



# The Winter Girl

*Matt Marinovich*

Download now

Read Online ➞

# The Winter Girl

*Matt Marinovich*

## **The Winter Girl** Matt Marinovich

A scathing and exhilarating thriller that begins with a husband's obsession with the seemingly vacant house next door.

It's wintertime in the Hamptons, where Scott and his wife, Elise, have come to be with her terminally ill father, Victor, to await the inevitable. As weeks turn to months, their daily routine—Elise at the hospital with her father, Scott pretending to work and drinking Victor's booze—only highlights their growing resentment and dissatisfaction with the usual litany of unhappy marriages: work, love, passion, each other. But then Scott notices something simple, even innocuous. Every night at precisely eleven, the lights in the neighbor's bedroom turn off. It's clearly a timer...but in the dead of winter with no one else around, there's something about that light he can't let go of. So one day while Elise is at the hospital, he breaks in. And he feels a jolt of excitement he hasn't felt in a long time. Soon, it's not hard to enlist his wife as a partner in crime and see if they can't restart the passion.

Their one simple transgression quickly sends husband and wife down a deliriously wicked spiral of bad decisions, infidelities, escalating violence, and absolutely shocking revelations.

Matt Marinovich makes a strong statement with this novel. *The Winter Girl* is the psychological thriller done to absolute perfection.

## **The Winter Girl Details**

Date : Published January 19th 2016 by Random House Doubleday

ISBN : 9780385539975

Author : Matt Marinovich

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Psychological Thriller

 [Download The Winter Girl ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Winter Girl ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The Winter Girl Matt Marinovich**

---

## From Reader Review The Winter Girl for online ebook

### Marjorie says

This one really pulled me in at the beginning. I thought, oh, this is going to be a fun read. But unfortunately, the more I got into it, the less I liked it.

It's one of those books that you keep saying "Are you kidding? Nobody would actually do this" but then I had to keep reading it even though it was a bit unbelievable. At least at first. But then this very twisted family just got sicker and sicker and I really didn't care what happened to any of them. I don't always need to have likeable characters in a story but these people had absolutely nothing going for them.

There were a few shockers in it that I didn't see coming though the ending was no surprise. I didn't think it was well written at all and found quite a few areas that needed some serious editing. I was reading an advance copy so possibly those mistakes will be corrected in the final edition. In thinking back on the story, it still doesn't make much sense to me. Sorry, but can't recommend this one. It's a wannabe "Gone Girl" that doesn't make it.

I was given a copy of this book by the publisher through NetGalley in return for my honest review.

---

### Alicia Marie says

Thanks to Netgalley and Doubleday Books for allowing me the eARC!

Not a complete waste of precious reading time, but in no way a good read. I feel like this could have been such a good book, but wasn't well executed and edited. Reading it was so disjointed and bizarre. The unexpected plot twists do keep on coming, which is the sole reason I continued to read. It was also a short novel, so finishing it didn't take long.

Read my full review at [www.booklovininalicia.blogspot.com](http://www.booklovininalicia.blogspot.com)

---

### Karen says

This review was done by **KissinBlueKaren**

This book left me scratching my head. Seriously. The characters were all twisted, and not in a fun way. Our protagonist is a former wedding photographer, so not much going on there. The wife is a speech therapist, but currently not working. They are both holed up at her dad's place because he is in the hospital. He is dying of colon cancer. His death is taking too long. Before you start feeling sorry, you should know the dad is a really bad guy. He did something terrible to his daughter, but she still won't talk about it. In the meantime our protagonist has nothing but time. He notices an automatic light going on in the house next door. Nothing odd there since it is winter in the Hamptons, so everyone is away. Or are they?

There wasn't anyone worth rooting for in this story. Still I found myself following along as these bored adults waddle through their marriage, which is falling apart. They are definitely an odd couple. Our protagonist doesn't know whether to hope they make up or hope they break up. Their relationship was really sad. The idle hands of our protagonist lead him to curiosity (*remember what happened to the cat?*). He wonders about the house next door. It's former self is in ruin and falling apart. Looking for inspiration he wanders over to take some photos of the house, but then he notices the front door is unlocked.

