

# language of flowers dictionary

Language of Flowers Dictionary: Unlocking the Secret Meanings Behind Blooms

language of flowers dictionary is a fascinating guide that reveals the hidden messages and emotions conveyed through different flowers and their arrangements. For centuries, people have used flowers as a subtle way to communicate feelings—whether love, friendship, sympathy, or admiration—without uttering a single word. This botanical code, also known as floriography, allows us to express complex sentiments in a delicate and beautiful way. If you've ever wondered what giving a particular flower really means or want to add a thoughtful touch to your bouquet, exploring a language of flowers dictionary is a wonderful place to start.

## What Is the Language of Flowers?

The language of flowers, or floriography, is a symbolic system where various flowers represent specific emotions or messages. This tradition dates back to ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks, who often associated certain flowers with gods, virtues, or stories. However, the language of flowers became especially popular during the Victorian era when strict social etiquette limited open expressions of feelings. People would send bouquets or single blossoms as secret notes to convey what was otherwise hard to say aloud.

Over time, florists, poets, and enthusiasts developed a rich vocabulary of flower meanings. A language of flowers dictionary helps decode this vocabulary, making it easier to understand the significance of each bloom in the context of personal relationships or cultural symbolism.

# Using a Language of Flowers Dictionary

If you're new to the concept, using a language of flowers dictionary might seem a bit daunting, but it can become an enjoyable and creative way to personalize gifts or decorations. By consulting such a dictionary, you can choose flowers that perfectly express your intended message, whether it's a heartfelt apology, a romantic proposal, or a congratulatory note.

## Understanding Flower Symbolism

Before picking flowers, it helps to know some of the most common meanings:

- **Roses:** Often symbolize love, but colors vary—red for passion, yellow for friendship, white for purity.
- **Lavender:** Represents devotion and tranquility.
- **Daisies:** Stand for innocence and loyal love.
- **Chrysanthemums:** Can mean optimism or loyalty depending on culture.
- **Lilies:** Often symbolize purity and renewal.

By looking up these flowers in a language of flowers dictionary, you'll find even deeper or less obvious meanings, which can help you craft a more nuanced message.

# Incorporating Flower Meanings in Everyday Life

Beyond gifting, knowing the language of flowers can enhance your appreciation of gardens, art, and literature. Many classic poems and paintings embed flower symbolism to add layers of meaning. Additionally, you might use this knowledge to brighten your home with flowers that uplift your mood or remind you of cherished values.

## Popular Flowers and Their Meanings in a Language of Flowers Dictionary

Let's dive deeper into some popular flowers and what they traditionally represent according to a language of flowers dictionary.

### Roses: More Than Just Love

While roses are the quintessential symbol of love, the color variations offer diverse meanings:

- **Red Rose:** Passionate love and desire.
- **Pink Rose:** Admiration, grace, and gratitude.
- **White Rose:** Innocence, purity, and new beginnings.
- **Yellow Rose:** Friendship and joy.
- **Orange Rose:** Enthusiasm and fascination.

This spectrum of meanings lets you tailor your message perfectly, whether you're celebrating a new romance or expressing thanks to a dear friend.

## Other Symbolic Blooms Worth Knowing

- **Sunflowers:** Represent adoration, loyalty, and longevity.
- **Violets:** Symbolize faithfulness and modesty.
- **Peonies:** Convey prosperity, romance, and compassion.
- **Forget-Me-Nots:** As the name suggests, they stand for remembrance and true love.
- **Orchids:** Exotic beauty, refinement, and strength.

Each flower carries layers of meaning that can be unlocked through a well-researched language of flowers dictionary. This knowledge allows your floral gifts to resonate deeply with the recipient.

## The Role of Colors in Flower Language

Colors add another dimension to the language of flowers. Even the same flower can convey different meanings depending on its color. This is why a language of flowers dictionary often categorizes meanings by both flower type and hue.

For example, tulips are generally associated with perfect love, but:

- Red tulips express true love.
- Yellow tulips once symbolized hopeless love but now often convey cheerful thoughts.
- Purple tulips represent royalty and admiration.

Understanding these color nuances ensures your floral message is both accurate and heartfelt.

