



Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen

Jacque Stevens

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Katie knows better than to believe in happy endings.

She learned there was no such thing after her mother died. In the postindustrial town of Riverside, Katie struggles to care for her distant father and his failing hotel. Her only comfort lies in the arms of her true love, Shay.

Yet one evening, he disappears without a trace.

Devastated, Katie jumps off a bridge in winter, expecting to meet death in the frozen water below. Instead, her fall transports her to a snowy netherworld, where trapped souls take on the form of animals and the only thing that matters is survival.

Then Katie discovers that Shay has been kidnapped by a deadly sorceress called the Winter Queen. She goes on a journey to find him, traveling through the realms of storybook fairies, princesses, thieves, and monsters to bring him home. But the path is harsh and dangerous. Will Shay and Katie be reunited? Or be forever trapped within an eternal winter?

A retelling of the classic fairytale *The Snow Queen*, WINTER FALLS is a young adult epic fantasy romance which examines the trials of depression and mental illness in a magical world of action and adventure.

Teen fans of C.S. Lewis and Shannon Hale will love this inspirational novel by author Jacque Stevens.

Clean romance. References to alcohol abuse, suicide, and other serious topics. Recommended for young adults and teen readers ages 14 and up.

Other Books by Jacque Stevens:

Stone Bearers:

- 0. The Stone Bearers (2016)
- 0.5. The Frog's Princess (2016)
- 1. The Queen's Opal (2017)
- 2. The Queen's Gift (2018)
- 3. The Queen's Heir (2018)
- 4. The Queen's Bane (Coming 2018)
- 5. The Queen's Rite (Coming 2019)

Please Note: The Queen's Opal is Book One. The Stone Bearers is a standalone novel that can be read before or after the full series.

The short story, The Frog's Princess, can also be read in any order. Find it in The Fantastic Worlds Anthology (2016) or have a free digital copy delivered to you after signing up for my email list at sjacquebooks.com. Those on my email list will receive monthly emails with updates on deals, review

opportunities for new releases, and other exclusive content.

Fairy Ring:

1. Fairy Ring: Shards of Janderelle (2017)
2. Fairy Ring: Changeling of Janderelle (Coming 2018)
3. Fairy Ring: Prince of Janderelle (Coming 2019)

Others:

Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen (2017)

Depths: A Tale of the Little Mermaid (Coming 2018)

Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen Details

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From Reader Review Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen for online ebook

Yana says

I received a free ebook review copy of this book but was under no obligation to post a positive review

Well, I don't really know how to start this review. I guess I'll go straight to the point- Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen is a wonderful book and I really hope it gets as much exposure as possible.

When I picked up this book I didn't remember much about the synopsis and why it caught my attention in the first place. I only knew it was a retelling of the snow queen and that I liked the cover. I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised from the first moment.

The book starts when we meet Katie Graham and she is getting ready to jump off a bridge. It's safe to say that it was a very interesting start for the story and as a person who finds depression and suicide very appealing topics in literature, I knew I chose right.

When the moment comes for Katie to jump something happens and she falls towards the frozen lake below. The next thing we know Katie wakes up in a world that is made up of fairy tales and is ruled by the winter fairy- Flurry. From this point on the story is told in present time and in flashbacks that reveal bit by bit what led Katie to decide on killing herself.

The flashbacks

We start to get to know Katie since she was a little girl who learns that her mom wasn't traveling the world like she was led to believe by her dad- she committed suicide a few years before. From this point on Katie's trust in the world and the people closest to her shatters. She starts building walls and barriers to protect herself from ever getting hurt by another human being again. In the process she stops believing in magic, fairy tales and anything in between. As a result she also stops understanding her friend Avrey, a crow she befriended as a kid who could talk.

After a time jump we get to know Katie as a teen who stopped dreaming about a future and believes she is destined to become an old spinster, even when there is a boy who is more than partial towards her- Shay. Shay moves into the Graham's home and becomes a favorite amongst her family, especially her siblings.

We get to know everyone a little bit better and when events unfold and some truths come to light, a conflict between Shay and Katie leads her to believe that she isn't wanted or needed by anyone and that everyone is leaving her-including Shay.

Fairy land

When Katie wakes up after falling she finds herself in a magical reality filled with talking animals, creatures who are both animal and human and more. This world is actually filled with lost souls from the mortal world who would rather escape and forget their past lives. There Katie isn't sure if she is dead or not but she does realize that maybe Shay didn't leave but was taken by the Winter fairy. After receiving guidance from telepathic roses she embarks on a quest of self discovery and adventures to save Shay.

