



Beyond the Iron Gate: Zara's Journey

Alicia Michaels

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In the year 1845, before the mystical land of Fallada was separated from the realm of men forever, the two worlds coexisted in harmony. Man could mingle freely in the world of the Elves and Faeries at will and peace reigned. In the hills of Shropshire, England, just miles from the gate separating the village of Ludlow from the world of mystical creatures, farmer's daughter Zara Wells longs for answers. It is not only the golden hair that trail feet behind her, or the strange hue of her violet eyes that separates her from the other girls her village. There is something inside of her, something touched by magic that longs to know more about what lies on the other side of the gate. In Fallada, darkness has begun to spread. As the youngest and most beautiful girls of her village begin to disappear, Zara comes closer to discovering the true circumstances surrounding her birth. Little does she know, that the closer she comes to the answers she so desperately desires, the closer she will come to being ensnared in the dark queen's web of growing treachery.

Beyond the Iron Gate: Zara's Journey Details

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Author : Alicia Michaels

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From Reader Review Beyond the Iron Gate: Zara's Journey for online ebook

Bex 'n' Books says

Reviewer: Bex

Rating: 5 out of 5 Fairies

Beyond the Iron Gate is a fabulous version of Goldilocks.

We are introduced to the character Zara and the gorgeous Kai. For fans of The Lost Kingdom of Fallada, this novella adds a lovely dimension to the story. For new readers, no doubt this will get you hooked.

The characters are beautifully crafted. For a novella especially, I was surprised with how caught up in their adventures I became. Alicia Michaels has a fabulous ability to entertain and draw in her readers. Beyond the Iron Gate is no exception. Her skill and descriptive narrative shines through in her novella.

Disclosure: This book was provided by the author in exchange for an HONEST and not necessarily positive review.

Leah says

I'm so happy I picked this book up! The fantasy genre is not usually my thing, but the last few fantasy books have actually been really good reads! Beyond the Iron Gate was a super easy read and was a great story!

Joy Whiteside says

I really enjoyed this book. Alicia has created characters that you fall in love with and you want things to work out perfectly for them. The story flowed smoothly from beginning to end, keeping the reader interested.

I sat down with this story and found that I could not put it down.

I cannot wait to see what the next installment might hold in this storyline.

Alicia Michaels is definitely someone to keep an eye on. I would definitely recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a good romance with the magic of the fairie thrown in.

I would give this book a rating of 4.25 out of 5

Sabrina Guthrie says

Awesome read. This was my first book to read by this particular author and it won't be my last. It took a fairy

tale story and twisted it into an amazing read.

I will not lie. Near the end, a few twists and turns had me emotionally unstable and holding on to my seat but I recovered quickly as I turned to the last page. I love fairy tales. Anyone that knows me knows that. This book amplified my desire to be swept away and placed in a world of mystical creatures and love.

Kai, you are my hero. I shall keep my thoughts about this fictional character to myself. I was truly jealous that I could not be in Zara's shoes!

If you want a great story and a wonderful twist to a fairy tale story, this is the book for you. Just be prepared for the surprise I got in the end! I shall not tell. Shhh.....

Sabrina D. Guthrie

Hannah says

Got this after reading the first book that this one is a novella for. Was a wonderful quick read that gave insight into a few characters that get minor mention in the rest of the series. At the same time, it was different and gave history to the make-believe land that has the feel of C.S. Lewis.

Annie Page says

Beyond The Iron Gate Zara's Journey by Alicia Michaels

Love the way the author writes this book she puts you right there understanding and feeling everything.

This is a great fantasy story with lots of mystical creatures she encounters.

This is about a mother who wanted a daughter so bad she did what she had to do right or wrong she wanted to have a girl.

Zara is drawn to the Iron Gates of Fallada feeling that that is where she belongs. Zara gets her chance to enter and a whole new world opens up for her

and the adventure begins Good Queen versus Evil Queen and Zara is in the middle. Zara finds out she has a destiny to fulfill and her hard journey begins

InD'tale Magazine says

3.5/5.0

An interesting mix of multiple Grimm tales such as Snow White and Rapunzel, "Beyond the Iron Gate, Zara's Journey" offers a different twist to the fairy tale romance and adventure.

