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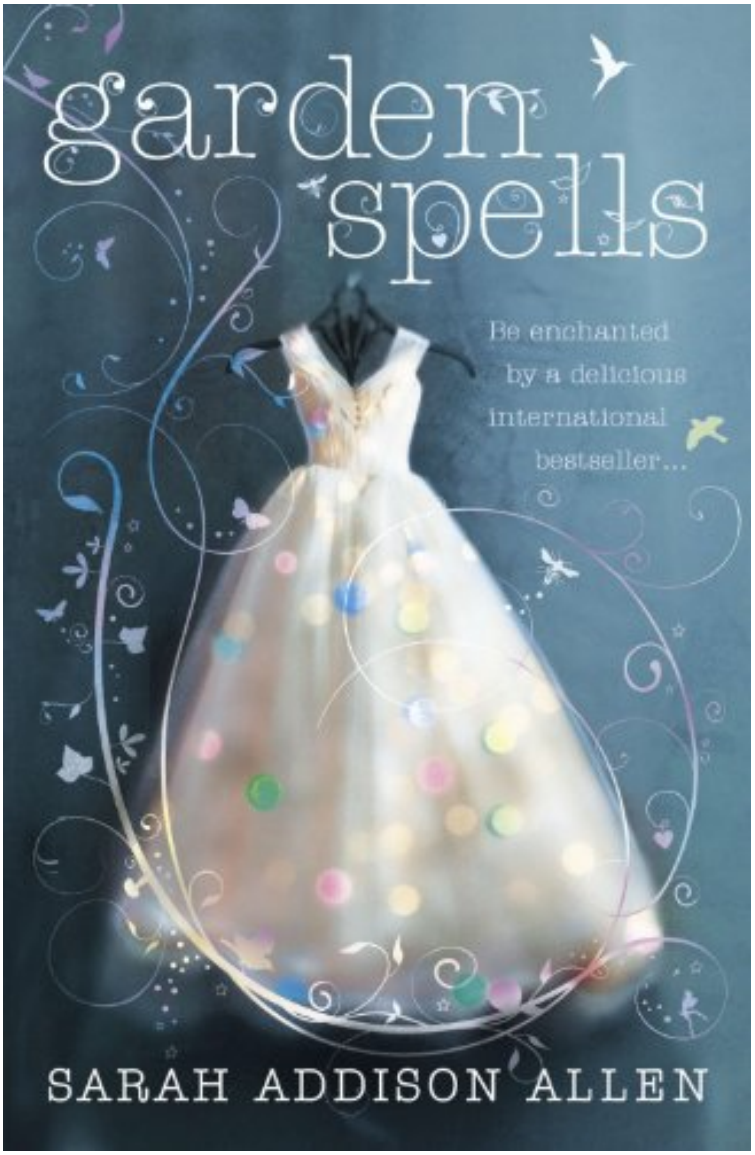
Garden Spells (English Edition)



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Par Sarah Addison Allen
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(Online library) Garden Spells (English Edition)

Par Sarah Addison Allen : Garden Spells (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Garden Spells (English Edition):

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWelcome to Bascom,North Carolina, where it seems that everyone has a story to tell about the Waverley women. The house that's been in the family for generations, the walled garden that mysteriously blooms year round, the rumours of dangerous loves and tragic passions. Every Waverley woman is somehow touched by magic. Claire has always clung to the Waverleys' roots, tending the enchanted soil in the family garden from which she makes her sought-after delicacies - famed and feared for their curious effects. She has everything she thinks she needs - until one day she waked to find a stranger has moved in next door and a vine of ivy has crept into her garden . . . Claire's carefully tended life is about to run gloriously out of control.ExtraitChapter OneEvery smiley moon, without fail, Claire dreamed of her