These people shouldn't have done what they did. They get into trouble, but it was addictive to see if it would spiral out of control for them. Kinda like watching a fire, or a car accident, if you are into that sort of thing. The winter girl (*herself*) was creepy and the result of really bad decisions. Starting off I didn't really like the writing style. Something about the dialogue just wasn't convincing, but then it just clicked for me. I had to find out what happened to this guy. In only his POV it becomes pretty apparent that the protagonist isn't mentally well. If that is what the author was trying to portray, he pulled it off brilliantly.

I almost feel guilt saying I enjoyed parts of it. There were plenty of twists in this story. I can say it left me shocked. Like, I had no idea how we got here, sort of thing. I think this book is an acquired taste. You would have to be the sort of person who wonders about the house next door and throws caution to the wind. I don't know if that will ever be me.

---

### **Janet Martin says**

I don't know why the reviews are so negative, I found the construction of this novel to be exceptional, the prose compelling, and the plotting excellent. It's a book about a character who makes bad decisions--i didn't like him very much, but my negative personal feelings about the characters had little to do with the exceptional skill I appreciated in the construction of this suspense novel

---

### **Katherine Decker says**

Very, very odd. It started off well but then got stranger and a bit uncomfortable, yet I found it really hard to put down.

---

### **Laura says**

I am always on the lookout for psychological thrillers because it is one of my favorite genres. I get really excited when I find something unique, twisted, and dark. I love unlikable protagonists that think distasteful thoughts. The more disturbing, the better. That is typically the case with me. While *The Winter Girl* started strong, it lost it's way in the middle and never quite redeemed itself.

The narrator, Scott, is married to Elise and has been staying in her father's house in the Hamptons. Elise's father, Victor, has colon cancer that spread making him hospital ridden. They're staying in his house so that Elise can visit him during the day. It is immediately clear that this married couple is not exactly a happy couple. Scott spends his days obsessing over the empty house next door. The lights are on a timer and something about it just pulls him in. It doesn't take long for Scott to break in and enjoy the exhilarating feeling. With his stale and resentful marriage, he thinks asking Elise to join him will jumpstart that passion

again. The thing is..Scott doesn't seem to have a clue what he is getting himself into. He just might realize how little he knows about his wife's family. There are plenty of secrets, bad decisions, and twists involved.

Something I couldn't get enough of was the tension. It was so strong, it was palpable. Psychological thrillers typically aim for this sort of feeling in readers and it was done successfully here. Unfortunately, somewhere along the way it let up. I think my biggest problem with *The Winter Girl* is the ending. I don't think it made sense. Other elements didn't feel necessary. The sexual parts were a little much. In the end, I was left feeling like this was a forgettable book that left little impact on me, even with the enjoyable parts.

This is still worth the read if a bad ending can be overlooked. It is a short book, so it's a relatively quick read.

**I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review via edelweiss.**

---

## **Judy Collins says**

*A special thank you to Doubleday and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review. Nice cover!*

Matt Marinovich delivers a deliciously evil creepy psycho-thriller **THE WINTER GIRL**, with cleverly infused family secrets, juicy suspense, "laugh out loud " hilarious, and twisted dark, sarcastic humor— far more entertaining than Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*'s couple, Nick and Amy.

Even though **The Winter Girl's** couple, Scott and Elise, have their own individual naughty plans, secrets, obsessions, and dangerous sexual games; *they are partners in crime*, even with their wacko personalities, and *hidden separate agendas*.

**The Winter Girl** has the addition of Hamptons' alluring winter setting, a vacant house, a perverted evil old twisted sadistic wicked father, Victor (who will not die)--continuing to plot his evil, even with cancer on his death bed. There's also the other worthy characters: the nurse, and the mysterious winter girl to add a bit of spice, and horror. A dangerous game of mind-blowing cat and mouse—making this an ideal "book to film" adaption. *The movie would be a riot.*

**It is winter** in early December--Elsie's dad has colon cancer metastasized, forcing them to leave their home to head to the Hamptons, to help with his care. Elsie is a speech therapist in Brooklyn. (not seeing a life worth much, they left behind).