The format

There was so much thought that was put in the construction of the story. The world building was just phenomenal- I was transported immediately into a world filled with wonder, magic and fairy tales. Even though the story is set in an intricate world I was never lost or confused. One of my favorite things to discover was the time fluidity of the magical realm- when Katie met Jaden was one of my favorite moments solely due to the amusing nature of the scene.

The writing style was amazing. It has been a while since I read a novel that was written so fluidly- once I started reading it was painful when I had to stop. Jacques Stevens is a truly gifted story teller in ways that I have always wanted to be myself.

My final thoughts

I cannot recommend this novel more. The character growth and representation of depression is spot on and

executed beautifully. It is a wonderful and magical fantasy that spans different worlds and times. This was one of the best stories I have read in a while.

Cristina says

What a refreshing and amazing take on the Snow Queen fairy tale. Since she was 7, Katie didn't have time for fairy tales, frivolity, or boys. She had become cynical and bitter, and charged herself with taking care of the family Inn because no one else would. Just as she realizes the boy that loves her is gone and her life had been a lie, she decides she has nothing left to live for, and jumps off the town bridge into freezing waters. Except she passes- into the fairy kingdom of her childhood. Her mission is to restore order, and rescue her love from the Queen of Winter, but along the way she finds things out about herself and humanity. Beautifully written, with amazing insight into the mind of someone dealing with depression, it shows the reader that not all fairy tales have happily ever afters- but some do live as happily as they can.

Shannon says

This book was provided for an honest review. Let me start out by saying I enjoyed this book. If you read the author's note at the beginning, you can really tell that the author was going through something when she wrote this and it comes through in Katie's story. The message of the story that whatever struggles you are going through end and that you can overcome them is a great one and I really appreciated the message and the way that the main character never gave up, though you thought she might a couple of times. My only real issue is Katie's self loathing attitude, I have a hard time connecting with characters like Katie. She refused to admit her feelings for other people, refused to be cared about by those around her, and never knew her own worth, and for me that gets old after a while. I needed her to snap out of it sooner than she did. I don't think it is an issue with the writing or the character development, I think after having read a few characters like Katie, I just don't connect well with them.

On to the actual story...Katie Graham lives in a hotel with her father. The book starts with Katie finding Avery, a talking crow from a place called the Four Kingdoms. Where Avery is from there are all manner of talking animal and fairy tale creatures, specifically the Fairy Princesses of the four seasons who take turns ruling. Avery has a broken wing and Katie vows to nurse him back to health and find his way home, in the meantime the two become inseparable companions. In the meantime, at the age of 7 Katie must take over the hotel while her father mourns the loss of her mother. Katie wants to keep the hotel in business and she has to grow up way to fast. The story follows her from the age of 7 to 17 while she runs the hotel, her father gets remarried and has more children, and Katie never feels like she is part of the family, she always feels left out even when she's included. Part of her issue is because she closes herself off to everyone and is cold so she doesn't get hurt. Even to Shay the boy who has liked her since they were 7. Much of the book follows Katie through her life at the hotel and her interactions with her family and the townspeople. After a while the story begins to alternate between Katie's adventures in the Four Kingdoms.

One of the guests at the hotel turns out to be the Snow Queen, Flurry. Flurry takes Shay to the Four Kingdoms, and Katie isn't very happy about it. She can't decide if they are just friends or something more, but she knows she has to go after him, so she goes to the Four Kingdoms herself and meets each of the princesses, who help her along the journey in some way. Katie's perseverance to save Shay and restore the Four Kingdoms and reunite the fairy sisters was really enjoyable. Overall a great retelling of the Snow

Queen tale.

Behemotkowa says

have received this ebook in exchange of the honest review. The book is retelling of the well know story of the Snow queen. To be honest I have never read the original story so I did know what to expect but if the original book is as good as this one I need to read it soon. I really enjoy Winter Falls, I think it's a great story and even better for young people who struggle with something in their lives.

Kate is a young girl who lost her mother when she was a little. She lives and run the hotel with her father who after sometime marries another woman. She is not being very social and not fitting in with her peers. There is one boy who seems to stick around, Shay, his attention is so confusing to her. We follow Katie as she struggle with her life. I felt connected with Katie, most of the time unfortunately I felt sorry for her. In each chapter Kate learns about her own emotions as well as we.

