

[The Write Place At the Write Time](#)

[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Announcements](#)

[Interviews](#)

[Fiction](#)

[Poetry](#)

["Our Stories" non-fiction](#)

[Writers' Craft Box](#)

[Writers' Contest!](#)

[Book Reviews](#)

[Exploration of Theme](#)

[Submission Guidelines](#)

[Feedback & Questions](#)

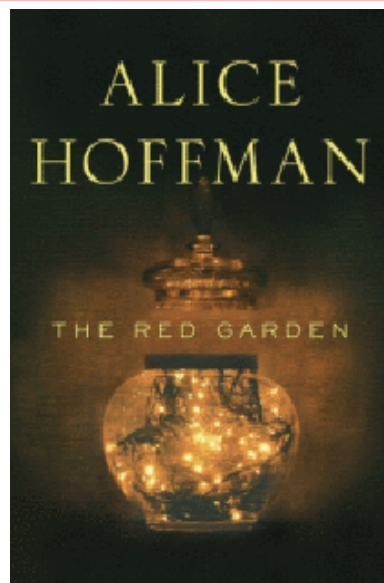
[Professional Services](#)

[Archives](#)

[Commentary On Two Years](#)

Come in...and be captivated...

The Write Place At the Write Time Book Review- Hot off the Presses



The Red Garden Cover Image

**The Write Place At the Write Time Book Review presents:
The Red Garden by Alice Hoffman**

Author bio~ Alice Hoffman was born in New York City attended Adelphi University, from which she received a BA, and then received a Mirrellees Fellowship to the

Stanford University Creative Writing Center, which she attended in 1973 and 74, receiving an MA in creative writing. Hoffman is the author of *Here on Earth*, an Oprah's Book Club Selection, bestseller *Practical Magic*, which was made into the Hollywood film starring Sandra Bullock and Nicole Kidman, and *Aquamarine*, also made into a Hollywood film, *The Ice Queen*, *Local Girls*, *Blackbird House*, *Third Angel* amongst many other beloved novels.

For further information on this book, please click on the cover image~

REVIEW by Nicole M. Bouchard~

Amongst the deep roots of *The Red Garden*, Hoffman creates fruitful blossoms that last through the ages. In her latest novel, Hoffman deftly transitions the reader through centuries of history in the rural town of Blackwell, MA. Beginning with the narrow survival of the town's founders through the help of the fiercely determined Hallie Brady, the town evolves through the seasons, growing, fading and beginning anew much like the mysterious red garden where the soil and plants carry a blood-red stain.

This book is a deep exploration of nature; that of humans, beasts, and elements alike. There is a tender affinity for the bonds forged between people and animals showcasing a connection amongst all creatures; bears who befriend children and women, dogs that love their owners long past death...

"They say that dogs may dream, and when Topsy was old, his feet would move in his sleep. With his eyes closed he would often make a noise that sounded quite human, as if greeting someone in his dreams. At first it seemed that he believed Sara would return, but as the years went by I understood that his loyalty asked for no reward, and that love comes in unexpected forms. His wish was small, as hers had been- merely to be beside her."

Blackwell, like the families that thrive and fail within it, experiences the turns of the world through the Civil War, the Depression, the aftermath of World War II, desire for a higher liberty in the 1960s and a resolution for the following generation in the 1980s.

The natural surroundings which serve as a backdrop to this engaging novel echo the difficulties faced by the townspeople as they undergo harsh winters, famine, losses of daughters, sons, spouses, heartbreak and isolation. Similarly the spring comes again, bees return to bring a golden haze on the fields while children are born, love is found, salvation and kindness bestowed upon those most in need of it. The dark woods pose threats of wild beasts and

lost men, the more dangerous of which being the humans having lost their humanity.

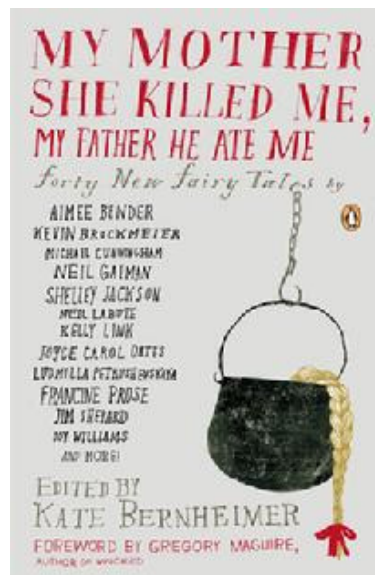
As with any small town, Blackwell has its folk tales, ghosts and superstitions yet here they seem as natural as the majestic apple trees that prevented starvation one passing year. The range of emotions runs deep beneath the ground, dangerous and unpredictable as the Eel River. A journalist traveling through during the Depression is in search of a story, a local myth worth his time and ink yet instead finds a dark secret, an impossible legend of a woman that he must let go to be true to himself.

