



# The Girl in the Park

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## **The Girl in the Park** Mariah Fredericks

When Wendy Geller's body is found in Central Park after the night of a rager, newspaper headlines scream, "Death in the Park: Party Girl Found Strangled." But shy Rain, once Wendy's best friend, knows there was more to Wendy than just "party girl." As she struggles to separate the friend she knew from the tangle of gossip and headlines, Rain becomes determined to discover the truth about the murder. Written in a voice at once immediate, riveting, and utterly convincing, Mariah Frederick's mystery brilliantly exposes the cracks in this exclusive New York City world and the teenagers that move within it.

## **The Girl in the Park Details**

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Author : Mariah Fredericks

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## From Reader Review The Girl in the Park for online ebook

### Jac (For Love and Books) says

One evening while lurking on NetGalley, I saw the cover for *The Girl in the Park* caught my eye - it was so eerie that I needed to know more about this book. I lurked around and saw a few reviews on Goodreads comparing it to Nancy Drew and that really got me curious, besides I was on a huge Stephen King kick. So I requested, and was thrilled when I could download this book.

One thing I really liked about Mariah Fredricks writing was how realistic it was - not that I've experienced a murder mystery - but that the characters were very real. I didn't absolutely love everyone in the book, which was great because that's how life works. There are people that scratch at you, that you would suspect in a case like this. And they all felt very real, likable or not.

Not only are the characters real, but the experience of death in the teenage crowd was very real to me - *Alive?* Wendy wasn't necessarily liked by everyone, but in death all of a sudden the student population was covered in grief. It brought me back to my high school days when a friend passed away. All of a sudden, everyone was heartbroken, even if they'd never really met him. This was much that way, and as frustrating as it was to read? It was real. And I like books that are real.

*The Girl in the Park* is a great, quick read. I was impressed by the lack of predictability and the realism. I recommend it to anyone looking for a good YA thriller.

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### Jeanette says

Every other month or so I read a YA and often am glad I did.

And truly I just don't know what I expected with this one. Maybe something other than the dysfunction and anxious unhappiness that cored it?

I did read every word. It's easy read and not overlong. I'd give the prose flow a 3 star. At points it seem so detached despite the angst of Rain's thoughts/ observations.

This is about a Manhattan elite private high school and the out of control kids (IMHO) and dynamics of "popular" within it.

Worst aspect was the plot for me. Run of the mill, below average and the reveal/ summation to how it becomes resolved? Not realistic whatsoever. That was 1 star.

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### Michelle says

By page 4 of *The Girl in The Park* I knew with absolute certainty that, even if I hated the story and the mystery just sucked, I would be shown why and not told. I read the conversations between Rain and her mother, then Rain and Ms. Geller over again a few times to be certain that it really had been only four pages,

yet I already knew so much about Wendy, Rain, and their relationships with each other and their mothers. Fredericks has honed down her words until each and every one pack a potent visual punch. The novel rushes forward but never let me behind. It was thoughtful and thought-provoking, moody and suspenseful, disturbing yet ultimately uplifting. Rain succeeds in her attempt to discover Wendy's murderer; but the most important discovery she makes is herself.

I am so impressed by so much of what Fredericks has done in *The Girl in The Park*. There are moments that feel so very dark and bleak, but the tone of the book as a whole is much more complex because - at its core - the book is honest. I love the way Fredericks deals with Rain's disability and the long lasting influence it has on how she views herself. How Wendy and Rain's friendship develops, grows, changes...then fades away. I like that Rain never really has a love interest because she hasn't yet learned to love herself. I am awed by how well Fredericks' shows all the varying aspects of Wendy's character without invalidating the others. Her characters are almost entirely shades of grey.

The mystery, too, was very well executed (except, perhaps, for the bad-guy-explains-it-all monologue toward the end.) There is successful foreshadowing - hints and clues that keep us one step (but only one step) ahead of Rain in pursuit of the murderer. As for that honesty mentioned earlier? It is shown in the suspects to full effect. Fredericks doesn't rely on last minute character assassination, previously unknown redemptive traits suddenly revealed, or a good guy just grossly misunderstood - everyone remains as they ever were. I love that Fredericks shows that just because someone is a thoroughly nasty jerk does not necessarily mean they are capable of murder, and (view spoiler) It may seem a bit grandiose to say this, but as I thought about what I would write in this review of *The Girl in The Park*, I kept coming back to some things I've heard Sister Helen Prejean and Vincent Harding say about justice, revenge and vengeance; about how the quest for each can become something just as dark as the original act and should never be what gives your life meaning. Fredericks does a wonderful job of showing Rain find meaning for her life within herself - and that is a powerful thing for a who-done-it.