The story is full of unexpected events. It's entertaining and full of wisdom messages to never give up and to fight for your own happiness.

I reccomend this book to everyone.

Stacie says

Winter Falls, by Jacque Stevens, is a contemporary retelling of The Snow Queen that will appeal to young adult readers. Its protagonist, Katie, is a young woman who has experienced the loss of her mother. She lives with her father in a hotel, and the hotel holds secrets that lead Katie on a fairytale adventure. Similar to The Snow Queen, a boy (Katie's lifelong friend Shay) is taken to the fairytale world - here called the Four Kingdoms, and Katie must enter the Kingdoms in order to bring him home. A story with both adventure and heart, it is an enjoyable retelling that has a message of perseverance at its core. Katie is a young woman that bravely faces life's battles, is inquisitive, adventurous and caring. Young adult readers will no doubt find some of themselves in her, and be entertained by the fairytale elements in the story.

*I received a free copy in exchange for an honest review.

iamnotabookworm says

This is my second book by Jacque Stevens. The first one was also a fantasy story but totally different from this one. The Winter Falls is a retelling of the story of the Snow Queen.

The story of the Snow Queen that I am familiar with is the one on the Chronicles of Narnia and Frozen. *Cue in background music for the "Let it go!" the sound track* I have also watched the movie where Emily Blunt played the role as Snow Queen opposite Charlize Theron as the Evil Queen. The difference between this story and other versions of the Snow Queens that were done is that on this version the Snow Queen is part of the four princesses that are responsible for the four seasons. This also included an alternate-universe-kind aspect--the real world and the fairy tale world co-existing in the same time and the portal to cross between these two worlds was through a broken glass shard.

What struck me most about this is the author's note. The author described how this story came about. This was written when she was going through hard times as cold and desolate as winter time. Then this book got

published in summer which spelled a lifting of the coldness and the coming of warmth and good things in her life. What I love most about everything she said was that, like everything else, winter ends also. No matter how cold, bitter and desolate it could get, spring comes and melts all the terrible experiences and lingering feelings winter has brought. This is a story of hope.

In a lot of ways, I can closely relate to what the author is talking about. Winter--the all encompassing metaphor for the hardships, loneliness, separation and emptiness we experience trying to get through life. And like the seasons, life moves on and with it the changes that come forth. Some of these changes we should be willing to initiate to finally find comfort and warmth. Others we need to accept as challenges thrown our way. We may not like them but they bring some sort of blessing or force us to find strength from all the strangest places. Just like what happened in this story.

I enjoyed this! The part where the main character, Katie, ended up in another world was so exhilarating. In that alternate universe, she was able to confront her weaknesses and find her strength. I think a lot of people can relate to Katie. We all have our own fears and frustrations. Most of us have built walls to not be hurt again. To protect us from getting our broken hearts from further crumbling to dust. We have fashioned full-body armors out of desperation and depravity as defense from all the foes whether human or otherwise. We walk around carrying these cumbersome armors in the hope of resisting pain and discouragement, all the while adding to our burdens.

I give this book 5/5 mirrors. Knowing where this story came from has affected me most. It made Katie's character so relatable and got me so involved in her experiences. I guess, understanding what the author went through and having been through the same contributed to the depth and sorrow expressed in the story. Yes, reading this felt like winter--freezing, isolating, desperate and tormenting but also filled with hope, just like all other fairy tale stories. It's always darkest before the dawn but through it all, the morning sun rises with all its glory and melts all the darkness to oblivion. This also pointed out a lot of parallelism to real life. If you haven't known, fairy tales are taken from real stories. They just use a lot of symbolism.

Whatever I had lost, had been missing for years and was certain to be gone for good.

- Jacques Stevens, Winter Falls -

Thank you again, Kathy of ebooksforreview.com for the copy. Sorry for the delayed post.

Also by Jacque Stevens:

The Stone Bearers

Jackie says

A lovely and sad story that didn't let me go until I finished it. Superb author that has me looking for more books. Received a free copy, but there's no way I wouldn't leave a review. Too beautiful not too.

?Stephanie? says

Title: Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen
Author: Jacque Stevens
Publisher: sjacquebooks, 2017 (January 23)
Genre: YA Fantasy, YA Retellings

****I received a copy of this book free from Ebooksforreview and the author in exchange for an honest review****

This review can be found on my Blog, TeacherofYA's Tumblr, or my Goodreads page

My Review:

Ok, you all know I'm drawn to pretty covers, right? Like, if you've followed my blog for at least a couple weeks, you know this by now. This cover didn't do it for me...but I took the plunge based on the blurb.