**Her dad, Victor** is an evil perverted gross old man. Her younger brother, Ryder is in jail (they have a special relationship, speaking in their own code). Her mother had left her father a long time ago. Her mother Puerto Rican, father Caucasian. He married his housekeeper. He was rich. He was abusive. *He is nasty.*

Told from Scott's point of view, he formerly taught at the New School, before they cut staff, then ended up photographing Asian newlyweds in Prospect Park. A gig he landed through a student; however, this was short lived.

Now, he has nothing but a house next door, an attempt to keep his marriage intact, and to hurry and collect the money from the old man. Victor and Scott despise one another.

**Not a career driven** or super couple, they are more about wanting the old man to die to inherit his millions, and cannot wait for him to rest in peace somewhere besides this earth. They hope he has not changed the will. In the beginning of the book, Elsie defends her father, and the by the end of the book, she is the one who wants him dead.

“The terrible thing about watching a parent die, one day you think they are ready to check out and the next they are on the five- year plan.”

Appears they need to pace themselves or do something to accelerate the process.

They are staying in Victor's home, while he is in the hospital. With little incentive to do any photography, while Elsie is away at the hospital visiting her father; Scott is intrigued with the house next door. The two lights in the upstairs bedroom were on a timer-- they turned off at 11 pm every night.

**Scott has nothing** better to do all day, except drink all Victor's liquor, watch the cooking channel, and imagine what is inside the vacant house. He decides he will satisfy his curiosity. The home is unlocked and makes his way in to explore. He dreams of photographing his wife nude at the pool, and possible some sex in the house in order to add some spice, to his rather dull marriage.

“The funny thing about the day I pretended to be a speech therapist is that it also turned into the first real argument between me and Elsie. I basically told her that she'd wasted seventy-five thousand dollars on a master's in speech. She told me I'd wasted ten years of my life pretending to be a photographer. We made up later that night, but looking back, I realize we never forgave each other. Part of each of us was always keeping an eye on the other from then on, even after we got married.”

Scott gets excited, about the house. Forbidden fruit. Making him feel as though he and Elsie are back in college, stumbling around in the woods, after taking two hits of Ecstasy. He talks Elsie into joining him for a little quickie in the vacant house; however, they soon find out this happened to be a brutal murder crime scene.

Whose blood? Whose murder? They cannot go to the police, since they are guilty of B&E. They could have picked any of these homes and instead they had sex in a murder scene, in one of the less impressive houses.

**The ongoing mystery.** Where are the owners of the house? Yes, it is winter, however, when searching through the house, looking at bills, bank statements, and listening to their voice mail answering machine, it looks like they are not returning, and no caretakers. They imagine all sorts of scenarios

Then old man Victor decides he wants to return home to die. This is when the fun and games begin!

A game between Scott, Elsie, and Victor. Victor controls everyone. Who is THE WINTER GIRL, her story, and how does she link to Victor and Elsie? What is the mystery behind Elsie, her father, and brother? Who owns the house?

"When you share a secret with someone, the mystery is cut by half." He was still excited. Scott could not deny the thrill of it. Maybe this house could save their marriage. "He feels like a suburban astronaut, exploring an abandoned home in which the crew had gone missing. "

Besides the steadily growing affair with the house next door, there are many other disturbing developments to add to the complexity of the mystery.

Combined with a ceramic kitchen pig carrying a chalkboard, “The Best is Yet to Come,” the mysterious winter girl, devious Carmelita, the ex-boyfriend, the brother Ryder, Elsie’s dark mysterious side, the dry as a bone turkey, The Ensure, a mysterious key, blackmail, numbers- odd/even, infidelity, violence, money, the Swains (Dick), and the evil deeds of the sadistic father.... A plot to murder—action packed.

“Everyone should have a winter girl.” “Secrets burn a hole in everything. They were burning a hole in my life before I was even born.”

Who is more twisted and evil: Elsie, Victor, Scott, or Carmelita? (Ideal for book clubs or further discussions).

**Marinovich's** wit, humor, and sarcastic one- liners set TWG apart—Devious twists, turns, shockers. I kept saying OMG, laughing -whereas with *Gone Girl*, I never cracked a smile during the movie or the book. If you are going to play sicko, combine it with good humor. Could not stop reading until finishing at 4am. Chilling and absorbing; yes, the ending is unexpected, however, is this not what readers come to expect with a book of this nature?