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### **Jaimie Scarpelli says**

it was alittle confusing in the beginning of the book but once I got to the middle it was easy to understand

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### **Wendy Darling says**

I enjoy mysteries, but I am not a huge fan of the writing, overall plot, or the characters in this book. The killer also seemed pretty obvious as soon as he/she shows up. There are also some pretty tasteless scenarios, starting with "I jerked him off" from one of the main characters at just 7% in. Probably won't bother some readers, but that sort of thing (written in that way) is definitely not to my taste.

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### **Genesis Fisher says**

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. The author, Mariah Fredericks, is clearly capable of writing books that are nearly impossible to put down. The characters, the genre, and the underlying themes all work so well to convey a message of empowerment towards people, more specifically young women, everywhere. It has a very clear audience of young adults, and I do think that it can help them in a lot of ways. Unlike many murder mysteries that use the content to show how dangerous life can be, this one shows how important it is

to take risks.

The genre of this book is a fictional mystery. It may also overlap into youth fiction. The intended audience is young adults, specifically the 15-19 years of age crowd. I think maybe older people could read it, but considering that it is set in a high school they may not have as much of a connection to it. It uses a murder to show how corrupt society can be, because the press blames Wendy for her own death. In general it is just very current and very gripping for people interested in this genre and this issue.

Themes against victim blaming stand out. They contribute to the work because for the most part, the public in this story, including people who knew her, blame Wendy for her own death. These themes are very effective because in the end it is seen that Wendy's death wasn't her fault, but rather the fault of a man who lost control of himself. Another theme I see is that you should speak up. The main character started out very quiet, but Wendy's death forced her to speak up, especially as she started uncovering more information. They are very effective, because these themes both contribute to each other and move the plot forward.

This author's style is accessible to all readers. Some of it is written more formally, but mostly it is informal and relatable. Some quotes that exemplify this are the quotes from Wendy. For instance "go get em tigriss!" and "Most people, myself included, talk too much. You listen. AND you think. Time to give up the silence girl!" give a more casual and relatable feel. It really highlights the fact that she has a way of giving Wendy life, even though Wendy is dead. It is also written with a style of suspense. Everything is complex, and every event contributes to the bigger picture. While there is a lot of foreshadowing, it is all incredibly subtle, and you don't realize that it was there until you look back on it. For instance, as soon as she brings the murderer into the picture, you feel a sense of suspicion, and definitely worry for Rain (the main character), but it isn't directly associated with the murderer.

This book is a fantastic mystery, in my opinion, with all the unpredictable twists and turns books of this genre should have. The characters really worked for me, and even though I don't share any of the issues of the main character, I was still able to empathize with her. The book definitely has both a logical and emotional appeal. I was emotionally invested in what had happened to Wendy and was genuinely angry with the other characters who brushed it off, and with her killer. As far as the logic goes, I really liked watching the whole mystery be solved and finding out how everything came about. This is a book for anyone who likes the unexpected.

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## **Kari says**

A well crafted mystery with a interesting central character, The Girl in the Park pulls in some known elements in a well done way. Though the choppiness of the chapters and scenes, and the rapid switching between past and present, made it hard for me to fully delve into the book, there is still something addicting and intriguing about the book. Pulling in some rough emotional aspects, and having a quick pacing, The Girl in the Park is a fast but thrilling read.

Rain is more than just the shy girl – she's the girl who's been bullied enough due to her cleft palate and speech problems that she's quiet and keeps to herself. When Wendy busted through that, and befriended her despite the physical problem, she definitely left a mark on Rain. Though the girls aren't really friends now, there is still a quiet sense of kinship that drives Rain to want to find the truth behind Wendy's death. Pulling in instances from the past and cataloging not only the good times but the bad times between them as well, Rain goes through a tremendous amount of growth that is scripted in a choppy yet well done way. Though she has her moments of weakness, and definitely has a few flaws, she's a great character with a strong story and drive in her.

Wendy is brash and showy, the kind of girl who goes after other girl's boyfriends and seems to have no qualms about it. A girl who gets around, and one who is the life of the party even in a bad way, it's almost no surprise when she turns up dead on the park. Still, despite the in your face way about her, Wendy had a soft side to her, and was a great friend when it counted. Though she was the kind to get hurt easily, and created her own problems, readers will sympathize with her, and not just because she ends up dead.

