Detective Inspector Gemma James are married and raising their blended family - three children, two kittens, and a dog - in a house in the suburbs. The detectives no longer work in the same police department and become involved in separate cases.

Gemma investigates the death of a pretty young nanny, Reagan Keating, whose body is found in a private garden shared by a group of houses. At first the nanny's death appears to be an accidental overdose, but the police soon discover she was murdered. The nanny worked in one of the neighborhood homes, looking after an 11-year-old boy and modeling for a tasteful clothing catalogue put out by his parents. The crime isn't in Gemma's jurisdiction, but DI Kerry Boatman 'borrows' her for the inquiry because Gemma knows some of

the local residents.

Kerry and Gemma question Reagan's boyfriend, friends, neighbors, employers, and so on - and everyone seems to like the amiable young woman. Thus the detectives are hard-pressed to find a motive for the killing. Then the sleuths hear some scuttlebutt about Reagan seeing 'another man' and learn that the parents of a local boy who died from an asthma attack blame Reagan. These discoveries lead to new areas of investigation, and - after a few twists and surprises - the crime is solved.

Duncan's case is much more complex. His former boss, Chief Superintendent Denis Childs, returns from a long leave of absence and arranges a secret meeting with Duncan. Childs alludes to a criminal conspiracy among bigwigs in the Metropolitan Police Service and warns Duncan to keep his distance.....for his own safety. Right after the meeting Childs is viciously attacked and falls into a coma.

Duncan already knows something is rotten in Scotland Yard. Deputy Assistant Commissioner Angus Craig was recently exposed as a rapist and murderer, after which he allegedly killed his wife and himself. And - after a bombing at London's St. Pancras Station - another detective supposedly committed suicide. Duncan believes all these deaths were murders, and proceeds to investigate. Fearing for the safety of his wife and children, Duncan doesn't confide in Gemma - and the Superintendent's absences from home and secretiveness put a strain on the marriage.

Duncan's current inquiries alternate with flashbacks to the past, when a group of Scotland Yard detectives were recruited to do undercover work for Britain's Special Branch (intelligence service). The 'cop spies' were tasked with infiltrating protest groups that might become troublemakers. However, this wasn't all on the up and up. One undercover cop was pressured to sabotage a group that was protesting the death-by-police of an innocent black man. And the killing of a female undercover agent - probably by the hand of a colleague - was swept under the rug. Clearly, something was rotten in the police service. (All this reminds me a bit of the 2017 American TV series "Shots Fired.")

The author cleverly melds Duncan's present day inquiries with the Special Branch storyline, and corrupt individuals are exposed. Some shocking revelations here!

Regular characters in the series make an appearance, including Gemma's co-worker Melody Talbot - who's now dating a rock star; and Detective Doug Cullen - who helps Duncan with his investigation. The Kincaid children are also on hand: teenage Kit (who cooks and helps keep the family organized); seven-year-old Toby (who's taking ballet lessons); and three-year-old Charlotte (who's sweet and clingy). And the pets are very cute.

One problem I had with the book is the surfeit of secondary characters. Gemma's case involves all the people who live in homes around the garden; some of their business acquaintances; Reagan's friends and acquaintances; children in the neighborhood; etc. And Duncan's inquiries include a large array of cops and supervisors, and some of their wives. With two storylines containing separate sets of characters, it's sometimes hard to remember who's who.

Still, this is a good addition to the series, recommended to mystery fans. Readers familiar with the series will get maximum enjoyment, but the book can be read as a standalone.

You can follow my reviews at: <https://reviewsbybarbsaffer.blogspot....>

Maureen Carden says

I love being in Duncan Gemma World. I've been along for the ride almost since the beginning. It's always sweet to see how the children have grown, what new pets they have acquired, and what their loyal friends have been up to.

This outing has been a bit different. Rare times with the children, and except for Mackenzie, almost no reference to their friends. This time two mysteries claim center stage and keep it. Gemma is investigating the murder of a young nanny found in one of London's private gardens; while Duncan, secretive, absent, and worried has ramped up his solo investigation into corruption at the Met. What Duncan's old boss, DCS Denis Childs has done to Duncan, he has turned around and done to Gemma, Doug and Melody, keeping them distant and in the dark. This does not bode well for any of Duncan's relationships. So often instead of mentally shouting, "Don't go in the basement" I am shouting, "Just tell them!"

Duncan's investigation now encompasses an extremely serious attack on DCS Childs. With tendrils reaching out from the past, Duncan doesn't know who he can trust. Those he can trust he wants to keep safe.

Gemma's investigation is one she should not be involved in. Mackenzie's husband uses his influence to basically shanghai Gemma into this investigation that has ramifications for their rarified social world and the children living within .

I subtracted a star for three reasons. The love is there, but I miss the romance. The first time Gemma and Duncan were together sticks with me all these years later. Now the only romantic scene I can recall is Gemma dancing with the busker several books back.

My second complaint is when there is a cell phone missing it can be tracked. Lets face it, all of us with cell phones are wearing personal trackers.

My biggest complaint, for the love of all that is holy please do NOT tell me the Met, even for pure intel operations encourages sexual relationships with targets. Can you imagine how that would go over for a police officer to testify, "Well yes, I did have sex with so and so, but I'm sure that didn't influence him committing the crime." ? With intel, how could you then trust your UC?

This book was worth the long wait. The mysteries are compelling, with Duncan's providing a satisfactory end to a long running story line. I always recommend reading the previous books just for the pleasure, but Crombie deftly sums up the threads from the other books making it easy for the readers to understand Duncan's investigation. As always, I've enjoyed being invited into the James-Kincaid household.

Lynn says

Garden of Lamentations is the 17th book in the Duncan Kincaid/Gemma James series. That's quite an accomplishment. The two are married police officers posted to different stations. There is a continuation of a story line from the previous outing which involves Duncan becoming increasingly suspicious of police corruption. Gemma is investigating the murder of a nanny in a posh part of London. I enjoyed this book although the police corruption angle is not my favourite plot thread. This is a solid police procedural series which has never let me down. Deborah Crombie is an American, but she plants the reader firmly in London and environs. Definitely recommended for readers who are intrigued by police procedurals and/or British mysteries.
