



# Hannah's Garden

*Midori Snyder*

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## **Hannah's Garden** Midori Snyder

Seventeen-year-old Cassie Brittman is looking forward to her violin recital and the prom-- until the hospital calls and she learns that her grandfather, noted mystical painter Daniel Brittman, is dying.

Cassie, her mother, Anne, and Anne's new boyfriend travel to the family farm and immediately see that things are far from normal. The farm, including Great-Grandmother Hannah's spiral garden, is almost destroyed, and someone (or something) seems to be stalking them. Cassie soon finds herself at the center of an age-old battle between two supernatural clans-the sinister, dark Red Clan and her own family, the Green Clan. For it turns out that Cassie's grandfather is half nature spirit, half human...

## **Hannah's Garden Details**

Date : Published April 21st 2005 by Firebird (first published 1995)

ISBN : 9780142401354

Author : Midori Snyder

Format : Paperback 256 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Young Adult, Fiction, Urban Fantasy, Fairies, Fae

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## From Reader Review Hannah's Garden for online ebook

### Victoria says

That was beautiful! The characters were amazing, I mean come on, a Fiddler/hare/man!? Doesn't get much more amazing than that.

I enjoyed taking a break from real life and living in this fantasy world! <3 I wish I could spend all day in a garden playing with these characters <3

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### Sienna says

Anyone who grew up enchanted — and haunted — by Brian Froud and Alan Lee's *Faeries* will understand why at fourteen I was so thrilled to discover that four authors had written novels inspired by Froud's wild and wily drawings, paintings and washes. My memory's selective specificity proves useful here: the usual trip to Bookstar in Tustin, a family tradition that followed the interminable IKEA loop and a stop at In-N-Out (cheeseburger with grilled onions, fries, chocolate shake), yielding Patricia McKillip's *Something Rich and Strange*. I didn't know *The Tempest* then, only that the title perfectly described the book's contents, which rose like glittery flotsam from the depths of the sea. Charles de Lint's *The Wild Wood* was a bit harder to track down, not quite as easy to love. And then... nothing. The other two books in the series never appeared in pretty hardcover format, scattered with evocative full-color images, but they were published eventually. I read Terri Windling's memorable, appropriately mythic *The Wood Wife* in my late teens, but only picked up an inexpensive secondhand copy of the fourth book, this slender, satisfying, musical work by Midori Snyder, a few weeks ago.

*Hannah's Garden* is not perfect. There are some dated pop cultural references, and it occasionally succumbs to my personal YA pet peeve: talking down to the reader. The writing is good but not exceptional — just magical enough. You could probably argue that the characters need more development, though I'd reply that extra distance mirrors the misty mystery dancing lightly through the spiral garden at the book's heart. This is a world in which a wreath of heartsease really heals and gold-flecked rosin burns. Badgers serve as guardians. Fiddlers be damned, violins can sing on their own. Art takes so many beautiful forms here. And the conclusion fulfills the promise of the opening pages without resorting to hand-holding or wordy exposition.

No, this book is flawed. But Snyder knows how to write sound, sensation, passion, uncertainty. She remembers how love felt when she was a teenager, how it's not necessarily more intense but almost certainly more pervasive than in later years if only because the newness of that skipped heartbeat, that skipping breath, the life-is-happening realization that almost makes you want to skip relegates the ordinary everyday to the background, barely visible and not even in focus. What's more, she knows how to express that love in words. Cassie, our heroine, has a great boyfriend and a mother who seems more like the daughter, but this story is about belonging. It illuminates the complex, complicated love of families and the choices we sometimes must make between our loves. One of Cassie's is music. I was sold by the second page:

*Maybe, I thought, I was too intellectual, keeping the music out of my body like a thing apart, when I should have distilled it deep in my heart and blood. Lying on the floor, I ached, just*

*wanting in the worst way to belong to that sound.*

But that's just the beginning. Halfway through I stopped intellectualizing and just let the story sink in, and somewhere near the end my response became more emotional: I loved Cassie and Anne and Poppie and Joe and the grey-haired fiddler with his indescribable songs. I loved Hannah's garden and the whole farm-that-isn't-anymore, for the love they represented, and I loved recognizing Froud's faeries as they peered from between trees and lines of text, daring me to remember my own childhood and the intense joy of belonging to something at once familiar and magical: family. Home.

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### **Kerry says**

This is a lovely book, made a young adult novel by it's tone rather than for any 'talking-down' to the reader. Because of the book blurb, I had more idea of what was going on than Cassie did, but that didn't hurt the story at all. I did find Anne's refusal to face up to the reality of her family and its legacy a little annoying, as Cassie would have managed the situation much better if she had had a little more information.

The Red Clan were truly creepy in a quite not-human sort of way and excellently portrayed. Hannah remained a strong figure throughout the story, despite the fact she was already dead, especially through her diary and her small "cameo" at the end, which was touch and beautiful both at the same time.

Like I said, I lovely book, as the best YA titles are, capturing both adult themes and stories without losing the magic with which one can remember childhood. Highly recommended. Barbara was right again.

[Copied across from Library Thing; 16 October 2012]

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### **Maggie says**

This book was a reread for me.

