



The Ghost Orchid

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In her enthralling novels of literary suspense, Carol Goodman writes stories that resonate with emotion set in lush landscapes that entice the senses. Now, with *The Ghost Orchid*, a narrative that seamlessly weaves together the past and the present, Goodman creates her most lyrical and haunting work to date.

For more than one hundred years, creative souls have traveled to Upstate New York to work under the captivating spell of the Bosco estate. Cradled in silence, inspired by the rough beauty of overgrown gardens and crumbling statuary, these chosen few fashion masterworks—and have cemented Bosco's reputation as a premier artists' colony. This season, five talented artists-in-residence find themselves drawn to the history of Bosco, from the extensive network of fountains that were once its centerpiece but have long since run dry to the story of its enigmatic founder, Aurora Latham, and the series of tragic events that occurred more than a century ago.

Ellis Brooks, a first-time novelist, has come to Bosco to write a book based on Aurora and the infamous summer of 1893, when wealthy, powerful Milo Latham brought the notorious medium Corinth Blackwell to the estate to help his wife contact three of the couple's children, lost the winter before in a diphtheria epidemic. But when a séance turned deadly, Corinth and her alleged accomplice, Tom Quinn, disappeared, taking with them the Lathams' only surviving child.

The more time she spends at Bosco, the more Ellis becomes convinced that there is an even darker, more sinister end to the story. And she's not alone: biographer Bethesda Graham uncovers stunning revelations about Milo and Corinth; landscape architect David Fox discovers a series of hidden tunnels underneath the gardens; poet Zalman Bronsky hears the long-dry fountain's waters beckoning him; and novelist Nat Loomis feels something lingering just out of reach.

After a bizarre series of accidents befalls them, the group cannot deny the connections between the long ago and now, the living and the dead . . . as Ellis realizes that the tangled truth may ensnare them all in its cool embrace.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Ghost Orchid Details

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From Reader Review The Ghost Orchid for online ebook

Tabitha Vohn says

I truly enjoy this book, and come back to it every so often. It's become my spring tradition to revisit a Goodman novel and this year I was feeling Ghost Orchid.

What's not to love? A writer's community flocking to a secluded artist commune in upstate New York. A mysterious haunted past, laced with myth and the supernatural. And of course there is Goodman's beautiful, fluid prose and lush descriptions that make her novels so enjoyable.

While it's not as dear a favorite as The Lake of Dead Languages or The Seduction of Water, The Ghost Orchid is the kind of book you can cuddle up into and escape life for awhile. It's riveting, engrossing, literary fun.

Anne says

A light summer read shouldn't be this hard

I picked this book up in the bookstore because I was drawn to the cover design. I had never read any of Carol Goodman's books before. I wanted a quick enjoyable summer read! If I put this book down for a few days, I had to think too much to figure out where I was at in the story when I picked it back up. I found her writing technique a tad cumbersome. The book was OK, but it will not go on my great books list.

Rebecca says

A decent beach read from Carol Goodman. I've noticed she tends to repeat the same theme over and over again in her books. There's a mystery and the key always involves some kid being switched with another one at birth.

While I liked the idea of the artists colony and all the personality clashes, it seemed to drag on for a long time. Usually these gigs last weeks or at most a few months. This one appeared to go for a year. Plus there were 2 stories happening at different times and Goodman wasn't always clear about who was talking.

But, if you can get through all that, it's a decent enough story.

Ameerah says

I read this book on the recommendation of a co-worker. I bought it used for one cent and I'm glad I didn't spend a penny more. This is not to say that the book is horrible- not by any means. It is simply that my expectation far exceeded the actual story itself. I am not a big fan of ghosts mysteries which is essentially what this book is. There is not a lot of character development before you are launched into the "boo!" plotline. I didn't find myself caring about any of the characters at all. The protagonist is a young woman who we find out is A. psychic but doesn't like to talk about it. B. Is the daughter of a hippie mother who she resents. and C. who is thin and tall. That's about all we ever really know about her and the story suffers for it. I never discourage anyone from reading something they are interested in so I say go for it if you'd like but don't expect a huge pay off.