## Tips for Using a Language of Flowers Dictionary Effectively

If you want to embrace the art of floriography, here are some practical tips:

1. **Research Before Buying:** Use a trusted language of flowers dictionary to check meanings before purchasing flowers.
2. **Consider the Recipient's Preferences:** While symbolism is important, personal tastes and allergies matter too.
3. **Combine Flowers Thoughtfully:** Arrangements with complementary meanings create layered messages.
4. **Include a Note:** If the symbolism might be obscure, a brief explanation can enhance the gesture.
5. **Explore Seasonal Blooms:** Seasonal flowers often carry traditional meanings and lend authenticity.

Using these tips will help you master the subtle art of communicating through flowers.

## **The Modern Revival of the Language of Flowers**

Although floriography peaked in Victorian times, its charm has seen a modern resurgence. Many people now look for meaningful ways to personalize gifts and celebrations. Wedding bouquets, sympathy arrangements, and even social media posts often incorporate flower meanings to add emotional depth.

Digital language of flowers dictionaries and apps make it easier than ever to explore this floral vocabulary. Whether you're planning a special occasion or simply want to brighten someone's day, understanding flower symbolism adds a timeless, poetic touch.

Exploring a language of flowers dictionary opens a world where nature's beauty and human emotion intertwine. It invites us to slow down, appreciate the subtleties of communication, and share feelings in the most delicate and heartfelt way possible. Whether you're a flower enthusiast, a poet at heart, or someone who loves thoughtful gestures, this botanical lexicon offers endless inspiration.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is a language of flowers dictionary?**

A language of flowers dictionary is a reference guide that explains the meanings and symbolism associated with different flowers, allowing people to communicate messages through floral arrangements.

### **How can I use a language of flowers dictionary?**

You can use a language of flowers dictionary to select flowers that convey specific emotions or

messages, helping you express feelings like love, friendship, or sympathy without words.

## **Are flower meanings universal in a language of flowers dictionary?**

No, flower meanings can vary across cultures and historical periods. A language of flowers dictionary typically focuses on meanings popularized in Victorian England but may include variations from other traditions.

## **Where can I find a language of flowers dictionary?**

Language of flowers dictionaries can be found in bookstores, online as websites or PDFs, and in floral design books. There are also mobile apps dedicated to flower symbolism.

## **What is the origin of the language of flowers?**

The language of flowers, or floriography, originated in the Victorian era as a way to send secret messages through floral arrangements, often used in courtship and social communication.

## **Can a language of flowers dictionary help in creating meaningful bouquets?**

Yes, by understanding the symbolic meanings of flowers, you can design bouquets that convey specific sentiments or stories, making your floral gifts more thoughtful and personalized.

## **Do colors affect the meanings in a language of flowers dictionary?**

Yes, flower colors often influence their symbolic meaning. For example, red roses typically symbolize love and passion, while white roses represent purity and innocence.

## **Is the language of flowers still relevant today?**

Yes, the language of flowers remains popular for expressing emotions in a subtle and artistic way, especially in occasions like weddings, funerals, and romantic gestures.

# Additional Resources

## Language of Flowers Dictionary: Decoding Floral Symbolism Across Cultures

A language of flowers dictionary serves as an essential tool for understanding the rich and nuanced world of floral symbolism. This lexicon of meanings attached to various flowers transcends mere aesthetics, tapping into centuries-old traditions, emotions, and cultural narratives. As a professional resource, a language of flowers dictionary offers clarity for florists, historians, writers, and enthusiasts alike, enabling them to communicate subtle messages through the choice of blooms. In the contemporary era, where personalization and symbolism hold significant value, this dictionary bridges the gap between nature's beauty and human expression.

## The Historical Context of the Language of Flowers

The language of flowers, also known as floriography, dates back to ancient civilizations but gained particular prominence during the Victorian era. In a time when direct communication of feelings—especially romantic ones—was often constrained by social norms, flowers became a discreet medium for conveying sentiments. A language of flowers dictionary from this period reveals a complex code where a single bloom could express love, jealousy, apology, or admiration.

Different cultures have their own versions of floral symbolism. For instance, in Japan, the ikebana tradition emphasizes not only the arrangement but also the symbolic meaning of flowers, while in the Middle East, roses often symbolize divine love. Comparing these cultural nuances within a language of flowers dictionary highlights the diversity and universality of floral communication.