This book....let's just say that Stealing Snow should have been replaced by this book! I could imagine that cover on this book. And then this book being picked up by the big pubs. Like, seriously, I'm finding all these jewels lately that are better than the big bestsellers...so what's up with that??

Anyway. Let me tell you about this fabulous book I read (that you better not judge cover-wise, even though I'm a hypocrite):

The book is set somewhere around the early 1900s from what I could gather...it never specifies but there are references. And it makes sense since the original Hans Christian Andersen story is from the 19th century. But I digress. As usual.

In the beginning, Katie falls through the ice. She was going to jump, but she slipped anyway. And when she wakes up, she is not dead, but in another world. We get backstory in between segments of the narrative, and we slowly find out what led Katie to jump...and what she is doing in this world to which she somehow traveled.

Katie works at her father's hotel since it's only the two of them. Katie's mother, her father tells her, is off fighting pirates and freeing people from criminals. But when Katie finds out from gossip at the hotel that her mother is actually dead, her belief in all things good shatters. She begins to build a wall and she stops believing in anything resembling magic, especially her pet crow Avery who used to talk to her.

But crows don't talk. Mothers don't fight pirates. And fathers remarry and have new families.

Told in a present to past perspective (via dreams, storytelling), we learn that Katie takes on more and more responsibility at the hotel, shutting herself off from her family. Shay, a young neighborhood boy, seems to be interested in her, but she keeps him at arms length as well, responding to the taunts of "Ms. Katherine, the spinster, the Ice Princess." A self-fulfilling prophecy, Katie eventually pushes everyone away.

But in this other world, she finds out that four fairies rule the seasons, but Winter has become the most powerful. And Katie learns the Winter Queen has Shay. But why does she have him? And why does Katie even care?

As she makes it her personal quest to save Shay, Katie discovers that even walls we build inside ourselves must crumble...if we are ever to find out the truth behind them.

Is it Classroom-Appropriate?

Yes. This story is very clean, it intermixes all sorts of lessons and other fairy tales, and it connects students to classic literature. The Snow Queen is a story we are mostly familiar with, and we have been searching for an adequate retelling for years. Some authors have done it and others have not (cough cough Stealing Snow cough cough). This could be used in a lesson plan as a contemporary retelling and be compared to the original. It could be used to showcase the coming-of-age theme, as well as highlight the escapism that Katie shares with the creatures from the other world. I think it would be better as a MG classroom piece, but I could see it effectively used if time allowed for a folk/fairy tale unit.

So I actually give Winter Falls ★★★★★ for classroom use!

Can definitely be used with some creativity!

Age Range

Of course indie books aren't ever on Lexile, so I won't even try to look it up. I would say 13 and up, as the Goodreads blurb warns of "alcohol abuse, suicide, and other serious topics." The site referenced, MyBookRatings, is not a site I'm familiar with, but they suggest 14 and up. I honestly think that's overcautious. It is a clean romance and there are many other books dealing with far more serious issues in MG books. So I think 13 is a good age, and I would even give it to my 12 year old niece (if she liked retellings, but alas, she's not like her cool aunt).

End Result

I found another favorite that gave me a major book hangover! This book is fresh and keeps you on your toes, as you are eager to learn what brought Katie to this world. The four fairies are so different but each are sympathetic characters, as is our Ice Princess, Katie. She is not a Mary Sue by any means, she is not a "chosen one" but a jaded girl who has felt alone all her life. Stevens writes with no errors and I honestly think if you slapped a pretty cover on this and put it out, people would love it. I haven't felt as passionate since Heir of Illaria. And at least that had a pretty cover.

So I give Winter Falls: A Tale of the Snow Queen ★★★★★.

Yup, it's a new fave of mine!

So...will you be picking this on up?

Melia says

This is a retelling of "The Snow Queen." It is a tale of a young girl and her trials and struggles as she grows, matures and finds true love and meaning in a life filled with heartache, loneliness, uncertainty and trials. She learns about true love as she tries to rescue the one person she has always loved but never quite figured out the depths of that love.

Lisa (Bookworm Lisa) says

I enjoyed this retelling of the *Snow Queen*. I have to admit that I am not as familiar with this tale as others, although I have been fascinated by it.

