



Good Reading

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This section gives you a comprehensive coverage of some of the books available this month, reviewed by famous names and new voices, all of them passionate readers, just like you. Each book has been given a star rating, and 'RG' indicates those books suitable for reading groups.

- ★ Disappointing
- ★★ Worth a read
- ★★★ A good read
- ★★★★ Highly recommended
- ★★★★★ Outstanding
- RG** Recommended for reading groups

Vincenzo's Garden

John Clanchy

 This is an extraordinary collection of short stories. It reminds me of Bernard Schlink's collection *Flights of Love*, in that each sentence is beautifully wrought, every word carefully chosen.

There are recurring themes in this collection – of guilt; of obsession; of art (Van Gogh appears in a number of stories); of uncertain sexuality; of people on the edge of madness; and of grief and

loss. The characters in each of the seven tales are beautifully drawn and each story leaves you thinking and questioning further.

'Burnt Offering' and 'Leaper' were, for me, the most riveting and thought provoking. 'A Portrait of Adeline Ravoux or The Girl in the Blue Dress' tells of the last days of Van Gogh as seen by the girl in the painting.

This is the first book I have read of John Clanchy's and it is one of those rare, outstanding pieces of writing that will stay with me for many years to come.

★★★★ RG University of Queensland Press \$22.95

Reviewed by Liz Gill