childhood. She always tried to stay awake those nights when the stars winked and the moon was just a cresting sliver smiling provocatively down at the world, the way pretty women on vintage billboards used to smile as they sold cigarettes and limeade. On those nights in the summer, Claire would garden by the light of the solar-powered footpath lamps, weeding and trimming the night bloomers-the moon vine and the angel's trumpet, the night jasmine and the flowering tobacco. These weren't a part of the Waverley legacy of edible flowers, but sleepless as she often was, Claire had added flowers to the garden to give her something to do at night when she was so wound up that frustration singed the edge of her nightgown and she set tiny fires with her fingertips.What she dreamed of was always the same. Long roads like snakes with no tails. Sleeping in the car at night while her mother met men in bars and honky-tonks. Being a lookout while her mother stole shampoo and deodorant and lipstick and sometimes a candy bar for Claire at Shop-and-Gos around the Midwest. Then, just before she woke up, her sister, Sydney, always appeared in a halo of light. Lorelei held Sydney and ran to the Waverley home in Bascom, and the only reason Claire was able to go with them was because she was holding tight to her mother's leg and wouldn't let go.That morning, when Claire woke up in the backyard garden, she tasted regret in her mouth. With a frown, she spit it out. She was sorry for the way she'd treated her sister as a child. But the six years of Claire's life before Sydney's arrival had been fraught with the constant fear of being caught, of being hurt, of not having enough food or gas or warm clothes for the winter. Her mother always came through but always at the last minute. Ultimately, they were never caught and Claire was never hurt and, when the first cold snap signaled the changing colors of the leaves, her mother magically produced blue mittens with white snowflakes on them and pink thermal underwear to wear under jeans and a cap with a droopy ball on top. That life on the run had been good enough for Claire, but Lorelei obviously thought Sydney deserved better, that Sydney deserved to be born with roots. And the small scared child in Claire hadn't been able to forgive her.Picking up the clippers and the trowel from the ground beside her, she stood stiffly and walked in the dawning fog toward the shed. She suddenly stopped. She turned and looked around. The garden was quiet and damp, the temperamental apple tree at the back of the lot shivering slightly as if dreaming. Generations of Waverleys had tended this garden. Their history was in the soil, but so was their future. Something was about to happen, something the garden wasn't ready to tell her yet. She would have to keep a sharp eye out.She went to the shed and carefully wiped the dew off the old tools and hung them on their places on the wall. She closed and locked the heavy gate door to the garden, then crossed the driveway at the back of the ostentatious Queen Anne-style home she'd inherited from her grandmother.Claire entered the house through the back, stopping in the sunroom that had been turned into a drying and cleaning room for herbs and flowers. It smelled strongly of lavender and peppermint, like walking into a Christmas memory that didn't belong to her. She drew her dirty white nightgown over her head, balled it up, and walked naked into the house. It was going to be a busy day. She had a dinner party to cater that night, and it was the last Tuesday in May, so she had to deliver her end-of-the-month shipment of lilac and mint and rose-petal jellies and nasturtium and chive-blossom vinegars to the farmers' market and to the gourmet grocery store on the square, where the college kids from Orion College would hang out after classes.There was a knock at the door as Claire was pulling her hair back with combs. She went downstairs in a white eyelet sundress, still barefooted. When she opened the door, she smiled at the fireplug of an old lady standing on the porch.Evanelle Franklin was seventy-nine years old, looked like she was one hundred and twenty, yet still managed to walk a mile around the track at Orion five days a week. Evanelle was a distant relation, a second or third or fourteenth cousin, and she was the only other Waverley still living in Bascom. Claire stuck to her like static, needing to feel a connection to family after Sydney took off when she was eighteen and their grandmother died the same year.When Claire was young, Evanelle would stop by to give her a Band-Aid hours before she scraped her knee, quarters for her and Sydney long before the ice cream truck arrived, and a flashlight to put under her pillow a full two weeks before lightning struck a tree down the street and the entire neighborhood was without power all night. When Evanelle brought you something, you were usually going to need it sooner or later, though that cat bed she gave Claire five years ago had yet to find its use. Most people in town treated Evanelle kindly but with amusement, and even Evanelle didn't take herself too seriously. But Claire knew there was always something behind the strange gifts Evanelle brought."Well, don't you look eye-talian with your dark hair and Sophia Loren dress. Your picture should be on a bottle of olive oil," Evanelle said. She was in her green velour running suit, and slung over her shoulder was a rather large tote bag full of quarters and stamps and egg timers and soap, all things she might feel the need to give someone at some point."I was just about to make some coffee," Claire said, stepping back. "Come in.""Don't mind if I do." Evanelle entered and followed Claire to the kitchen, where