## Features and Components of a Language of Flowers Dictionary

A comprehensive language of flowers dictionary typically includes several key components:

- **Flower Name:** Both common and botanical names to avoid ambiguity.
- **Symbolic Meaning:** The traditional or widely accepted emotional or thematic associations.
- **Historical Usage:** Background on how the flower's meaning evolved over time.
- **Cultural Variations:** Differences in interpretations across regions or traditions.
- **Visual References:** Images or illustrations to aid identification.

Such dictionaries may be organized alphabetically or thematically, and some even categorize flowers by occasions (love, mourning, friendship) to facilitate practical application.

## Popular Flowers and Their Meanings

Certain flowers recur frequently in language of flowers dictionaries due to their strong symbolic resonance:

- **Rose:** Universally associated with love and passion; color variations add layers—red for romantic love, white for purity, yellow for friendship or jealousy.
- **Lily:** Often symbolizes purity and renewal, but can also represent mourning depending on cultural context.
- **Violet:** Represents modesty and faithfulness.
- **Chrysanthemum:** In Western cultures, it often signifies friendship and well-wishing, whereas in

some Asian cultures, it relates to death and mourning.

Understanding these subtleties is crucial for anyone seeking to employ floral symbolism accurately and respectfully.

## **Applications of a Language of Flowers Dictionary in Modern Contexts**

In today's digital and globalized world, the utility of a language of flowers dictionary extends beyond traditional gift-giving. Florists leverage it to create bespoke arrangements that communicate personalized messages, while writers and marketers use floral symbolism to enrich narratives and branding strategies.

Moreover, the rise of online platforms offering flower delivery services has increased consumer interest in flower meanings. Integrating a language of flowers dictionary into these platforms can enhance user experience by guiding customers to select arrangements that align with their intended sentiments, thereby reducing the risk of miscommunication.

## **Comparative Analysis: Physical vs. Digital Dictionaries**

Language of flowers dictionaries exist in both physical book form and as digital resources. Each format presents advantages and challenges:

- **Physical Dictionaries:** Often feature detailed botanical illustrations and historical context, appealing to collectors and academics. However, they lack the immediacy and searchability of

digital formats.

- **Digital Dictionaries:** Provide quick access, keyword search functions, and interactive features such as flower identification apps. Their limitations may include oversimplification or inconsistent information due to varying sources.

For professionals requiring in-depth research, a hybrid approach combining both resources might be most effective.

## Challenges and Criticisms in Interpreting Floral Symbolism

While language of flowers dictionaries are invaluable, they are not without limitations. The symbolic meanings of flowers can vary widely depending on time period, geography, and cultural context. For example, the red carnation can signify admiration in one culture and disdain in another. This variability creates challenges in offering definitive interpretations.

Furthermore, over-reliance on a standardized dictionary may lead to ignoring personal or familial meanings attached to certain flowers, which can be equally significant. Therefore, users of a language of flowers dictionary should approach it as an informed guide rather than an absolute authority.

## Pros and Cons of Using a Language of Flowers Dictionary

### 1. Pros:

- Facilitates nuanced communication through floral arrangements.

- Preserves cultural heritage and historical knowledge.
- Supports various professional fields including floristry, literature, and marketing.

## **2. Cons:**

- Presents challenges due to cultural and temporal variability.
- Potential for misinterpretation if used without contextual awareness.
- May oversimplify complex emotional or symbolic nuances.

# **Integrating Language of Flowers Dictionary into Contemporary Design and Communication**

Modern designers and communicators increasingly harness the language of flowers dictionary to add depth to visual storytelling. Whether in wedding florals, branding campaigns, or social media content, selecting flowers with intentional symbolism can resonate more deeply with target audiences.

For instance, a brand aiming to convey reliability and trust might incorporate blue hydrangeas, which symbolize understanding and gratitude. Similarly, a wedding bouquet designed with white peonies can evoke feelings of romance and prosperity, demonstrating how the dictionary's insights translate into tangible design choices.

As digital tools evolve, augmented reality and AI-powered apps are beginning to integrate language of flowers dictionaries, allowing users to identify and learn about flowers in real-time. This technological fusion promises to expand the accessibility and relevance of floral symbolism in everyday life.

The language of flowers dictionary, while rooted in tradition, continues to evolve alongside cultural shifts and technological advancements. Its enduring appeal lies in its ability to transform simple blossoms into eloquent messengers of human emotion and experience.

