

Dream House: A Novel by CutiePieMarzia

By Marzia Bisognin



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From YouTube sensation Marzia "CutiePieMarzia" Bisognin comes a debut young adult paranormal thriller about a girl whose dream house quickly becomes a nightmare.

When Amethyst stumbles upon the house of her dreams, she can't help but be enchanted by it, even if there's something a little...off about the place.

It's everything she's ever wanted in a home, so when the Blooms invite her to stay the night to avoid an impending storm, she instantly accepts.

Yet when she awakes the next morning, alone and unable to bring herself to leave, Amethyst comes face-to-face with unexpected twists and turns—like Alfred, the creepy gardener; Avery, the handsome but secretive neighbor, and a little girl who keeps appearing and vanishing within the house.

As Amethyst searches for the Blooms and tries to unravel the truth, her connection to the house only grows stronger. Will she be able to break free of the house's allure, or will its secrets keep her trapped forever?



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Editorial Review

Review

"Beautifully-written and a wonderful addition to the YA horror genre." (Here's to Happy Endings)

About the Author

Marzia Bisognin is a fashion, beauty, and lifestyle vlogger known for her YouTube channel CutiePieMarzia, which has over six million subscribers. Originally from Vicenza, Italy, Marzia currently resides in Brighton, England, with her boyfriend, Felix Kjellberg, aka PewDiePie, and their dogs, Edgar and Maya. *Dream House* is her debut novel.

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DAY 1

THERE IT is, right in front of me.

A one-story Greek Revival house, probably dating back to the early 1900s by the look of it.

From the gate, a path of small flagstones crosses the front garden, ending at three small steps which lead up to the porch. A row of columns supporting a triangular pediment with a small bull's-eye window adorn the façade, and between them I can see a rocking chair among the potted plants.

The whole thing is painted a luminous white, which is set off by the pale blue of the shutters flanking its narrow windows. It's surrounded by neatly trimmed green lawns, perfectly tonsured hedges, and immaculate flowerbeds, and they all suit the place perfectly.

A thin trail of smoke rises from the chimney on the pointed roof. To one side, the top of a white church spire peeks out from behind distant trees, while to the other, the dark tiles of a neighbour's roof are visible.

I somehow have the strangest sensation that this is all I have ever dreamt of, ever since I was just a little girl—of owning a modest yet exquisite house, a house like this, surrounded by fields and the odd neighbour. And now it seems as though the image that I've been gradually assembling in my mind since childhood has come vividly to life right in front of me, just so that I can admire it in all of its splendour.

I stand there by the black iron gate that separates me from the tidy garden and stare at the doorbell, an elegant little gold button set below a brass nameplate that, evidently, no one has ever bothered to use, undisturbed as it is by a name.

The unengraved nameplate might suggest there's nobody currently living in the house, but the sight of the well-kept grounds gives the lie to the idea—and holds me there, transfixed.

Perfectly still.

Immobile.

Frozen.

Wondering how exactly I even arrived here in the first place.

I've never noticed this house before, and yet it's always been right where it is. I know that.

Somehow.

Blanketed by the woolly clouds of deepening autumn, the sky is getting darker and darker by the second. That's the way it feels, at least, although I don't really have any idea how long I've actually been standing here, my finger suspended in mid-air, aimed at that lonely button.

The air is heavy with a powerful smell, something that I recognise, something that makes me think of . . . lawnmowers? Is it oil? Or maybe kerosene?

I don't even know what it is I'm standing here waiting for, but there's definitely something holding me back from ringing the bell; it's as if I'm not supposed to be here now, in this particular moment.

Here I am, though, stuck under this darkening sky, and so I eventually decide to force myself to go through with it. I close my eyes, take a deep breath, and begin to move my finger forward.

But before it gets close enough to make contact, I hear a worried voice from nearby asking, "Are you all right?"

My eyes snap open and I see an elderly couple standing on the front porch, which just a minute before I'd been admiring with such intensity. I stare at them, not uttering a single word.