The mystery around Wendy's death, and the ensuing investigation, are well executed in a smart and realistic way. With little clues dropped here and there, but keeping the bigger things hidden, readers will make some connections but not all of them, giving them some feeling of control while still eager to find out the truth. Having a strong emotional and sympathetic element to it, and almost painful in the full scope, the actual reasons for everything are both realistic and understandable.

Quietly enthralling, though hard for me to get into due to the style of the writing and scene shifts, The Girl in the Park is a fast and fun read. I love murder mysteries, and this one didn't disappoint. With a captivating central character, and pulling in some great elements, this one is enjoyable and worthwhile.

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## **Chanelle says**

I wasn't too excited to read this book. I guess because there wasn't much buzz around it and I'd never heard of it before I was given the chance to review it. But then I started reading.

At first we're introduced to Rain, a girl with a hole in the top of her mouth that means for a lot of her life, she couldn't talk properly. Couldn't pronounce her s's or t's. Got picked on a lot at school for being the girl who spoke like a three year old. And the only person who gave her the chance to be herself? Who tried to get her to speak up and not be scared to talk? Party girl, Wendy Geller, who made a game of sleeping with the boyfriends of girls who pissed her off.

The book is heart breaking and hope inducing and beautiful all in one. When Wendy is killed, she and Rain aren't so close anymore. You know how it is. Friends start to realise they actually don't have much in common anymore. But her death still rocks Rain, and when it's all people can do to slander Wendy's name, Rain decides to finally speak up.

There were a lot of characters to remember and interact with throughout the novel. And Fredericks does a fantastic job in developing each secondary character so we remember who they are even fifty or so pages after they were first mentioned. Though the story is told in present tense, day by day as the police investigation goes on, we're thrown back in time every so often to get a real look at the characters we're dealing with. There's much mystery around the killer, and just when I think I know who it is, I'm thrown a new clue that ruins everything.

Towards the middle, I was totally invested in finding out who the killer was. I wasn't disappointed, although when Rain confronts them, I did long for a more...dramatic show down I guess. Because everything else was so honest, I expected a hugely honest and raw scene of revelations. It slightly lacked there for me.

But all in all I very much enjoyed this book. I'm liking thrillers more and more, and the whole 'whodunnit' aspect of this novel was definitely done well and realistically. It was fun piecing the clues together, and Rain was a smart character that made her own decisions and thoughts while at the same time learning that if you have something to say, you should speak up and say it.

4 out of 5 stars. Recommend to anyone who enjoys a good murder mystery.

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### **Charlotte says**

It's been so long since I've read a mystery that I had forgotten how much I love reading them. Looking for clues. Trying to read the characters and guess who the murderer is and what the outcome will be. This book definitely delivered all those and so much more.

Very well written and very well paced, *The Girl in the Park* kept me turning pages and not wanting to put it down. Fredericks had me guessing who the murderer was at each turn while making me second guess myself moments later.

Fredericks puts an interesting spin on the usual murder mystery by giving us the story from the victim's former best friend, Rain. As the story unfolds so does the victim Wendy Geller's character. Rain struggles standing by watching the media and her classmates tear Wendy apart with gossip and portray her solely as the 'party girl' that may have been asking for what she got. We not only get incredible characterization of Wendy here, but of Rain and everyone surrounding the murders as well.

As she investigates Wendy's death, Rain's life is revealed to us as well. She learns a lot about herself and where her choices have brought her as she remembers more about Wendy and the friendship they had as well as where some of her current choices might be taking her.

As the story came closer to the end and I finally began to realize who the murder was I also realized that this was definitely not the whole point of this story. For me it was more about the fact that we never really know someone fully. There are so many angles to everyone involved in this story, too and including our narrator. I'm an adult, I know this already, but sometimes we tend to forget it. We tend to let the media sell us a view. We let the gossip pull us in and allow us to pass judgement. There are so many characters here that on the surface lend themselves to easy judgement. Watching each character unfold, seeing different sides to them was all part of making this a richly detailed and vividly delivered story.

An advanced copy of this book was provided by the publisher through Net Galley.

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### **Walter says**

Loved the mystery writing, and though I am so very bored with the lives of rich, spoiled, New York teens, the storytelling and plotting redeems the book from my "no" pile--my teens are liking this a lot.