Katie is a young woman who experiences many changes and heart ache in her life. Her mother jumped from a bridge when she was small, she lives with her father in an inn that is struggling to make ends meet, and then her father remarries. It is a lot for a young woman to deal with. She also has a challenge of not being very social and not fitting in with her peers. There is one boy who seems to stick around, Shay, his attention is confusing.

Katie enters another realm after the Snow Queen comes and takes Shay with her. She meets the fairy of the four seasons and goes on a quest to remove him from Winter's hold. Through visions, she knows that she must get to him soon or face losing him forever.

This tale is well told. I enjoyed the action, adventure, romance, and the creatures that inhabit the other realm. They are part human and part animal. They are very interesting and the way they interact and live is creative. Jacque Stevens has taken an old tell and breathed a different life into it. If you enjoy retellings, you may like this one. It is clean with a little bit of violence, an attempted suicide, and kissing.

Source: I received an electronic copy of the book for review purposes.

Jennifer says

While it was a little slow getting into it, I quite enjoyed this book. I loved the wide range of characters involved. This was the first book by Jacque Stevens that I had read, and I'll definitely be on the look out for more.

Ryan Stanton says

This book was a great source of deep thinking and self reflection for me. I related to the characters more than I thought I would. Sometimes we have to experience darkness to acknowledge and enjoy the light.

VV says

So... This is probably going to be a bit messy and incoherent, but here goes.

First, this is one of my favorite genres ever, fairytale retellings. This one is based on the Snow Queen, and if you know the story, you know that the snow queen kidnaps a boy and the girl who loves him has to take on a journey to rescue him. Except this book here is a little more than that. Our heroine, Katie, has to rescue herself before she can even come close to rescuing her heart's dearest. It is as much a journey toward self-

healing as it is toward saving a loved one, maybe even more. There are several themes here too, like innocence and reflections and delusions and fairytale versus reality and such. Actually, there's a lot of duality, now I think of it. And mixed in with all the fairy tale is a bit of religion too. And, of course, we do have to talk about Katie, if only for a moment. She's depressed. And angry. And there's suicide so be warned. She's frustrating and stubborn and delusional in her own right—I'm heartless, I know, seeing only what she wanted to see, making her own situation more terrible than it needed to be. Or it could be that I just don't get it. To be sure, she has reasons for the way she was, and at least she's sympathetic and constant in her behavior (unlike some other characters I know.) And when her story was told, consistent with everything else, there was no fairytale happily ever after. You get the sense that she would still experience moments of darkness, but she'd still pull through in the end. Hopefully ever after? I think so.

Oh, and before I forget. Here's a heavy, heavy book that also deals with depression and horrors of the kind one only dreams of. And it's also a fairytale retelling. Deerskin.

Jolie says

What a great retelling and imaginative retelling of the Snow Queen.

Told in 1st person and through flashbacks, after Katie jumps off of the same bridge that her mother, Winter Falls explores depression, suicide and how it affects the people left behind. The way the author wrote about it and the sensitivity that she showed about such sensitive subjects was amazing. I also like that she didn't glamorize suicide, as I have seen in some books. Beth's reasons for committing suicide were awful and I cried when the reason was revealed.

I liked how Katie's character wasn't perfect by any means. She is a snob, keeps herself away from her family and openly mocks her stepmother as she tells fairy tales to Katie's younger brother and sisters. You are hard-pressed to like her in her flashbacks because of how she is.

But, everything does change when she enters the land of fairy and starts on her quest to get Spring, Summer and Autumn's tokens of powers. You could just see her come into her own and you could see her processing how closed off she was, how rude and how snobby she was as she is retelling her life story and how she fell in love with Shay.

Shay's character was as flawed but he was aware of it and he did try to better himself. I felt awful when he was talking to Katie about how bad his home life was after his mother died and when Katie's stepmother basically told his father to get lost.

Katie's quest was different and full of surprises. The people/animals that she met and helped/were helped by stood out to me. Each season was basically her finding herself and her understanding that she didn't need to live her life the way she was and that only she could change her life.

The climax of the story was great and I was put on edge. I did get slightly emotional during a certain scene with Shay and Katie.

All of the storylines were resolved by the end of the book. I really liked how they were resolved in realistic

ways. Not every storyline was a HEA and it was refreshing to read that.

The end of the book was great. It was pretty standard but the changes in Katie and Shay was there for everyone to see.

Heidi Lane says

If you are in the mood for fairies and talking crows

I was in the mood for a fairy tale and this one did rather well. Very cute storyline. I just wanted to hear more about what happened to the fairy land in the end.