Looking increasingly unnerved, the lady slowly descends the steps and walks down the path towards me, the old man close behind her. She's not looking at me, though—her eyes seem to be focused on something over my shoulder.

Mine remain locked upon her.

She reaches the gate and—looking me full in the face now, her eyes quite concerned—repeats, "Are you all right, dear? You really shouldn't be standing out here in the rain."

I gaze down at the grey paving stones beneath my feet and notice that, yes, they're rapidly becoming freckled with dark, wet spots. Before I can say anything, the tall gentleman accompanying her opens the gate and puts his arm around me, implying an invitation to enter what I suppose is their lovely home.

Once we're safely inside, the front door closes behind us and I'm ushered over to the sofa near the fireplace. I can't stop looking around the room in which I now find myself—a medium-sized parlour with a high, embossed ceiling, its Victorian décor illuminated by two large French windows and a crystal chandelier.

It truly is my dream house. It just happens to already belong to someone else.

While I make myself cosy, the kindly old lady disappears for a minute, and with shaky hands the old man puts some logs on the fire in an attempt to bring the dying embers back to life.

Strangely enough, I have the feeling now that I am exactly where I'm supposed to be—not like before. And I don't want to leave. Even though I know that very soon I'll have to, and that I don't actually have any real excuse for being here to begin with.

As I sit on the stiff leather sofa, still peering in wonder around the beautiful room, I realise that the couple who live here must be religious, because the walls and bookshelves are dotted with symbols whose meanings I'm not exactly sure of but which I'm absolutely certain are esoteric.

I ask myself why on earth they would be so nice to me, why they would so happily invite a complete stranger inside their home, but then I think, What am I complaining about? I wanted to go inside, didn't I?

The sweet-looking lady appears again. She places a cup of hot tea on the coffee table in front of me and clears her throat as she takes a seat at the opposite end of the sofa. She's fair-skinned with hazel eyes, and her hair—short and fluffy, its original auburn colour now fading—suits the healthy pink glow of her cheeks. The smile on her face seems forced, though, betraying a tension she's trying carefully to hide.

I reach for the cup and feel its warmth between my fingers.

"I'm Amabel," she says. "And this"—pointing at the man who is now standing by the door with an open book in his hands—"is my husband, Marvin. Nice to have you in our home."

Giving me a distracted smile, Marvin nods.

I open my mouth, but no words come out, so instead I bring the cup to my lips and take a slow sip, bothered and confused at the same time.

What is wrong with me?

I've always been aware of the fact that I'm not exactly what you might call a particularly . . . sociable person. But I'm definitely not rude. And yet that's exactly the way I'm behaving towards these people.

Why?

But before I get a chance to ponder the question further, Amabel stands up and walks across to the other side of the room to join her husband.

"It's getting late," she says, "and there's a storm forecast for tonight. You are very welcome to spend the night here. I'll take you to the guest room. I hope you'll find it comfortable in there."

Finding myself unable to reply, I decide that the least I can do is go along with the invitation, and so I nod meekly and get up to follow her. As we walk past Marvin, who is still intent on his reading, I manage a quick peek at the embossed title of the volume he is holding—Spiritual Relief.

The carpeted floor creaks beneath our feet as we make our way along the corridor which leads away from the living room. The walls are wainscotted and hung with artworks and the odd photo, and at the end of the corridor is the door to a little spare room, isolated from the rest of the house. Now looking visibly pleased to have me there, Amabel holds it open for me.

As I step past her and go inside I manage a gesture with my head that's meant to show my gratitude, and

while she closes the door she gives me a smile in return that seems both happy and melancholy.

I potter around that solitary yet cosy little room for a while, trying not to dwell too much upon what a strange situation I find myself in, but at the same time quite unable to fathom what has happened.

In the end, I lay myself down on what turns out to be a surprisingly comfortable bed and do my best to relax.

The sound of the breeze blowing softly through the slightly open window by the bed makes me sleepy, and so I decide to switch off the Tiffany lamp that, together with a small alarm clock, occupies the nightstand.

A few moments later I feel my tired, heavy eyes closing, allowing me to get some rest for the night.

Users Review

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Bryan Smith:

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