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**language of flowers dictionary: A Victorian Flower Dictionary** Mandy Kirkby, 2011-09-20 “A flower is not a flower alone; a thousand thoughts invest it.” Daffodils signal new beginnings, daisies innocence. Lilacs mean the first emotions of love, periwinkles tender recollection. Early Victorians used flowers as a way to express their feelings—love or grief, jealousy or devotion. Now, modern-day romantics are enjoying a resurgence of this bygone custom, and this book will share the historical, literary, and cultural significance of flowers with a whole new generation. With lavish illustrations, a dual dictionary of flora and meanings, and suggestions for creating expressive arrangements, this keepsake is the perfect compendium for everyone who has ever given or received a bouquet.

**language of flowers dictionary: The Floral Dictionary** Anna Maria Campbell, 2016-12-16 A facsimile reprint of the very scarce 19th century Floral Dictionary by Anna Maria Campbell. This book differs from other Language of Flowers dictionaries of the period in several ways - it gives a colour to every plant, it includes some plants not listed elsewhere, and some of its meanings differ from those found in other books.

**language of flowers dictionary: The Complete Language of Flowers** S. Theresa Dietz, 2022-04-12 The Complete Language of Flowers is a comprehensive and definitive dictionary/reference presenting the history, symbolic meaning, and visual depiction of 1,001 flowers and botanicals from around the world in one volume—now in a pocket-size edition for easy, on-the-go reference.

**language of flowers dictionary: The Language of Flowers** Beverly Seaton, 2012-10-10 The author traces the phenomenon of ascribing sentimental meaning to floral imagery from its beginnings in Napoleonic France through its later transformations in England and America. At the heart of the book is a depiction of what the three most important flower books from each of the countries divulge about the period and the respective cultures. Seaton shows that the language of

flowers was not a single and universally understood correlation of flowers to meanings that men and women used to communicate in matters of love and romance. The language differs from book to book, country to country. To place the language of flowers in social and literary perspective, the author examines the nineteenth-century uses of flowers in everyday life and in ceremonies and rituals and provides a brief history of floral symbolism. She also discusses the sentimental flower book, a genre especially intended for female readers. Two especially valuable features of the book are its table of correlations of flowers and their meanings from different sourcebooks and its complete bibliography of language of flower titles. This book will appeal not only to scholars in Victorian studies and women's studies but also to art historians, book collectors, museum curators, historians of horticulture, and anyone interested in nineteenth-century popular culture.

**language of flowers dictionary: The Language of Flowers** Frederic Shoberl, Louise Cortambert, 1839

**language of flowers dictionary: The Language of Flowers** Henrietta Dumont, 1852

**language of flowers dictionary: *The Language of Flowers*** OJ LEIGH, 2023-09-11 In the heart of a bustling city, where the noise of urban life reverberates through the streets, a hidden treasure awaits discovery, a modest flower shop with an extraordinary secret. Enter the world of 'The Language of Flowers,' where Amora, a reserved florist, tends to her blossoming companions while nurturing a unique and profound gift. While her affinity for flowers is undeniable, it is the whispers hidden within their petals that truly define her. Amora possesses the remarkable ability to understand the emotions they convey, a skill she keeps carefully concealed. Within the vibrant tapestry of petals and fragrances, Amora discovers a sanctuary of solace and comprehension, a sanctuary disrupted by an unexpected meeting with Kalani, a customer in search of more than just a bouquet. As the two women's paths converge, a journey of self-discovery and profound connections unfolds. Kalani, nursing a wounded heart, finds herself inexplicably drawn not only to the enchanting blooms but also to the enigmatic florist behind them. Little does she realize that this serendipitous encounter will swing open the doors to a realm where flowers serve as bridges between souls, where sentiments are conveyed through the delicate language of petals and leaves. Through the gradual unfurling of this tale, the ancient language of flowers takes center stage, weaving its spellbinding magic. Past wounds are tenderly tended to, long-lost passions rekindled, and a panorama of human emotions is unveiled through the canvas of blossoms. In the embrace of nature's most captivating creations, Amora and Kalani's lives converge, guiding them through the intricate landscape of feelings, where love, forgiveness, and hope flourish. 'The Language of Flowers' captures the essence of two kindred spirits entranced by the allure of blooms, and their voyage towards solace and love within the petals' embrace. This narrative serves as a poignant reminder of the timeless, cross-cultural language that transcends barriers, where unspoken sentiments find expression through the ethereal dance of nature's most exquisite wonders. Step into the threshold of the flower shop and lose yourself in a realm where emotions blossom and the language of flowers patiently awaits to unveil its mystique.