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### **Eve (Functioning Insanity Reviews) says**

This was another ARC from Netgalley.com which I just finished last night. *The Girl in the Park*, comes out April 24th, published by Random House Children's Books.

*The Girl in the Park*, is a mystery. Wendy is dead. Body found in the park after a party. She wasn't the most popular girl in school and had a reputation for being a wild party girl who would do anything. The press

makes her look horrible, victim or not. Rain though, former good friend, has a hard time accepting this. She knew Wendy was flawed, they hadn't been friends in a while but she still remembered the girl who made her feel special and knows she wasn't all bad. Either if she was she didn't deserve what happened to her. Almost by mistake she sets out to find out who killed her friend. No one will speak up for Wendy then it's up for her to try.

Now I will warn you that I did figure out who did it pretty early on in the book. I know some of my friends have a problem with things like that. For me it depends on the story. In this book I didn't mind at all. I knew I was right but reading along finding new evidence that either helped or hurt my suspect was enjoyable. Because it's not just a story of finding out who murdered Wendy, but a story about Rain and her coming to terms with herself and the things that have happened in her life.

I have to say I really like the main characters Rain and Wendy. Yes, Wendy dies in the beginning. So how can she be a main character? Easy, we learn about her life, all the different aspects of her, what she did who she was before she was killed. I felt like with each passing page I got to know both characters even better. Now Rain. I have to say at first this name caught my attention, and I liked it. Different and cute. It also played in well with the difficult teasing. She isn't perfect, speech problems, cleft pallet... anyone who has been in high school and wasn't top tier popular will totally feel for her.

Rain doesn't speak much. Never speaks up for herself given the teasing she's endured through most of her life, a habit that is hard to break. A fear. Still she is drawn to figure this out even if it causes more problems because after all she is really good at listening to people. Sometimes they just might say something they don't want anyone to really know.

Overall I would give this book a solid 4 Stars. I liked it. It intrigued me. I knew who did it but that didn't take away, for me anyways, from the story. Again the book comes out April 24th and if you like a good mystery and self journey check it out.

<http://functioninginsanity.blogspot.c...>

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## **Wandering Librarians says**

Rain Donovan used to be best friends with Wendy, but they haven't really spoken in years. Early one morning, Wendy's body was discovered in a park. She'd been strangled. Rain wants to give Wendy justice, so she quietly starts investigating herself. Her first hunch, however, leads to the wrong person being accused. Now Rain is short on time to figure out what really happened, and the answer might be more than she's willing to face.

At first I didn't realize this was a mystery. I thought it was another YA realistic fiction book about a girl found murdered. Have you noticed there are a lot of them in the past year or so? So I was in a particular mindset when I started reading it and was not ready for the twists and turns a mystery has.

After the first person was accused, but it clearly wasn't the right person, I realized what it was. Then I thought it was kind of a lame mystery because the actual killer was super obvious. But well done Mariah Fredericks because she put in several good twists that kept me guessing and I didn't actually figure out who really did until close to the end.

Rain was a complex character who had many reasons for doing what she did. Rain has a cleft palate, which causes a lisp. While she had speech therapy that helped, Rain is afraid to speak. She's a listener and an observer. At the end of her high school career, the role she's fallen in to is "the girl people can talk to." She nonthreatening and she listens. This puts her in a very good position for finding things out.

When Wendy first moved to town at the beginning of high school, she and Rain became friends, but Wendy always wanted to be in the popular crowd. Wendy was loud and brash and completely her own person, and yet she had an intense desire to be loved and wanted. This led her to hooking up with a lot of boys, and in many cases, hooking up with the boys who girlfriends had been cruel to her. This is important to know because after her death, there were some who felt "she got what she deserved." She was a slut, she should have been more careful, it's her own fault. Getting with a lot of different people and actively stealing other people's boyfriends is not something I support, but does it mean you deserve to get murdered? Sure doesn't. It leads us back to the, "but look at what she was wearing!" defense. It doesn't matter what a girl is wearing, she doesn't "deserve" to get attacked.

I liked that Rain had a very supportive mother who was actively a part of her life who loved and cared for her. She wasn't in the book a ton (and when I say she was supportive I don't mean she was supportive of her kid investigating a murder) but she was a refreshingly realistic parental character who wasn't having a meltdown or falling apart. She acted like an adult. It made me realize how rare it is to kind functioning adults in YA.

