

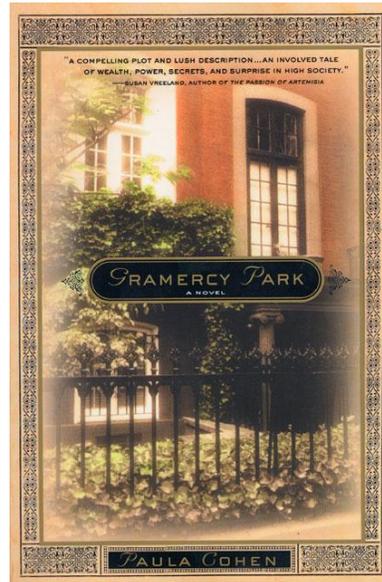
READING GROUP GUIDE

Gramercy Park

By *Paula Cohen*

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About this Guide

The following author biography and list of questions about *Gramercy Park* are intended as resources to aid individual readers and book groups who would like to learn more about the author and this book. We hope that this guide will provide you a starting place for discussion, and suggest a variety of perspectives from which you might approach *Gramercy Park*.

About the Book

New York City, 1894. To Gramercy Park, bordered by elegant town houses, cloistered behind its high iron fence, comes Mario Alfieri, a celebrated tenor and the toast of Europe. Poised for his premier at the Metropolitan Opera, the summit of society, Alfieri needs a refuge from the clamor of New York's elite . . . and from the eager women who rule it. He finds it, he thinks, at Gramercy Park, in the elegant mansion of the recently deceased Henry Ogden Slade. The house is available, but not quite empty. Clara Adler, Slade's former ward, lives there still, friendless and alone. Who is this bewitching young woman? Why did Slade take her into his home, only to leave her penniless at his death? And what tragedies and terrors have left Clara little more than a pale and frightened ghost, haunting the deserted mansion? Mystified, then enchanted, Alfieri is soon involved in an intrigue that spans two decades and pits him against a vicious enemy who swears to destroy both him and the woman he loves . . . and whose weapons are scandal, murder, and the revelations of Clara's past...

About the Author

Paula Cohen is a native New Yorker with an addiction to the opera and all things Victorian. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband. *Gramercy Park* is her first novel.



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Discussion Questions

1. When did you first realize the truth about Chadwick's daughter?
2. Do you believe in the kind of immediate, intense love that Clara and Maria experience?
3. Do you believe it would have been possible to ruin Clara by exposing her past? Would she be ruined today by such an exposure?
4. Is Mario Alfieri a completely sympathetic character? Did you disagree with any of his actions?
5. How did the author's use of language make this particular time period come alive?
6. Who do you see as the true villain in the story? The true hero?
7. Is Lucy Pratt at all justified in her quest for vengeance? Who deserves to be the target of her revenge?
8. Was Henry Ogden Slade an honorable man? Why or why not?

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