**language of flowers dictionary: The language of flowers** Henrietta Dumont, 2025-03-02 In *The Language of Flowers*, Henrietta Dumont intricately weaves a narrative that explores the rich symbolism and emotional resonance of flora through vivid prose and lyrical descriptions. Set against the backdrop of the Victorian era, the novel delves into themes of love, loss, and societal constraints, illuminating how flowers served as a covert language for expressing sentiments that could not be articulated openly. Dumont's style is both poetic and evocative, drawing readers into a world where each bloom holds significance, reflecting the characters' inner lives and the cultural norms of their time. Henrietta Dumont, a noted scholar of Victorian literature and botany, brings a unique perspective to this narrative, influenced by her extensive research into the historical uses of plants in communication. With a background rooted in both literature and the natural sciences, Dumont crafts a compelling tableau that showcases her passion for the intersection of language and nature. Her personal experiences with flora, shaped by her childhood in an estate filled with gardens, are vividly woven into the fabric of the story, enriching the reader's experience. This captivating novel is

a must-read for those interested in the intricate relationships between language, culture, and nature. Recommended for fans of historical fiction and botanical symbolism, *The Language of Flowers* invites readers to immerse themselves in a world where every petal and leaf tells a story, offering profound insights into the human condition and the timeless art of communication.

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Complete Language of Flowers* S. Theresa Dietz, 2020  
The Complete Language of Flowers is a comprehensive and definitive dictionary/reference presenting the history, symbolic meaning, and visual depiction of 1,001 flowers and botanicals from around the world in one volume--

**language of flowers dictionary:** *Flowers and Their Meanings* Karen Azoulay, 2023-03-21  
Uncover the secret meanings behind your bouquets and floral arrangements with this stunningly illustrated exploration of the Victorian language of flowers, including the multicultural history, rituals, and mythology behind over 600 flowers, herbs, and trees. In the Victorian language of flowers, hundreds of blooms were ascribed specific meanings based on folklore, science, and ancient history. Page through this botanical encyclopedia to learn each flower's Victorian meaning (ranunculus, for example, boldly states, I am dazzled by your charms, while marigold represents despair), common names, and cultural history. There is also an index of the flowers grouped by theme, should you want to challenge your local florist to create a coded message for a loved one. The study of floriography can be used by readers to decode hidden messages in beloved novels like *The Age of Innocence* or speculate as to why two canary-yellow roses—which signify jealousy and infidelity—were featured in Diana Spencer's wedding bouquet. You might share some honeysuckle (meaning bonds of love) with a friend or partner as a gesture of commitment. Or perhaps you'll choose a celebratory bouquet of angelica (inspiration) and purple columbine (resolved to win) for a friend who has triumphed over something difficult. Karen Azoulay pairs nineteenth century botanical drawings with electric photography, creating a one-of-a-kind flower dictionary with a contemporary, artful feel. With a foreword by Kate Bolick and a helpful sentiment-based index, *Flowers and Their Meanings* is both a beautiful volume and a practical guide to incorporating the language of flowers into your own life.

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Language of Flowers* Miss Ildrewe, 1874

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Language of Flowers with Illustrative Poetry* Frederic Shoberl, 1835

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Language of Flowers* Nicolae Tanase, 2019-03-09 (gift book with dedication) --- This book will make you bloom! It contains a list of 800 flowers and their beautiful and timeless meanings. Easy to look through. This pocket book will accompany you all the time in your phone, tablet, or in your Kindle. You can access the meaning of a flower anytime and everywhere, day or night, at a dating or a wedding, and early in the morning in the fragrant garden. Bejewel your heart with the language of a flower. Give someone a flower imbued with fragrance and a word from the soul. Adorn your garden of flowers with values and virtues. Let your garden become the garden of love. Let your heart radiate like the fragrance of a flower...

