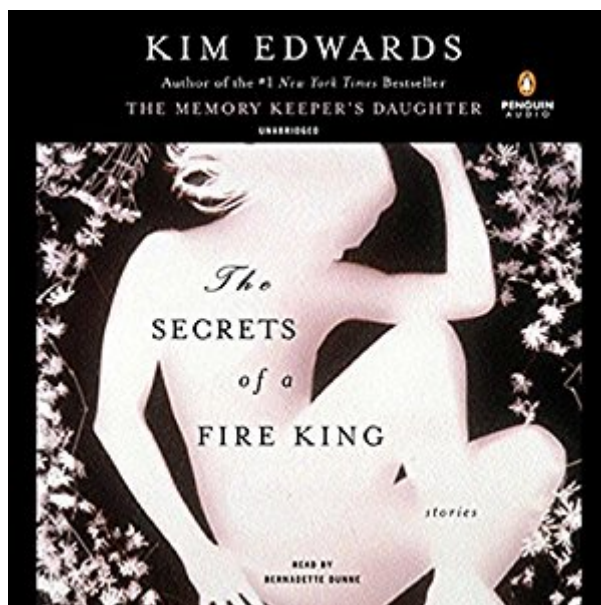


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The Secrets Of A Fire King: Stories



Synopsis

The first story collection from the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *The Memory Keeper's Daughter*. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Not great stories but I have read her novels and wanted to read these earlier stories. No problem with . Great price and service.

I loved Kim Edwards novel, "Memory Makers Daughter" so I decided to try a book of her short stories. I am not as impressed by this book of short stories as I was the novel that she wrote.

This book was a huge disappointment. After reading her best seller I thought this book would be better.

A fascinating collection of short stories published in 1997. These stories are very different from a lot of award-winning "post-postmodern" contemporary short fiction in that they are all straightforward to read, and all of these stories contain plot. Yes, you heard that correctly-- these short stories have actual PLOTS in them. And they aren't at all difficult to read. (!!!) I was amazed!! These stories are truly a delight!"A Gleaming in the Darkness" stars Marie Curie, a gorgeous tale. "Balance" tells the story of two acrobats, with an ending that is haunting and beautiful and perfect. "The Invitation" is an exquisitely clever story of a racist colonial woman in Malaysia. "Aristotle's Lantern" played with

storytelling time in ways that I marveled at with wonder. The title story, "The Secrets of a Fire King," was a dark and wonderful tale. I also loved "Spring, Mountain, Sea," about a cross-racial marriage and the unbreakable bonds of love. I really enjoyed this collection. Kim Edwards is a very fine writer, and the plots of these stories, along with the great characters who star in them, made each tale engaging and compelling to read.

I was rummaging through the \$5 book bin at Borders a few months ago and I stumbled across this hidden gem. The cover seemed interesting and then I noticed the author, Kim Edwards, the same woman who wrote, "The Memory Keeper's Daughter". I have also purchased that book but still have yet to read it. But I liked how the plot of that book sounded so I figured, why not? It's only \$5--let me check this out. I opened it up to reveal soft, thin pages, which, for me, somehow always makes a book more enjoyable to read. I flipped through some of the pages to the middle to read an excerpt. This is my trick to get a quick glimpse of the author's style to determine if it would be something I would be interested in reading. The excerpt that I read seemed delightful. The author had a flair for description and wrote in such a way that when I traipse upon one of these delectable kinds of books, I feel like I am indulging in a guilty pleasure, a kind of expression not often enough incorporated into today's modern works. I was convinced enough to spend the money, so I picked up the book and it was the only thing I purchased that day. The book spent a few months on my bookshelf as I went through a few other books that I deemed more interesting at the time. Then the time came that I just wanted to clear up some space and read some of the thinner books on my shelf, thereby slowly thinning out my collection. I noticed this book again and said, sure, why not? I sat down with it on my couch and was enraptured. I usually only read the first chapter of a book when I start to get a basic feel for the book. If I can stop then, I know it's nothing too special but if I continue on, I know I have found that rare book that so captures my attention that it will be a quick read and a long memory. I read three stories that first night! "The Secrets of a Fire King" is a collection of short stories that deal with the human spirit--unknown strengths we never realized we had, or getting in touch with the part of you that you never realized existed and upon discovery, you realize you don't really like. A particularly touching story for me was "Spring Mountain Sea", the second story in the book. In this story, we meet a man who takes a foreigner for a wife and despite wanting to hold on to her traditional values, tries to assimilate into his American culture, only to be betrayed in the end by the people she had come to trust. In the tragic title story, we meet a magician who falls madly in love with a woman whose brother idolizes him and wants to be a magician also. Unfortunately, a betrayal soon occurs which will change the lives of all three of them forever. In "The

Way It Felt to Be Falling", we meet a young girl who discovers strength she never knew she had after sky-diving with her boyfriend. If you are a fan of stories that deviate from the norm to teach a lesson and that are written beautifully in an almost poetic sense, I strongly suggest you pick up this collection by Kim Edwards. One thing is for sure, I will definitely be reading "The Memory Keeper's Daughter" sooner than I expected! Kim Edwards is an excellent story-teller and I can't wait to read more stories from her.

If this book had been shy a few stories I would have given it 5 stars. Edwards writes well. The way she sequences words is often described as "exquisite" or something, but ultimately I got tired of her narrative voice and I think she ran out of material. Does a collection really need two stories featuring the poisonous effects of radium, unexpected at the time of its discovery? I highly recommend these: "Falling", "Spring, Mountain, Sea", "Chain of Being"; also good are "Balance" and "Fire King." "The Invitation" has a clever premise but wound up in the air (according to me). The rest, well... Ho hum. I was lucky enough to spend some time in peninsular Malaysia and Borneo but the stories concerned with that area got repetitive. Pet peeve: I wish these stories featured fewer "shafts of light." BTW, I subsequently found out that the stories I liked all seem to be freely available on [...].

I loved this short story collection of Kim Edwards. It was written in a very lyrical, well versed style. She really knows the language. I actually enjoyed this one far more than "The Memory Keeper's Daughter," which was wrought with angst.

I purchased this book after reading The Memory Keeper's Daughter. It wasn't quite what I expected, because each of the individual stories had very different tones - some of which were much darker than I was initially prepared for. I'd recommend this book for taking with you on a trip, or for anything else where you'll have quite a few interruptions. You don't have to worry about losing threads of the story since they're so short. Don't buy this collection of stories if you're looking for a feel-good read, but do if you want a thought provoking read.

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