

The Poison Diaries

By Maryrose Wood, The Duchess of Northumberland

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In the right dose, everything is a poison . . . even love.

Jessamine Luxton has lived all her sixteen years in an isolated cottage near Alnwick Castle with her father, Thomas, a feared and respected apothecary. His pride and obsession, a poison garden, contains exotic and local specimens of the most dangerous plants in the world. But Jessamine is absolutely forbidden to enter.

Her life changes forever the day a traveler brings a stranger to their cottage, claiming that the young man has special gifts that Thomas might value. Jessamine is intrigued by the young man, who goes by the name of Weed. He has an intense sensitivity to growing things, and an even rarer and more specialized knowledge about plants than Thomas does. As Jessamine falls in love with Weed, she learns his extraordinary secret—and is drawn into the dangerous world of the poison garden in a way she never could have imagined. . . .

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 7 Up–Readers will be intrigued by both the romance and complex moral questions in this fantasy set in late-18th-century England. Jessamine, 16, lives with her apothecary father, Thomas Luxton, in the remote countryside near Alnwick Castle. As she keeps house and tends to the gardens, there is one place she is forbidden to go: only her father enters the locked apothecary garden where he nurtures poisonous plants collected from all over the world. Their pastoral existence is interrupted by the unexpected arrival of Weed, a straggly teenage orphan who has an inexplicable knowledge of the medicinal uses of plants. As romance blossoms between Jessamine and Weed, she discovers that he is able to communicate with all growing things. Luxton begins to crave Weed's know-how and allows him into the apothecary garden, where the teen is made physically ill by the overwhelmingly evil personalities of the poisonous blooms. What begins that day propels the three characters into a tangled web of passion, betrayal, and the supernatural influence of the Prince of Poison. The novel explores the nature of good and evil and the consequences of choices whatever their intentions. As Luxton's explanation foreshadows, a plant that can kill used in one way can heal used in another. Told mostly in Jessamine's voice, the story has a compelling sense of urgency and mystery even as climactic events become too melodramatic. The book is based on a concept by the current Duchess of Northumberland who created the real Poison Garden at Alnwick Castle.–Cheri Dobbs, Detroit Country Day Middle School, Beverly Hills, MIα(c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

From Booklist
Jessamine is skilled at growing plants, but her apothecary father won't allow her into his locked garden of poisonous specimens for fear that she will come to harm. Then Weed, an orphan with a mysterious gift with plants, is left with the family, and things take a strange turn at the peaceful cottage. This intriguing fantasy has many tendrils to wrap around teen hearts: there is the budding romance between Jessamine and Weed, a grave illness that threatens Jessamine's life, Weed's supernatural skills, a series of chilling folklore-worthy tests of Weed's love, and encounters with Oleander, a figure who enters Jessamine's fevered dreams and implores her to abandon Weed and join him in death. The haunting ending will leave readers wanting to talk about the themes of cruelty, honesty, and loyalty. The setting is the area near Alnwick Castle in England, the real home of the Duchess of Northumberland, who has established her very own Poison Garden, and where (savvy fans may know) the scenes at Hogwarts were filmed in the Harry Potter movie series. Grades 8-11. --Cindy Dobrez

Review
“Lyrical and lovely, a fast-paced literary gem.”— (Ally Carter, New York Times bestselling author of Heist Society)

“This intriguing fantasy has many tendrils to wrap around teen hearts. The haunting ending will leave readers wanting to talk about the themes of cruelty, honesty, and loya—lty.” (Booklist)

“A passionate story....Wood does a marvelous job of creating heart-wrenching decisions for her characters and portraying a doomed romance reminiscent of Romeo and Juliet.” (Publishers Weekly)

“Wood fashions a narrative whose conventions of gothic romance intertwine with, then utterly succumb to, the brutal forces of human obsession. Absorbing.” (Kirkus Reviews)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Angel Echols:

The guide untitled The Poison Diaries is the publication that recommended to you you just read. You can see the quality of the reserve content that will be shown to you actually. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The writer was did a lot of analysis when write the book, therefore the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of The Poison Diaries from the publisher to make you a lot more enjoy free time.

Kayla France:

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