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Moonlit Garden, The



Synopsis

Lilly Kaiser had come to terms with her solitary, uncomplicated life after becoming a young widow. So when a stranger delivers an old violin to her Berlin antiques shop and tells Lilly it belongs to her, she's completely bewildered. Why should she be the one to inherit such an exquisite instrument? Together with her best friend, Ellen, and handsome musicologist Gabriel Thornton, Lilly sets out to explore the violin's legacy. From England to Italy to Indonesia, she follows its winding trail. Along the way, she learns of Rose Gallway, a beautiful woman of English and Sumatran descent who lived among Sumatra's lush gardens more than a hundred years earlier. A celebrated and sought-after musician, Rose once owned Lilly's violin and regularly played concerts for Sumatra's colonial elite - until, one day, she simply disappeared. As Lilly unravels the mystery behind Rose's story - and uncovers other unexpected secrets - she'll come to see her own life in an entirely new light. And as each shared discovery brings her closer to Gabriel, her heart might finally break its long-held silence.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Corina Bomann's *The Moonlit Garden* instantly intrigued me when I read the book description so I knew I had to read it. I absolutely love reading historical fiction and I studied music for a long time growing up so I couldn't wait to start reading this book! As soon as I started it, I had a hard time putting it down and I tore through it within less than two days. I was also interested to see that *The Moonlit Garden* had originally been written in German and then translated into English by Alison

Layland. In my experience, not all translated novels read as smoothly and beautifully as this one and, at just over 400 pages, *The Moonlit Garden* is an exquisitely-crafted novel that will appeal to historical fiction fans alike. Lilly Kaiser is in her late thirties and owns an antique shop in Berlin, Germany. She is working in her shop on a seemingly normal day when a mysterious elderly gentleman walks in to show her a violin, claiming it belongs to her. Before she can ask him any more questions, he disappears into thin air and Lilly is left to figure out the mystery behind the beautiful antique violin with the symbol of a rose on the back and a piece of sheet music tucked into the violin's case. Suddenly, Lilly's life has been altered and she has been given a new purpose of tracing down the history of the violin and why would have received it. Before she knows it, she is on a whirlwind journey over multiple continents to discover what happened so long ago to the violin's original owner. Beautifully written and flawlessly translated, *The Moonlit Garden* is a wonderful historical fiction novel that kept me thoroughly engaged over the past two days. I stayed up way too late and hardly did anything else other than read this book and I loved every single minute of it!

Lilly, a widow in her late 30s, owns an antique store in Berlin. One day, as she's closing the shop, an elderly man comes in to show her a violin, tells her it belongs to her, and leaves without giving his name or explaining the rationale behind his statement. The violin is beautiful, and quite old; under the lining in the case is an old piece of sheet music, titled *The Moonlit Garden*. Intent upon finding out more about the violin and returning it to the old man, its rightful owner, Lilly puts a trusted friend and sometimes employee in charge of her shop, and travels to London, where she meets with her lifelong best friend, Ellen, who is an expert on violins, and may be able to help her unravel the mystery of this beautiful violin with a rose engraved on the back which is perhaps 200 years old. Aided by a music historian, Lilly travels with Ellen to Italy, and then further in search of the truth behind the violin. Interspersed between chapters about Lilly are chapters from 1902 and 1910. These characters are all explained within their time frame, and this helps the reader to figure out the connections between some of the characters. There are 3 great connections, and I figured out the first, missed on the second a little bit, and the third was a happy surprise. These connections were a great part of what kept me involved with this book. This book was originally written in German, and translated to English. This is not at all evident in the flow of the book; the translator did an outstanding job. It was a very engaging book, one I finished quickly, because I wanted to know what happened not only with the violin, but also to Lilly. The characters she met along the way were very likable and it was easy to understand their actions.

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