Psycho-thrillers are made for amusing its readers; escaping the ordinary...leaving room for the reader to explore and space for the imagination. Characters switching sides who cannot be trusted and average people thrust into strange or dangerous situations.

**The Winter Girl** accomplishes all of the above, plus more.

Have also pre-ordered the audio, narrated by *Quincy Dunn-Baker*, one of my favorite narrators of Linwood Barclay's crime thrillers. *Should be quite entertaining!*

JDCMustReadBooks

---

## Linda says

I received this book from The Doubleday Marketing Department at Doubleday Publishing. Thank you to Doubleday and to Matt Marinovich.

"You're going to drop into Hell like a stone."

Pretty harsh words from one of the characters and a pretty harsh storyline overall in *The Winter Girl*. Gonna chill your bones in more ways than one.

Scott and Elise are a young couple living in Brooklyn who receive word that Elise's father is terminal and in the hospital. They rush to the Hamptons to stay at Victor's house. Elise makes daily trips to the hospital. Meanwhile, Scott, an out of work photographer, has plenty of time on his hands alone. He is intrigued by the lights of the house next door that automatically come on every evening at 11 o'clock. His curiosity gets the better of him and he lets himself into the neighbor's house. His "trips" eventually include Elise and what they

find there will be the makings of a snakepit.

POSSIBLE SPOILERS: It only takes a millisecond to figure out that Victor is a vile and vicious man. Scott spins on a dime so fast that you question it throughout the remainder of the book. I'll save the characters of Elise and Carmelita for your own analysis. They are in a category of their own.

The Winter Girl begins tamely with your eyes focused on the neighbor's house. The writing draws you in. The last half of the book reads like it's on spin cycle throwing in as much shock and awe as possible. The content is heavy. There are no characters with redeeming qualities to be found.

The Winter Girl could have been something. It just left me with nothing at the end.

---

## **Melissa says**

HO-HUM...BORING. Here, we have zero sense of setting, no ambiance, no atmosphere, no "edge of your seat" suspense, uninteresting dialogue from even less interesting people, and absolutely nothing that stirs any real excitement. The ending was entirely predictable. The next "Gone Girl" or "The Girl on the Train?" Not just no, but a resounding f\*ck no. Not even close. I gave it two stars because at least the author had the decency to keep it short--the audio performance was less than 7 hours.

---

## **switterbug (Betsey) says**

This was a story I was not expecting to encounter as I opened the book, poised to read a more traditional mystery. It is a suspenseful thriller that starts off casually, and not very mysteriously, pointing the way to a domestic drama about a marriage troubled by external crises. Up in rural New York, Scott and Elise have come to Elise's father's house to assist Victor during his last dying months of life.

Elise, a speech therapist, had to leave her job, and Scott's work as a photographer was waning even before they left their place in Brooklyn to help Victor. Hoping for a quicker end, the not-too-happy couple becomes frustrated that the old man keeps hanging on. It is during this isolated time that the background story of Elise's family unravels as Scott starts snooping on the apparently abandoned neighboring house.

What reminds me of Hitchcock is the sense that, even though the story is in written rather than film form, a camera is following characters as they move from place to place. Each time Scott threads his way through the snow to the house next door, I imagine a camera behind his movements, jiggling at intervals like a nervous voyeur, or steady as a taut wire right at his back. Also, Scott himself is voyeuristic in this tale that he narrates, often with his camera or binoculars, trying to get a closer look at the empty house. Eventually, Elise joins Scott in his spy work next door.

"And here we were, following each other through other people's rooms..." turns into almost a motif as the story chillingly twists and turns to a breath-holding climax. Intermittently, I heard in my head those chaotic string instruments that Hitchcock employed, with sonic explosions of sound and a vertigo-inducing cadence.

It's worth a fair warning that there are some extremely disturbing scenes in this book, with a perverse and graphic sexuality that I wasn't anticipating but was rolled out organically. As the sinister story progresses, a



frightening, alarming set of shocks began reverberating across my chest, coiling me with its ruthless images and advancement of plot. What makes it even more intriguing is how the author combined the explicit with an air of ambiguity at times--soon, your imagination is conjuring the most riveting images.