Read full review in the 2013 July/August double issue of InD'tale Magazine.

Rittwolf says

I'm hooked! I absolutely loved this novella.

I really enjoyed Alicia's writing style and the way she described the characters and their surroundings. I quickly became attached to Zara's character and couldn't wait to find out what would happen to her in the next chapter. The fact that I had to use the dictionary app on my iPad while reading this story was an added bonus. Who knew that Plaits is another way of saying a braid? No me. I love it when I can learn something new while enjoying a great book.

I will definitely be reading more in this series.

Lynn 2 Girls & A Book says

The author, Alicia Michaels, paints a beautiful canvas to which she puts her own twist on the fairy tale classics we grew up with. The reader can easily become lost in the land of Fallada.

Beyond the Iron Gate has a little something for every reader. Love, fighting, paranormal creatures, oh my! This is a quick read that adds insight to the backstory of Eranna and how she became so jaded, twisted, and down right evil. It also tell the love story of Kai and Zara and how the wandering spirit of the moor came to be.

This quick read novella is a prequel to Daughter of the Red Dawn.

Claire Taylor says

Alicia Michaels
Beyond the Iron Gate
A Lost Kingdom of Fallada Novella

A twisted and magical version of Goldilocks. Zara is a farmer's daughter, but has always felt a pull to the mystical land of Fallada and upon meeting Kai, a gorgeous elf, her life was changed forever. Daughter of the Red Dawn was an amazing book, and this novella adds a completely new level to the story, showing how Eranna was seduced by dark magic. Incredibly well written with strong character development, this book draws you in and will keep you gripped right until the end.

I received an e-copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Emily Fogle says

Beyond the Iron Gate by Alicia Michaels is an amazing, timeless, heart touching, modern day fairytale. The story is a prequel to Red Dawn, explaining a little bit of Eranna's bitterness and why she loathes Queen

Adrah so much. It also tells of a young woman, Zara, and her quest for adventure. Zara lives in the world of men, but has never felt like she actually fits in. When she ventures to Fallada, however, the sense of belonging touches her heart and she knows that she has found her true home. While in Fallada, Zara meets Kai, a handsome elf. Together, they unravel the story of her birth and the mysteries behind the elusive rampion flower (which offers the gift of eternal life). In doing so, they are also faced with life-threatening danger. Eranna has been consorting with witches and is obsessed beyond all reason with her beauty and thoughts of immortality. Because of this, the wickedness inside of her grows and she will stop at nothing to capture Zara and drain her of the powers that live within her.

Without spoiling the plotline and giving away all of the fantastic details, I will say that the story is captivating and the writing is awe inspiring. The author does a phenomenal job painting a picture of a beautifully inviting world, but also one that is slowly being tainted by evil. At the end, I wanted to cry. The touch of tragedy brings a depth to the tale that absolutely tugs at the heart's strings. For me, the ending and the fate of the two lovers was the best part. It makes their love all that much stronger and drowns the reader in the sorrow that surrounds them.

This is beyond a doubt, one of my favorite love stories (and I am NOT a romance reader!). This story is so much more than a 'romance' novel. It's filled with fantasy and adventure, and TRUE love. All of the greatest love stories have a hint of tragedy attached to them: you can't have real love without the heartache that sometimes comes with loving one person with all of your soul.

Well done, Alicia Michaels! I can't wait until I can take the next adventure within the land of Fallada!

Elisabeth Wheatley says

If you are acquainted with the bloggersphere of Tumblr, you have probably heard the term "oh, so many feels." If not, that means you have a life and I congratulate you, but this book left me with "oh, so many feels." It was so sweet and beautiful and romantic and charming and heartbreaking all at once and is a kind of fairytale we need more of.

The plot:

I read this in one sitting. The story trots along at a pace that keeps you hooked, showing us the villain's diabolical workings to maintain the suspense while things are going apparently well for our heroine. It was a perfectly paced plot that packed a lot into a short space, but didn't feel rushed or hurried at all. When I got to the end, I was left with a bittersweet feeling and a definite desire to read the rest of this series.