JackieB says

This was fantastic. It's about a mansion in the USA which has been turned into a retreat for creative people. However there was a mysterious scandal involving seances and ghosts (or maybe trickery) in the house when it was still a private house. One of the writers is writing a novel based on the scandal and that's where our story starts. This is what I would class as a gothic novel. It's not scream out loud scary but the author builds up a nicely spooky sinister atmosphere. I don't mean that gothic novels aren't scary but it's the way she builds up the atmosphere that makes me class it as gothic. There are some loose ends that never get resolved and some amazing coincidences but I forgot about them because I was enjoying the story so much. Overall I thought it was a good page turner.

Jamie Stanley says

Loved. Loved. LOVED!!!! This book. Could not put it down for a second. Old secret gardens, old house, old status, old wealthy families. OMG loved it!

Britni says

It's an okay book if you want a little scare with some mystery thrown in. I don't recommend it, however, if you are looking for something to invoke any level of critical thinking or problem solving. It's on the same level as the horror movie with the girl running through the woods in stilettos.

Barb says

There is something different about listening to a story versus reading it for yourself. Sometimes those differences can be the difference between enjoying a book and not. I often have a problem with tone of voice when I'm reading. If you get the wrong tone of voice in your mind it completely changes the meaning of the written word. One of the things I like about listening to an audio book is that you don't have to figure out the

tone of voice for each character, the reader does it for you. I really enjoyed Jen Taylor's reading of this book, she brought all the characters to life with a variety of voices and hit the exact right tone.

Ellis Brooks is working on a novel at the artist's retreat, the Bosco Estate, in upstate New York. Several other writers are staying in the mansion as well. Ellis is working on a historical novel based on events that took place at Bosco back in 1893. Corinth Blackwell was a medium who came to Bosco in 1893 because the mistress of the house, Aurora Latham, wanted to communicate with her three dead children. The séance that was supposed to reconnect her with her children turned deadly and resulted in the kidnapping of the Latham's only surviving child.

There are so many things I liked about this book, I liked the reoccurring imagery the author uses: water, bondage, blackbirds, Native American lore. I liked the parallel story lines between the past and the present, it added to the complexity of the story as a whole. I liked the sense of adventure that threads through the story with the character David researching the gardens at the Bosco estate. And there was an element of fun that reminded me of listening to spooky ghost stories as a child.

I also liked the setting, being a resident of upstate New York and hearing all the places Goodman refers to gave me a little thrill. She mentions Lily Dale the spiritualist community in western New York which I drove past many times on my way to college at SUNY Fredonia, though I never visited. She also mentions the place of my birth and does so in a way that is perfectly fitting for this story. The legend of how the city of my birth was named fits hand in glove with the fiction Goodman has created for her characters.

This is a story where I could actually suspend my disbelief and just enjoy it for what it was, a fun well thought out ghost story. I highly recommend the audio book version, I listen to audio books while driving but found myself so hooked into this story that I had to bring it inside to listen to while I was baking.

Jessica says

I thought this book was lovely and creepy. I chose it as my "book based on it's cover" category for a reading challenge I'm doing. So I had no idea what it was about and it turned out to be a good pick.

I guessed what was happening about half-way through, but it was still suspenseful.

I liked how you couldn't be totally sure at first whether or not Corinth's chapters were Ellis' writing or not. Like the pearl pins, is it just a coincidence, or was Ellis inspired to use that detail after seeing Bathesdas room.

Robin says

I wanted to love this book and couldn't wait to read it. When none of my local bookstores had it in stock for me to buy, I went so far as to go to the library - which is kinda rare for me, but ultimately, it was just ok. I didn't hate it, I just didn't love it or think the story was particularly interesting - it sorta reminded me of TV movies that try to be scary or creepy, but aren't really. I wish there had been more focus on a real world mystery without so much supernatural ghost / haunted gardens type of stuff. I also wish I felt more for any of the characters, but unfortunately it was very much a "character A does action B" while "character b says this

or that" and that was about the extent of it. Sadly, there wasn't enough character development for me to become attached to or care about any of them.

While I wouldn't really recommend this book, I may try others from Goodman to see what else she can do.

