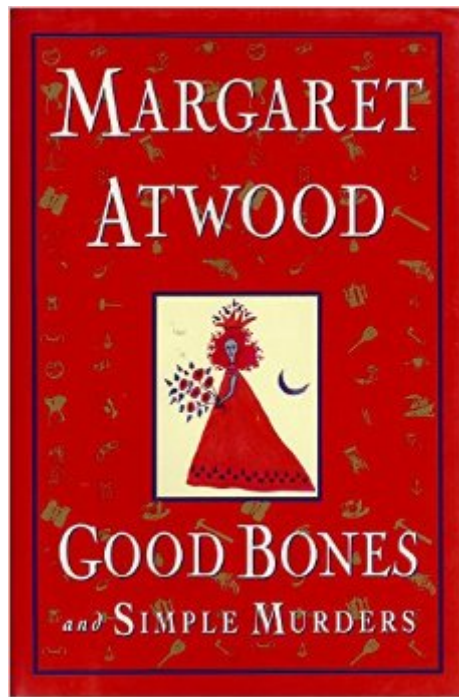


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# Good Bones And Simple Murders



## Synopsis

In this collection of short works that defy easy categorization, Margaret Atwood displays, in a condensed and crystallized form, the trademark wit and virtuosity of her best-selling novels, brilliant stories, and insightful poetry. Among the jewels gathered here are Gertrude offering Hamlet a piece of her mind, the real truth about the Little Red Hen, a reincarnated bat explaining how Bram Stoker got Dracula all wrong, and the five methods of making a man (such as the "Traditional Method": "Take some dust off the ground. Form. Breathe into the nostrils the breath of life. Simple, but effective!") There are parables, monologues, prose poems, condensed science fiction, reconfigured fairy tales, and other miniature masterpieces--punctuated with charming illustrations by the author. A must for her fans, and a wonderful gift for all who savor the art of exquisite prose, *Good Bones And Simple Murders* marks the first time these writings have been available in a trade edition in the United States.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I snagged a used copy of *GOOD BONES AND SIMPLE MURDERS* on , whilst shopping around for some of Atwood's older novels. A slim collection of short stories and poetry, *GOOD BONES* is an eclectic mix, with illustrations by the author peppered throughout. The stories cover a little bit of everything: fantasy, mystery, science fiction, speculative fiction, feminism, rape culture, gender wars, dating, death - you name it. Many of the pieces are hit and miss; my favorites are the scifi stories that hinge on an environmental or animal-friendly theme: - "Cold-Blooded" - An alien race of matriarchal moth people visit planet earth - or as they call it, "The Planet of the Moths," a nickname

owing to the fact that their moth cousins outnumber us by billions - and find humans sorely lacking in both culture and intelligence;- "My Life As a Bat" - A series of reflections on the narrator's past life as a bat, including a disturbing (and, as it just so happens, true) anecdote about WWII-era experiments in which bats were made into unwitting suicide bombers;- "Hardball" - A piece of dystopian speculative fiction in which humans, having decimated their environment, have retreated to live under a giant dome. Since space is limited, the population must be kept in check: for every birth, one person is chosen to die via a lottery. Care to guess what becomes of the remains? Also enjoyable are those stories which reimagine classic literature: "Gertrude Talks Back" gives voice to Hamlet's long-suffering mother, and "Unpopular Gals" and "Let Us Now Praise Stupid Women" celebrates those villains and "airheads" without which fairy tales would not exist.

Good Bones and Simple Murders / 0-385-47110-6 This compilation of Atwood's shortest stories and musings include the following:- Murder in the Darl- Bad News- Unpopular Girls- The Little Red Hen Tells All- Gertrude Talks Back- There Was Once- Women's Novels- The Boys' Own Annual- Stump Hunting- Making a Man- Men at Sea- Simmering- Happy Endings- Let Us Now Praise Stupid Women- The Victory Burlesk- She- The Female Body- Cold-Blooded- Liking Men- In Love with Raymond Chandler- Simple Murders- Iconography- Alien Territory- My Life as a Bat- Hardball- Bread- Poppies: Three Variations- Homelanding- The Page- An Angel- Third Handed- Death Scenes- We Want It All- Dance of the Lepers- Good Bones These stories are all fairly short, no more than a few pages each, and many are less stories than simply musings on the part of the author. Each one is a little snippet of thought, with a larger story behind it that exists only in the author's mind. For instance, "Gertrude Talks Back", a quick short speech where Hamlet's mother responds to his famous berating speech and confesses proudly that it was she who killed Claudius. Behind the speech lies an unwritten story with a stronger Gertrude, one who takes command of her own destiny rather than simply playing the passive roles of widow, wife, and mother. The only real drawback to this compilation is that the stories are almost too short, too unpolished. The idea behind each is compelling, but it is disappointing that the idea wasn't able to blossom into a full story, or even a whole novel.

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