The characters:

Zara is the Rapunzel in this retelling. Naive and warmhearted, she can't help but feel she belongs in the world of the fey rather than that of the humans. She was a sweet and innocent character who liked to think the best of everyone and never failed to find the wonder in the world around her. She was like a little girl about a lot of things, but still brave, and that made her irresistibly endearing both to me and to Kai.

Kai is the elf who first finds Zara in a pixie-induced sleep when she wanders too close to Fallada. He

becomes her friend, her guide, and eventually something more. He was a noble, protective character and it was hard not to love him to bits.

(On a side and slightly spoiler-ific note, while they weren't actually married, I really liked that they were at least promised to each other before Kai took Zara as a lover. What? Stop looking at me like that. I'm old fashioned, shoot me.)

Even the main baddie, Queen Eranna, is sympathetic in this story. While the reader still understandably wants to dunk her over a very steep and rocky precipice, she's not pure evil and I pitied her in many ways. But once she goes over the edge, she goes over in a big way and I think she must be a simply epic villain for the rest of the series.

The end of this novella left me a little sad and with a teeny tiny longing to wring Eranna's snow white neck, but at the same time it was so gorgeous and I call for a round of applause for the author for this exceptional piece.

Nanette Bradford says

I was given this book to read for an honest review. I'm a total sucker for love stories and this one really got to me. It was hard for me to read.. Not because it was a bad book, far from it, it was because I could sense what was going to Happen and wanted to prolong my torture apparently. I didn't want the story to come to an end but as all great books do

I had to read on. I had to know what became of Zara and Kai.

In this book of Fallada the faerie Queen Adrah tells the story of two lovers and how they're paths came to cross.

It's about Zara, a young human girl who never felt right in the human world and longed to cross the iron gates into Fallada. Zara was drawn to Fallada but she did not know why yet. She's always felt this strong connection to it and everything within.

Kai was a young elf who was pretty much a loner. He had a huge family but felt more at peace when he was alone in the woods in his perfect house in the trees. On a hunt after a deer, he happened to see a figure beyond the gate. As Kai moved closer he saw with his own two eyes the most beautiful creature he'd ever seen. This was the start of it all. This is how Zara and Kai's paths intertwined and their destinies became one.

What story would be complete without an evil Queen. Queen Eranna, very beautiful but also very vain and becoming heartless with every breath she takes. She wants nothing more than to be the most beautiful woman in Fallada forever. She hates the worthless humans that share her world and doesn't understand why the faerie Queen Adrah loves them so. On her search for immortality and power she will let no one person or creature stand in her way.

This second book totally stands up to the first and I'm not very patiently waiting for the next to come out. I'm already a huge fan of Alicia Michaels and will recommend her stories to anyone who asks.

Sheri says

****revision****

Upon speaking with the author, I found that this book was SUPPOSED to follow those same lines; like the stories from our childhood, with a darker twist! Now that I understand this, I liked it even more!**

While I did enjoy the story, I was a little concerned that it resembles several stories that I already know and love. For example, Snow White had a strong prevalence stemming from the "wicked queen" who frequents the magic mirror asking "Mirror, mirror, on the wall. Who is the fairest one of all?" Also, she works in conjunction with a witch to capture the one who the mirror decides is the most beautiful...

Also, the magic flower idea, as well as the long golden hair remind me an awful lot of Rapunzel. Her family never locked her in a tower, but they did keep her hidden from those who would covet her inner power, which falls along the same line as well.

With that being said, I did enjoy the book. The fantasy of it all was very well written. I found myself picturing a beautiful land full of wondrous creatures and magical sights. The similarities didn't make me enjoy the book any less I just found myself thinking of different stories while I was trying to focus on this one. It can be hard to differentiate between stories when they follow the same lines...

I should say that I would certainly recommend reading it, it was a fun read for sure!! Don't stay too focused on similarities because this story has it's own plot, drama, and drive!!

Tabatha Wheat says

this is a great book. I read this one last, I love the back story about how the evil Queen came to be.