she sat at the kitchen table while Claire made the coffee. "You know what I hate?"Claire looked over her shoulder as steam carrying the smell of coffee curled around the kitchen. "What do you hate?""I hate summer."Claire laughed. She loved having Evanelle around. Claire had tried for years to get the old lady to move into the Waverley house so she could take care of her, so the house wouldn't feel as if the walls were moving out of her way as she walked, making the hallways longer and rooms bigger. "Why on earth would you hate summer? Summer is wonderful. Fresh air, open windows, picking tomatoes and eating them while they're still warm from the sun.""I hate summer because most of them college kids leave town, so there aren't as many runners and I don't have any nice male backsides to look at when I walk the track.""You're a dirty old lady, Evanelle.""I'm just sayin'.""Here you go," Claire said, setting a coffee cup on the table in front of Evanelle.Evanelle peered into the cup. "You didn't put anything in it, did you?""You know I didn't.""Because your side of the Waverleys always wants to put something in everything. Bay leaves in bread, cinnamon in coffee. I like things plain and simple. Which reminds me, I brought you something." Evanelle grabbed her tote bag and brought out a yellow Bic lighter."Thank you, Evanelle," Claire said as she took the lighter and put it in her pocket. "I'm sure this will come in handy.""Or maybe it won't. I just knew I had to give it to you." Evanelle, who had twenty-eight sweet teeth, all of them false, picked up her coffee and looked over at the covered cake plate on the stainless-steel island. "What have you made over there?""White cake. I stirred violet petals into the batter. And I crystallized some violets to put on top. It's for a dinner party I'm catering tonight." Claire picked up a Tupperware container beside it. "This white cake, I made for you. Nothing weird in it, I promise." She set it on the table next to Evanelle."You are the sweetest girl. When are you going to get married? When I'm gone, who will take care of you?""You're not going anywhere. And this is a perfect house for a spinster to live in. I'll grow old in this house, and neighborhood children will vex me by trying to get to the apple tree in the backyard and I'll chase them away with a broom. And I'll have lots of cats. That's probably why you gave me that cat bed."Evanelle shook her head. "Your problem is routine. You like your routine too much. You get that from your grandmother. You're too attached to this place, just like her."Claire smiled because she liked being compared to her grandmother. She had no idea about the security of having a name until her mother brought her here, to this house where her grandmother lived. They'd been in Bascom maybe three weeks, Sydney had just been born, and Claire had been sitting outside under the tullip tree in the front yard while people in town came to see Lorelei and her new baby. Claire wasn't new, so she didn't think anyone would want to see her. A couple came out of the house after visiting, and they watched Claire quietly build tiny log cabins with twigs. "She's a Waverley, all right," the woman said. "In her own world."Claire didn't look up, didn't say a word, but she grabbed the grass before her body floated up. She was a Waverley. She didn't tell anyone, not a soul, for fear of someone taking her happiness away, but from that day on she would follow her grandmother out into the garden every morning, studying her, wanting to be like her, wanting to do all the things a true Waverley did to prove that, even though she wasn't born here, she was a Waverley too."I have to pack some boxes of jelly and vinegar to deliver," she said to Evanelle. "If you'll wait here for a minute, I'll drive you home.""Are you making a delivery to Fred's?" Evanelle a...From Publishers WeeklyTwo gifted sisters draw on their talents to belatedly forge a bond and find their ways in life in Allen's easygoing debut novel. Thirty-four-year-old Claire Waverley manifests her talent in cooking; using edible flowers, Claire creates dishes that affect the eater in curious ways. But not all Waverley women embrace their gifts; some, including Claire's mother, escape the family's eccentric reputation by running away. She abandoned Claire and her sister when they were young. Consequently, Claire has remained close to home, unwilling to open up to new people or experiences. Claire's younger sister, Sydney, however, followed in their mother's footsteps 10 years ago and left for New York, and after a string of abusive, roustabout boyfriends, returns to Bascom, N.C., with her five-year-old daughter, Bay. As Sydney reacquaints herself with old friends and rivals, she discovers her own Waverley magic. Claire, in turn, begins to open up to her sister and in the process learns how to welcome other possibilities. Though Allen's prose can lean toward the pedestrian and the romance subplots feel perfunctory, the blending of horticultural folklore, the supernatural and a big dollop of Southern flavor should find favor with a wide swath of readers. (Aug.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.