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Language and Sentiment of Flowers* , 1973

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Language of Flowers* Dena Seiferling, 2022-05-03  
An adopted bumblebee learns the language of flowers from her floral family in this enchanting picture book, inspired by floriography, that celebrates one of nature's most important relationships. Deep within a magical meadow, some lonely flowers receive a very special gift: a baby bumblebee in need. The flowers name her Beatrice, they care for her and help her find her wings. And as she grows older, Beatrice learns the language of her floral family — messages of kindness and appreciation that she delivers between them. With each sweet word, the flowers bloom until the meadow becomes so big that Beatrice needs help delivering her messages and decides to set out in search of her own kind. But this little bee's quest takes her beyond the safety of the meadow and into the dangerous swamp the flowers have warned her about, a swamp inhabited by strange plants with snapping jaws and terrible teeth . . . will these prickly plants let her pass? Could they just be in need of a little sweetness themselves? A gently fanciful tale of the miracle of pollination and the important

relationship between flowers and bees, this sweetly affirming story, inspired by the Victorian practice of floriography, suggests the secret to flourishing is kindness and appreciation.

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Posy Book: Garden-Inspired Bouquets That Tell a Story* Teresa H. Sabankaya, 2019-05-07 “Like a favorite recipe, a posy is meant to be savored and shared. Try it yourself, and ... welcome a bit of floral enchantment into your life.” —Amy Stewart, author of *The Drunken Botanist* Inspired by the Victorian-era language of flowers, a posy is a small, round bouquet of flowers, herbs, and plants meant to convey a message, such as dahlias for gratitude, sunflowers for adoration, or thyme for bravery. These floral poems have become Teresa Sabankaya’s signature. Brides want them for their weddings, but a posy is a lovely gift any time of year, and one that readers can easily put together from their garden or with blooms from their local florist. In *The Posy Book*, Sabankaya shares step-by-step instructions, floral recipes for more than 20 posies, and ideas for seasonal variations. A modern floral dictionary, with 12 original paintings by celebrated illustrator Maryjo Koch, will help readers craft their own posies filled with personal meaning.

**language of flowers dictionary:** *Flora's Dictionary* Kathleen Gips, 1995 Do you know what you're saying when you give the gift of flowers or plants? What's the difference between a red rose & a white one? Why shouldn't you give your spouse a yellow carnation or a pumpkin flower? The answers to these questions lie in the traditional meaning of plants. Even fruits & vegetables have meanings - potato for beneficence, raspberry for apology - & all of them are historically documented in this book. You'll learn how to be cold & cruel or warm & caring just by choosing different plants for a bouquet. Ms. Gips has spent twenty years researching the historical meaning associated with plants. This updated, expanded version of her previous book contains authentic meanings for more than 700 plants, including 40 rose forms. Anyone - lay or professional - who designs theme gardens, floral arrangements, wreaths or any kind of herbal or floral gift will find this one-of-a-kind book an indispensable reference. Authentic Victorian illustrations with color plates of tussie mussies. Dictionary format, includes index. Order from: Village Herb Shop, 26 South Main St., Chagrin Falls, OH 44022. 800-836-9120. Trade discount.

**language of flowers dictionary:** *The Language of Flowers* Vanessa Diffenbaugh, 2011-08-23 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions: honeysuckle for devotion, asters for patience, and red roses for love. But for Victoria Jones, it’s been more useful in communicating mistrust and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now eighteen and emancipated from the system with nowhere to go, Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. But an unexpected encounter with a mysterious stranger has her questioning what’s been missing in her life. And when she’s forced to confront a painful secret from her past, she must decide whether it’s worth risking everything for a second chance at happiness. Look for special features inside. Join the Circle for author chats and more. Praise for *The Language of Flowers* Instantly enchanting . . . [Diffenbaugh] is the best new writer of the year.—Elle “I would like to hand Vanessa Diffenbaugh a bouquet of bouvardia (enthusiasm), gladiolus (you pierce my heart) and lisianthus (appreciation). In this original and brilliant first novel, Diffenbaugh has united her fascination with the language of flowers—a long-forgotten and mysterious way of communication—with her firsthand knowledge of the travails of the foster-care system. . . . This novel is both enchanting and cruel, full of beauty and anger. Diffenbaugh is a talented writer and a mesmerizing storyteller. She includes a flower dictionary in case we want to use the language ourselves. And there is one more sprig I should add to her bouquet: a single pink carnation (I will never forget you).”—Washington Post A fascinating debut . . . Diffenbaugh clearly knows both the human heart and her plants, and she keeps us rooting for the damaged Victoria.—O Magazine Diffenbaugh effortlessly spins this enchanting tale, making even her prickly protagonist impossible not to love.—Entertainment Weekly

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