



## Winter Solstice

By Rosamunde Pilcher

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In *Winter Solstice* Rosamunde Pilcher brings her readers into the lives of five very different people....

Elfrida Phipps, once of London's stage, moved to the English village of Dibton in hopes of making a new life for herself. Gradually she settled into the comfortable familiarity of village life -- shopkeepers knowing her tastes, neighbors calling her by name -- still she finds herself lonely.

Oscar Blundell gave up his life as a musician in order to marry Gloria. They have a beautiful daughter, Francesca, and it is only because of their little girl that Oscar views his sacrificed career as worthwhile.

Carrie returns from Australia at the end of an ill-fated affair with a married man to find her mother and aunt sharing a home and squabbling endlessly. With Christmas approaching, Carrie agrees to look after her aunt's awkward and quiet teenage daughter, Lucy, so that her mother might enjoy a romantic fling in America.

Sam Howard is trying to pull his life back together after his wife has left him for another. He is without home and without roots, all he has is his job. Business takes him to northern Scotland, where he falls in love with the lush, craggy landscape and set his sights on a house.

It is the strange rippling effects of a tragedy that will bring these five characters together in a large, neglected estate house near the Scottish fishing town of Creagan.

It is in this house, on the shortest day of the year, that the lives of five people will come together and be forever changed. Rosamunde Pilcher's long-awaited return to the page will warm the hearts of readers both old and new. *Winter Solstice* is a novel of love, loyalty and rebirth.

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## Winter Solstice By Rosamunde Pilcher Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

### Amazon.com Review

Rosamunde Pilcher's novel, despite its chilly setting, will warm the hearts of her growing army of loyal fans. *Winter Solstice* has all the familiar trademarks of a Pilcher saga, spun in her inimitable, homey, beguiling style. The story is told, chapter by chapter, from the perspectives of an eclectic array of characters. Former actress Elfrida--not very good by her own admission--leaves London for a geriatric bolthole in the country where she meets retired schoolmaster and organist, Oscar. Meanwhile, Carrie (Elfrida's second cousin), returns to London from Austria where she had a brilliant career in the tourist industry, only to find her niece, 14-year-old Lucy, sadly neglected by her selfish mother and equally spoiled grandmother. Finally, handsome Sam is recalled from New York by his company chairman to revive an ailing Scottish textile mill.

As one character after another must learn to live with their losses, they find themselves collectively spirited northwards, from Sussex to Scotland, by way of Cornwall. And, as events unfurl, slowly, surely, but inevitably, those in need find solace in unexpected places. While her characterizations are generally carefully crafted and entirely rounded, Pilcher's greatest strengths lie in her natural, easy narratives of everyday life and her thoroughly researched and captivating descriptions of scenery and surroundings. --*Carey Green*

### From Publishers Weekly

The author of *The Shell Seekers* has penned another romance sure to give fans the warm fuzzies, even though it's set in the north of Scotland in winter. Colorful Elfrida Phipps, 60-ish and single, has retired from a lifetime on the stage to a country retreat in Hampshire, England. There, she is befriended by Oscar and Gloria Blundell and their 12-year-old daughter, Francesca. Oscar, an organist, is somewhat older than his wife and the Blundells live in Gloria's family house. When Gloria and Francesca die in an automobile accident, Gloria's sons from a previous marriage inform Oscar that they are selling the property and he must leave. Elfrida persuades the grief-stricken, penniless Oscar to return to his childhood haunt, Corrydale, in Creagan, Scotland. His grandmother's grand estate is now a hotel, but the former estate manager's house is vacant and still belongs to the family. With few ties herself, Elfrida moves with Oscar to Creagan, where he plans to escape the upcoming Christmas festivities and the sad memories they will arouse. A distant relative of Elfrida's is also looking for a quiet place to spend the holidays. Beautiful, stylish 30-year-old Carrie Sutton is escaping a painful love affair. She has rescued her 14-year-old niece, Lucy, from Lucy's neglectful mother and grandmother, and the two seek asylum with Elfrida and Oscar. When handsome, successful, separated Sam Howard knocks on their homey door in a snowstorm, there is nothing to be done but invite him to stay, and the five souls from three generations find Christmas isn't so sad, after all. As her devoted readers have learned to expect, Pilcher's fond descriptions of domestic detail and her atmospheric evocation of the Scottish landscape add substance to a predictable but heartwarming plot. Literary Guild and Doubleday Book Club main selection; BOMC alternate; Reader's Digest Select Edition; audio rights to Random House. (Aug.)

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### From Library Journal

In her new novel, Pilcher (*The Shell Seekers*) takes us to northern Scotland, where five vaguely connected people find themselves together at Christmas in a large Victorian house. They plan to "go pagan and celebrate the Winter Solstice with a lamb chop" but instead create a proper Christmas and soon come as close to one another as they are to the families from which they have been disenfranchised by death and cruel abandonment. Elfrida, a lonely retired actress, befriends Oscar, who is barely surviving the grief of the deaths of his wife and daughter in a car crash. Carrie, bereft after an aborted love affair, takes over the

holiday care of her 14-year-old niece, Lucy, who is unwanted by her mother, grandmother, and indifferent father. Sam, in town to take charge of the old woolen mill, is reeling because his wife left him for another man. What lifts this saga above melodrama is the author's skill at creating believable, multifaceted characters with rich inner lives who sustain one another with good sense and gentle humor. Highly recommended.

*-DMolly Gorman, San Marino, CA*

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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jimmy Hicks:**

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#### **Merideth Davis:**

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#### **Leif Gibbs:**

Is it you who having spare time subsequently spend it whole day by watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This Winter Solstice can be the respond to, oh how comes? A fresh book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your time by reading in this brand new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these books have than the others?

#### **Maria Trussell:**

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