Kristi says

This book is in no way a masterpiece, but its a fun summer read. It is a mix between a mystery, and some history in upstate NY. Its quick to finish and pretty entertaining.

Linda says

A haunting mystery, set in an artist retreat called Bosco. The story goes back and forth from present day to 1893. The orginal owners of the estate, have left the home as a artist colony. A series of very tragic events involving past visitors, keeps you guessing to the very end about what really happened so many years ago. Present day writer Ella finds herself and her fellow artists are all haunted by the past. There is romance, ghosts and lots of evil twists to the story. Very good.

Jenny says

[Was everyone at Bosco related to the folks who were there in 1893? I actually was expecting David Fox to be related to the gardener Landini! Then there was of course th

Heather says

I think I would have enjoyed this more if I hadn't read so many other of Carol Goodman's books. I like her writing style a lot, but the facets (Upstate NY, Water, a protagonist that is literary or an academic) is starting to wear thin on me. I long for that same level of mysticism and intrigue, but ideally with some fresh locations and types of characters

Greta says

Entertaining enough, this book kept me occupied during a day during which I wanted no more and no less than a compelling story. While it fell short of my hopes after reading "The Lake of Dead Languages" [which I loved!:], " The Ghost Orchid" was a page turner. A bit like "The Haunting" in its sensational style and definitely melodramatic and a little predictable, still a fine ghost story.

Felisa Rosa says

Reading a book you don't like but can't put down is a peculiar form of torture. As with the last book I read by Goodman (The Drowning Tree, which I really enjoyed) The Ghost Orchid is a little heavy on the symbolism and stuffed with allusions to 19th century art and literature. Both books hinge on a suitably creepy mystery from the past. But while The Drowning Tree seemed refreshingly intelligent, The Ghost Orchid is just overblown, and most of the characters (particularly the protagonist) are vaguely annoying *and* not very well developed. Generally, I'd assume that a book with ghost children, seances, magicians, a house with secret passageways, ancient Indian burial grounds, and haunted scotch would be awesome, but you know what they say about too much of a good thing... *The Ghost Orchid* sinks beneath the weight of its own dramatically creepy ambiance.

Brooke says

This time around, Carol Goodman serves up a ghost story with her signature solving-mysteries-from-the-past plot. The chapters alternate between the past and the present, and I really like the way they're linked together. The setting, a mansion with a sprawling garden populated by statues and a maze, comes to life with Goodman's descriptions and the gardens almost become a character themselves.

I think The Lake of Dead Languages remains my favorite Goodman novel, but this one comes in at a close second.

Meika says

This is a great Gothic style romance. The romance is part of the subplot, really, with the gothic taking center stage. The setting is brilliant... the statues in the statuary practically come to life. This isn't a pseudo-ghost story, where the ghosts are psychological. The ghosts are tangible...the main character is a medium.

Cora Lockhart says

If I had to choose a favorite Carol Goodman, it would be the Ghost Orchid. I'm not sure if this is because this was the first of her books that I'd ever been introduced to by my good friend, Carla, or if because the language and characters and setting were so magical that I couldn't help but be captivated. When a first-time novelist is invited to an upstate New York artists' colony, she becomes convinced that the real story lies within the gardens and underground tunnels of the Bosco estate, where years before, a famous medium held a seance, which involved the disappearance the children who belonged to Bosco's enigmatic founder, Aurora Latham. I lost many hours of sleep, staying up at night reading this little beauty, and it was well worth it.

Blair says

The third Carol Goodman book I've read, this wasn't as good as *The Lake of Dead Languages* but redeemed the author in my eyes significantly after the uninspired *Arcadia Falls*, and it was actually more original than both. The alternate chapters moving between past and present worked well as they kept me interested in both strands of the story. I was also both surprised and pleased at the inclusion of a genuine supernatural element. I think it all dragged on a bit too much towards the end though - there were far too many twists on top of twists, which were probably intended to make the plot seem deeper and more complex but actually just made the whole thing confusing; it could have ended much sooner and still have been a great story. As a side note, I was really happy Ellis ended up with Nat.
