



The Garden of Lost and Found

Dale Peck

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From Dale Peck, "one of the most eloquent voices of his generation" (New York Times), comes a novel about "the odd entanglements of love, loss, of the impossible realized through generosity." The Garden is the story of James Ramsay, a 21-year-old who discovers he's inherited a building in New York City upon the death of his mother, who disappeared from his life shortly after his first birthday. James's childhood was spent shunted from the home of one uncaring relative to another; for the two years prior to his mother's death he's lived on his own in a small town in Kansas, where he's been having liaisons with a 55-year-old traveling salesman he knows only as Trucker. Just before James learns that his mother has died, Trucker tells James that he's infected him with HIV. Confused and shaken, James takes up residence in No. 1 Dutch Street, the five-story brownstone his mother has left him, whose only other tenant is an elderly black woman named Nellydean. The building's lot is worth millions, but the estate is cash poor. James is immediately faced with a choice: sell the building for a small fortune or attempt to stave off the mounting tide of taxes that will cause him to forfeit his only connection to a mother he never knew. Before he can decide what to do, a chance encounter lands him on the cover of the New York Post, which in turn brings two new people into his life: Knute Lingon, a middle-aged ad exec moonlighting as a reporter; and Claudia MacTeer, Nellydean's niece, who is looking for a home for herself and her unborn child. The strange threesome become tangled in a web of sexual, familial, and financial complications, over which hangs the specter of 9/11. "A strange and wonderful novel," in the words of Joseph O'Neill, The Garden is a "brilliant" interrogation of identity, race, and sexual politics by a writer who "appreciates language not for its tricks but for its power to genuinely stir heart and mind." (Booklist)

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