Amid all this white glare of snow, dark sky, cold air, and secluded setting, a story of suffocating intimacy and hot detachment ensues. Proceed with care!

---

## Kalen says

My initial response to this book wasn't fair. Take two. Mild spoilers follow. Stop reading if you are concerned about learning too much, but I think I'm sufficiently vague.

I tried, I really tried to like this book. I thought it was going to be dark and creepy, like Jennifer McMahon's books. Instead, it felt gratuitous and leering. But because this book didn't work for me, doesn't mean it won't for you. Read it for yourself if it sounds interesting to you. This is always my advice--I'm a tough judge.

From the beginning, I couldn't work out why Scott was sneaking around. It felt like we were missing part of the story. A person doesn't go from "decent" to "creepy" without any provocation. I'm guessing he was always strange but we never got any backstory or context explaining his history, actions, or motivations.

With Elise, it became clearer but with her, I couldn't work out why she continued to maintain a relationship with her dad. Was it hopes of an inheritance? This wasn't at all clear, nor was it clear why as an adult she participated in his bad behavior.

As for Scott and Elise together, they puzzled me all the way through, especially their behavior in the house next door, again, throughout the book. And who were the two guys who broke into the house? They showed up but were never explained. (I'm guessing one of them was Elise's brother.)

The sex and violence throughout, especially regarding Carmelita, felt gratuitous and not at all contextual, to the point where it seemed like Marinovich was just going for the gross-out and not trying to move the story forward with it. I like my fiction dark, but it has to come together as a whole. This one, unfortunately, felt exploitative, implausible, and off.

P.S. Crustle is not a word. I hope someone caught this before the book went on-press.

---

## Elaine says

Once again, high hopes dashed on the rocks of disappointment, wasted potential and amateur editing.

How did I know the story was not going in my favor?

When I laughed *OUT LOUD* the moment **The Winter Girl** was introduced. And not in a *OMG, that poor girl, that's awful, I feel so bad for you* kind of way but in the **story has jumped the shark and I cannot believe this, not for a teeny, tiny second** kind of way.

I was right because it just got progressively worse from then on.

No exposition to the motives of the characters, the whys and hows and where did you come from, no background, no decent characterization, I despised everyone and not in a **Game of Thrones-you-are-so-diabolical-I-wish-I-was-Cersei-kind of way** but in the **I kept hoping a piano would drop on top of everyone so I could stop reading** kind of way.

Called the ending.

---

### **Diane Dachota says**

Difficult novel to review without giving away spoilers. Scott and Elise are a married couple who move into Elise' fathers home so Elise can care for him while he is dying of cancer. At first, Victor (the father), is in the hospital and Scott spends long days at home alone while Elise visits the hospital. We know that the couple have a troubled marriage, and Elise quit her speech therapist job to take care of her dad, while Scott lost his job as a wedding photographer.

Scott becomes fascinated with the house next door, which appears abandoned yet has nightly lights that come on with a timer. He decides to break into the house and after discussing it with Elise, she joins him in trying to find out what mysteries the house holds.

After that, all kinds of things happen which I really can't even discuss. There is a mysterious woman named Carmelita, blood, secrets and depravity. I didn't mind the sex and torture scenes as much as the parts of the book that just don't make sense. The lifestyle of the Winter Girl for one, the brother that we never find out much about, and many other things that don't hold together when you think about it. This is the type of book that starts out very intriguing and then falters.

---

### **Emily Crow says**

[Have the "surprise" ending revolve around incest and torture, what fun! (hide spoiler)]

---

### **Carol says**

This book was just plain weird. Seriously weird. It was so poorly written and poorly explained, it drove me nuts. Sometimes I read a book that I just want to throw across a room and this was one of those times. A couple of unhappily married losers move in with the wife's wealthy father to "take care of him" as he slowly dies, and it all goes south from there. There's a loser brother, a half-sister, a vacant house next door, a perverted, disgusting past to deal with, a perverted, disgusting husband who gets it on with the half-sister, betrayal, gratuitous sex, and boneheaded burglars. Every character is disgusting and gross, so this one is pure trash, in my opinion.

---