



A Wolf at the Door and Other Retold Fairy Tales (13 stories)

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These are not your mother's fairy tales...

Did you ever wonder how the dwarves felt after Snow White ditched them for the prince? Do you sometimes wish Cinderella hadn't been so helpless and petite? Are you ready to hear the Giant's point of view on Jack and his beanstalk? Then this is the book for you.

Thirteen award-winning fantasy and science fiction writers offer up their versions of these classic fairy tales as well as other favorites, including The Ugly Duckling, Ali Baba, Hansel and Gretel, and more. Some of the stories are funny, some are strange, and others are dark and disturbing -- but each offers something as unexpected as a wolf at the door.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8-This well-written collection revisits both familiar and lesser-known stories with creative revisions by a variety of familiar writers. The tales range from Jane Yolen's comic "Cinder Elephant" to Garth Nix's downright creepy "Hansel's Eyes," in which the witch no longer eats children, but instead harvests their organs for sale. It's easy to recognize the traditional tale in most instances, but some are likely to be unfamiliar to many readers, particularly Katherine Vaz's "The Kingdom of Melting Glances," based on two Portuguese tales. Tanith Lee's "A Wolf at the Door," set in the next ice age, and Janeen Webb's "Ali Baba and the Forty Aliens" enter the realm of science fiction. Neil Gaiman's "Instructions" is a poem of advice for those finding themselves in the midst of fairy tales. Gregory Maguire's "The Seven Stage a Comeback" is a song in which the dwarves consider taking back Snow White. The diversity of content, style, and tone makes this an excellent collection for sampling. Most of these stories ask readers to think a bit more about fairy tales and what they may be saying to and about us. Overall, *Wolf* is enjoyable reading for those who like fairy tales, particularly fans of revisionist versions who don't expect humor in every story.

Ellen A. Greever, University of New Orleans, LA

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 6-10. Irreverent, poetic, and thrillingly evil, these new versions of classic fairy tales are less comic and playful than the fractured fairy-tale picture books for younger readers. In fact, as the editors point out in their introduction, fairy tales were originally told to older audiences before the stories were sweetened and simplified for children. Many of these retellings are contemporary, set in the city and the schoolyard as well as the dark woods, with lots of evil stepmoms and rivalrous siblings. Garth Nix's "Hansel's Eyes" may be too lurid, even for teens, spelling out the fairy tale's elemental terror in graphic detail, with a Hagmom who gets Dad to dump the kids in a city wasteland. But many of the other stories are dark and strange and beautiful. In Gregory Maguire's "The Seven Stage Comeback," the dwarves speak in poetic monologues as they try to get back their beloved Snow White after she's left them for the prince ("We took her in when she was lost / But then we lost her in our turn"). Jane Yolen's "Cinder Elephant" is about "a lovely big girl," whose dancing slippers are size nine-and-a-half wide, very wide; she hooks the prince with her love of sports and books and her fast, funny talk. Both immediate and traditional, this dramatic collection will grab middle-graders and teens for storytelling and readers' theater. *Hazel Rochman*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Harking back to a time when fairy tales were scarier . . . and the heroes and heroines were more interesting, 13 fantasists spin trenchant remakes or sequels. The editors mix work from fixed stars and rising ones: Jane Yolen's chubby Cinderella gets her prince almost in spite of inept help from a flock of birds; Michael Cadnum envisions Jack and the Beanstalk from the point of view of the giant's wife; Delia Sherman (*The Months of Manhattan*) and Garth Nix (*Hansel's Eyes*) give their versions of well-known tales with urban settings; Nancy Farmer reworks *The Goose Girl* so that the horse Falada survives. In a lighter vein, Neil Gaiman offers *Instructions* to anyone suddenly trapped in a fairy tale (A red metal imp hangs from the green-painted front door, / as a knocker, / do not touch it; it will bite your fingers). Tanith Lee's well-read 14-year-old unenthusiastically works herself up to kissing a clumsy, obviously bespelled wolf, and Janeen Webb chronicles a Close Encounter in *Ali Baba and the Forty Aliens*. Most of the protagonists are young, the violence is toned down (the giants do keep stepping on people but not deliberately), and readers will come

away from this collection satisfied, whether they're after romance or danger, psychodrama or belly laughs. Author comments, mostly about favorite childhood fairy tales, follow each story. (Short stories. 11-15) -- *Copyright © 2000 Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Regina Laporte:

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Sandra Lynn:

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