I remember thoroughly enjoying this book when I was younger, and I still do. To me, the descriptions of plants, nature, and music are beautiful and calming. The book has a slow build-up, and takes time to let us get to know the characters and how they interact.

A few things do bother about this book. The first is that while Cassie keeps seeing strange animals and experiencing weird things, she somehow keeps convincing herself that she is either imagining things or is dreaming. Then, all the explanation of the fairy world and the final conflicts seems very rushed. The author spends so much time building up the story only to have it end very quickly. The information about the gate and who and how they guard it was not explained thoroughly. Also, I personally would have liked a bit more explanation of how fairy society is construction in this book.

Overall, it is still a good book, but I will probably not be rereading it again.

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### **Ketandu says**

A wonderfully magical book. I'm very happy I read this book.

The descriptions were amazing and the writing was great. I really enjoyed the ending scene with Cassie and her friends. It was so beautiful. 4 Stars for a great read. :)

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### **Kate says**

Hannah's Garden didn't particularly stand out in my mind, and now, a scant few days later, I find I have trouble describing it. It was decently well written. I liked the main character, Cassie, particularly her interaction with Hannah's garden. I liked the fiddler and the hare. But the story never quite coalesced for me, remaining interesting separate elements rather than an interesting story.

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### **Jalilah says**

[in Hannah's garden the lead characters great grandmother was childless due to her husband and w

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### **Megan Verhagen says**

My mom got me this book when I was 12, and for some reason I didn't pick it up until I came home for a visit from grad school ten years later. I can't imagine why I never cracked this book open but I'm glad I did now. The fantasy world that Snyder created was wonderful, a bit reminiscent of Spiderwick, but she had her own flair. The main character Cassie is amazing representation for young girls, and I loved her finding the courage and confidence in the climax of the story to stand up for herself and her family. I'm still not sure which age group this book is exactly geared towards (the writing is similar to authors I read in middle school, but some of the content is young adult level) but overall Hannah's Garden was a very enjoyable read!

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### **Cheryl says**

Snyder has contributed some special stories to different fantasy anthologies that I've read. This looks to be in the same vein, so I'm considering it.

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### **Melanti says**

Lovely book in the de Lint version of urban fantasy.

This was originally slated to be part of Brian Froud's Faerielands series. It's such a shame that the Faerielands series was discontinued. I managed to get my hands on the illustrated edition of McKillip's

*Something Rich and Strange* and I was in awe of the artwork, though it didn't always fit the text.

But I think it's dreadful that this book was never released with the intended cover art or internal illustrations. Froud's ethereal fae would have been a wonderful addition to this little book, and they would have felt right at home.

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### **Kamilla says**

I was in dire need of a comfort read, so I re-read *Hannah's Garden*. It's a story about a family who is intertwined with the fey, and the things that happen to them when their father/grandpa gets ill. It's really beautifully and simply written, with the enchantments and magic that swirl around the characters practically oozing off the page. There is a lot of descriptions of music and art since the main characters are a violinist, a fiddler, a writer/English major, and a folk artist, and a load of magic is woven into all of their crafts. I really love this one, and would recommend it to anyone.

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### **Chere says**

I enjoy young adult fantasies, especially those with a female lead character, and especially those in a contemporary setting. *Hannah's Garden* certainly did not disappoint! Lush descriptions full of sound and visuals, and interesting characters abound in this novel. A lot of nature, and yet the story is very modern. I love Midori Snyder's style! Highly recommended!

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### **Julia says**

Seventeen year old Cassie Britzman feels like she's almost "there," after a life following her aimless odd mother around, she's got a violin solo at the school recital, a great normal boyfriend, and a date to the prom.

Then she and mom get a call from the hospital, her famous grandfather, a reclusive painter of landscapes, sprites and fairies is dying and she must cancel it all. Her mom, her mom's new boyfriend and Cassie go up to farm and it's nearly been ruined.

It's a great book, it might make an excellent read-aloud to the right class. Has a lot of the same themes as *de Lint*, but it's not urban fantasy, it's more like rural fantasy.

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### **Elise says**

I was really enjoying this book for about 70% of it ..... then I suddenly felt lost. The magic was so mixed up with a sort of preachiness that I couldn't quite make sense of most of the time. I felt like there was a whole underworld of myth and lore that I just wasn't in the know about, and it left me a bit confused. The ending was predictable, and I was completely ok with that. Maybe you just have to read more Midori Snyder books to understand what happened here? I wanted to love it because I do love a little magic and eccentricity in a story, but maybe I'm just not hard-core enough for this book. The writing style was good and I liked the

characters and the general idea of the story, it just got weird and confusing for me near the end, that's all.

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### **Mary-Beth says**

This is what I mean by a good fairy story. Cassie finds out that her Poppie, a famous artist is very ill in the hospital at just the wrong time. She has to cancel her plans for prom and an important violin recital. When she and her mother, Anne return to Poppie's farm, Cassie finds that his illness is more complicated than she thought.

Cassie is a nice plucky heroine and I enjoyed the slow unveiling of her family's connections to the woodland spirits who begin to trouble her mostly ordinary life. The supernatural characters are interesting and unusual. I like the way they have dual identities and are associated with animals. I liked the fairy lore the book built up and the interesting way the antagonistic fairies used to fight back.

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