I ended up really enjoying this story, and while it's not Ellis Peters, it was a good and engaging mystery that kept me guessing. There were definitely a couple moments when I wanted to yell, "Rain, WTF are you doing? You know that's the murderer, why are you going off alone with this person?" But she had to so it could all have a dramatic conclusion and the murderer could reveal their whole dastardly plan. Because that's how it always works, right?

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## **Kennedy Albers says**

This book was out of my comfort zone. I did not enjoy it as I much as I thought I would. It was to unusual and everything just happened to perfectly fall into place. I believe this book could of been better if it had added things that sounded like real life scenario. Mariah Fredericks did a horrendous job of making the characters come to life, well at least in my opinion.

This book is about a shy girl named Rain struggling to find the murder of her use-to-be best friend, Wendy Geller. Rain always thought that Wendy was a try-hard, that she would never take no for an answer. One night Wendy had dragged Rain to a girl named Sasha's party. Sasha has a boyfriend named Nico, who Wendy adored. Wendy was boy crazy, in every way. She was the kind of girl that went for another girls boyfriend. Rain had been Wendy's ride home, so when Wendy told Rain she didn't need a ride, Rain immediately left. Rain had a speech problem. When she was born she had no roof to her mouth, so doctors had to pull the sides of her mouth in, leaving a hole in the roof of her mouth.

The next morning Rain gets a call from Wendy's mother, saying that Wendy had not come home the previous night. Rain told her that she must have slept over at Sasha's house. Unfortunately later that day, a girl was found dead in the park. The body was Wendy Geller. The school acted like they were at wreck by all of this, but many people thought Wendy deserved it. She had been beaten to death. With the talk of new work city as " Death in the park: Party girl found dead," rain new she had to stop it. She got a hold of the detective on the case of Wendy's death. The detective had told Rain a secret, that they found an E pin. An E pin was a gift given to the students that stood out that year. Wendy was not one of the students. Soon Rain

started putting everything into place, Wendy wanted to leave with Nico, and Nico's girlfriend had 2 E pins. Had Nico's girlfriend given one to him, or had Sasha killed Wendy out of jealousy. No, it couldn't have been Sasha, because she had been in her room the whole time everything went down, Rain knew because she had checked on her before she left. It must have been Nico.

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### **Alicia Balliett says**

The only thing I liked about this book is the cover.

I found the main character too annoying and whiney. I just didn't like her at all.

Wendy... I only feel bad that she died. Everything else that happen to her before her death is her on damn fault. I feel like the author wants us to have complete sympathy for Wendy but I just have very little.

It did keep me a bit entertain and that's why I didn't give it one star.

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### **Loretta says**

Posted Here:

<http://www.betweenthepagesreviews.com...>

The Girl in the Park was a very fast, interesting read. In as little as only 200+ pages I got a great story. Fredericks really delivered with this one. It took me a couple chapters to get "into" the book. But, after that I had no problem at all giving The Girl In The Park all of my attention.

Wendy hung out with the wrong people. The party girl that she became led her to something that she could not come back from. Wendy for me was not one of my favorite characters. She was rather selfish, and just wanted to do what she wanted.. even though her choices, made her seem incredibly .. what's the word?... stupid. Yes, she just wanted to be loved. But, doing the things she did was not the way to go about it. Being the popular girl in school comes with having enemies as well.

Rain feels that she must find out what has happened to Wendy. Even though she and Wendy really have not been since Wendy just left Rain, for her new life. The Popular life. Rain feels she should do something, anything. To help find out what happened. Who had done this to Wendy? And Why? After their last encounter before Wendy's death. Rain just knows that something was off about Wendy. The way she was acting maybe? Something was totally not right with her. Rain sets out to find out exactly what was going on with Wendy, and how she ended up dying.

While reading The Girl in the Park, you as a reader will get to know the person that Wendy was. How she ended up being the person she died as.

Fredericks really wrote a bone chilling, murder mystery. These are never easy books to read. Espically when lives are taken.

I was relieved to see that Fredericks kept you on your toes. Once I was sure I knew who the killer was, until I doubted myself. The writing keeps you wanting to know what is going to happen. You feel for the characters. You want the best for them. You see things happening, that you wish would be prevented, but in life that's not how things goes. This book was a great fast, day time read!! Day time, because you know..

Me.. I am seriously scared at night, when I read things like this. Overall, this was a very enjoyable read. With a satisfying ending!

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