The instincts to survive, love, protect and preserve speak strongly to the heart page after page of this novel that deserves to be savored.

Were I to hike through the forest, past Hightop Mountain and step into the town of Blackwell, I would make a straight path to the oldest house and peer over the white fence of the red garden where I'd choose one crimson blossom; this being my only wish, I would press it into a treasured book meant to be handed down through generations with the thought that *no one* and *nothing* is to be forgotten.

FEATURED EXCERPT~

<http://www.alicehoffman.com/hoffman-red-garden-excerpt.htm>



My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me Cover Image

**The Write Place At the Write Time Book Review presents:
My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me; Forty New Fairy Tales edited by Kate Bernheimer**

Author/Editor Bio~ Kate Bernheimer has published novels, stories, children's books, creative nonfiction, and essays on fairy tales, and has edited three influential fairy-tale anthologies.

Her trio of novels about three sisters—The Complete Tales of Ketzia Gold, The Complete Tales of Merry Gold, and the forthcoming The Complete Tales of Lucy Gold—work together as one volume, exploring themes of sadness, anger, and bliss (all with FC2). Her first children's book, *The Girl in The Castle inside The Museum* (Random House/Schwartz & Wade Books), was illustrated by Nicoletta Ceccoli and was named one of the Best Books of 2008 by Publishers Weekly. Forthcoming children's books include *The Lonely Book*, currently being illustrated by Chris Sheban, and *The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair* (both Random House/Schwartz & Wade Books). She has published fiction and literary nonfiction in such journals as *Tin House*, *Western Humanities Review*, *Poetry International*, *Puerto del Sol*, and *The Massachusetts Review*.

As a fiction writer devoted to fairy tales, she has also undertaken to help preserve this literary tradition through essays and editorships. Her anthologies include *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me: Forty New Fairy Tales*, *Mirror, Mirror on The Wall: Women Writers Explore Their Favorite Fairy Tales*, and *Brothers and Beasts: An Anthology of Men on Fairy Tales*. In 2005, she founded, and currently remains editor of, *Fairy Tale Review*, the leading literary journal dedicated to fairy tales as a contemporary art form. Ms. Bernheimer serves as an Associate Professor of English and Writer in Residence at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette.

For further information on this book, please click on the cover image~

REVIEW by Nicole M. Bouchard~

The latest anthology from editor, Kate Bernheimer, breathes entirely new philosophies into age-old fairy tale literature from across the globe. With contributors such as Joy Williams, Jonathon Keats, Gregory Maguire (*forward*), John Updike, Neil Gaiman, Joyce Carol Oates and Kevin Brockmeier, adventure is sure as the reader walks the long hall of forty fairy tales and chooses, at his or her whim, a door to open.

These tales, as magical as their subject matter, strike a resemblance to the trees leading to the home under the ground in J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*; the stories, like the passageways in the hollows of the trees, are not made to fit you but rather you are made to fit them. It could be a simple matter of adding or subtracting a layer to your consciousness or it could be an unseen, undefined process. The result, however, should be that you gain entrance into this other world lit by the fire of your imagination. Every single tale may not be a fit to you but once you stumble upon the many that are, you experience something positively extraordinary.

Amongst the many, many tales that glimmer in brilliance against the darker elements of their foundations are "Baba Iaga and the Pelican Child", "Ardour", "A Day in the Life of Half of Rumpelstiltskin", "With Hair of Spun Gold", "Blue-Bearded Lover", "Whitework" and "The Wild Swans".

The first of these unearths a simple truth about a historical practice, the second is beautifully dark and romantic with coming of age themes, the third an inspired and whimsical touch on the softer side of a 'villain', the fourth a modern adaptation that crosses love with betrayal, the fifth a simplification on the themes of the original

and the secrets between lovers, the sixth a story within a story of identity and the last about an unfinished, seemingly unfortunate end that unravels at the seam. As seven is so often a fortuitous number in folklore, I have chosen it as a number to give a sampling of the wonders between the covers of a book that delights in so many alluring ways as it studies the ancient manner of storytelling; one which in the retellings captures a piece of the heart of each author.

Dark, dangerous, attractive and intricate, these tales are spun carefully of the nettled thread that Bernheimer has woven in hopes of cloaking readers in a transformation.

FEATURED EXCERPT~

"7:45 am- He showers and dresses.

Half of Rumpelstiltskin awakens from a dream in which his body is a filament of straw, coiled and twisted about itself so as to mimic the presence of flesh and entrails, of hands and ribs and muscles and a knotty, throbbing heart. In his dream, Half of Rumpelstiltskin is seated at a spinning wheel, his foot pumping furiously at the treadle, his body winding into gold around the spindle"- Excerpt from "A Day in the Life of Half of Rumpelstiltskin" by Kevin Brockmeier

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