



## Terminated

*Simon Wood*

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Stephen Tarbell needed that promotion. But they had to go and give the job to his supervisor, Gwen Farris. Now Tarbell has had enough—and he's about to put Gwen on notice. She has two choices: give him a glowing review on his performance evaluation or suffer the consequences.

Gwen has already survived one violent attack, fifteen years ago. But even that experience couldn't prepare her for Tarbell's relentless fury. Pulling a knife on her was just the beginning. Like a sadist peeling the wings off a helpless fly, Tarbell is determined to pick apart her life using every means of physical and psychological torment. The company's security firm says they'll handle the situation, but whose side are they really on? And how do you stop a psychopath so consumed by hate he thinks *he's* the one being persecuted?

An ominous thriller set in a world where workplace insecurity meets violent obsession, Simon Wood's *Terminated* grabs the reader by the throat and never lets go.

## Terminated Details

Date : Published November 13th 2012 by Thomas & Mercer (first published May 25th 2010)

ISBN :

Author : Simon Wood

Format : Kindle Edition 342 pages

Genre : Thriller, Suspense, Mystery, Crime, Mystery Thriller, Audiobook

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## From Reader Review Terminated for online ebook

### Patricia says

We have all worked with an annoying person. That being said I should never hope to encounter the sort of person that Simon Wood so aptly describes in this story. Tarbell takes harassment of his boss to an unheard of level. Poor Gwen finds herself with a slew of doubters that don't quite believe her assertions regarding Tarbell. Tarbell just about completely ruins her life. Take a chance and read this thriller to learn how it ends. It will be worth your while

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### Lisa says

This was definitely an emotional roller coaster ride. At times I would have to stop reading/listening due to how much anger and frustration the situation caused. This is not a bad thing. This tells me the author did his job because he caused a genuine response to the reader. It definitely isn't boring. Poor Gwen was attacked from every angle. Not only from her assailant, but her employer, coworkers and the people that were supposed to protect her. If you are a victim of an assault or stalker, this may cause triggers. It did for me when I didn't even know I had an issue with my past experience. If I were Gwen, I would be going to the media and a lawyer about my employer not protecting me and wanting to not involve the police. They never hesitated when they thought the tables had turned and she was stalking her coworker who was the guilty party. But things like this almost never get the justice they deserve. Out of all Simon's books I've read/listened to so far, this is my least favorite. I think because it reminded me too much of my stalker and harasser. By the end, I was ready for Gwen to just say kill me already. There's so much I want to explain but there's no way to give the kind of review to do this justice because it would require revealing spoilers. There was someone in the end that helped her that was a nice twist. I sort of saw her using him but didn't know how well it would be figured in. Well, actually two people. I was sad about what happened to one character that I really liked. I was screaming NO at the author and flinging my iPad across the room! He knows how to get my blood pressure up! I bet he's laughing right now as he reads this review. \*\*Raspberries to you, Mr Wood!\*\* lol.

I wasn't crazy about the narrator. She was good, don't get me wrong. Great with the female voices. But most of the male voices sounded the same. I liked his other narrators better. I think I would like this narrator with other types of books.

If you like thrillers and fly by the edge of your seat, you will love this!

\*\*Side note\*\* I just read some other reviews of this book. It's easy to get frustrated with Gwen and say she made stupid decisions, but unless you have ever been a victim, you don't know for sure what you would do.\*\*

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### Nancy Silk says

"An Awesome Thriller, When The Victim Is Believed to Be The Perpetrator

Again, Author Simon Wood's novel here amazes me. He is so very creative, writes extremely well, and I get so absorbed in his stories which are so easy to read. In this story, Gwen Farris is a supervisor of Quality Assurance for Pace Pharmaceuticals. On this day, she is meeting with staff members rendering performance reports. Stephen Tarbell is very upset about his report. He's never had respect for her because he's extremely upset and angered because he should have been promoted to the supervisory position. He had more experience and seniority. However, he is known to be short tempered and a workaholic. His report reflects he has failed to meet expectations and he demands it be immediately changed to remove the substandard rating. He victimizes Gwen and assaults her that evening in the company parking lot, at knife point. She agrees to change the rating on his report, but the first thing she does is report the attack to her superiors. They hire Robert Ingram of Private Security International as a consultant and to investigate Tarbell's assault. Gwen's husband, Paul, is pleased that Pace will be providing protection services to his wife, which the local police could not possibly provide. Ingram explains to her that his job is to protect her against retaliation and to dispose of Tarbell in short order. This story moves forward where those at Pace Pharmaceuticals believe Gwen has a vengeance against Tarbell, and she is quickly fired and banned from the corporation property. Author Simon Wood has crafted a villain much smarter than what others may think of Stephen Tarbell. This is a fast moving mystery/chiller you won't want to put down. I read the first half on my Kindle, and the last half I listened to the provided audio. The audio version is well read, and I was never distracted. Kudos to Author Simon Wood creating another intoxicating story.

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### **Niles says**

Gwen Farris had only been head of the Quality Assurance department at Pace Pharmaceuticals for six months when it came time to do the employee performance evaluations. All was going smoothly until she reached Stephen Tarbell. His performance did not meet Pace's minimum level, and when she explained this to him, he was livid. He had been at Pace longer than anyone in the department and was up for the head position, only to have Gwen snatch it away from him. A clear case of an equal opportunity hiring if ever there was one. The bad evaluation pushed this borderline sociopath over the edge.

Gwen was working late and was the last person to leave the building. As she approached her car, the only one in the parking lot, Tarbell jumped out from behind the dumpster wielding a knife. He threatened to kill her if she did not change his evaluation to one more acceptable to him. Gwen, fearing that Tarbell would follow through on his threat, agreed to his demands. However, once she was safely at home, she called the head of Human Resources and told what Stephen had done in the parking lot. Gwen agreed not to call the police and let Pace's in house security firm, Private Security International, investigate the matter to build an iron-clad case against Tarbell and ultimately terminate his employment.

Once the investigation was under way, it became clear that Tarbell was a very smart and diabolical criminal. He had avoided the security cameras in the parking lot and there was no record of what had transpired there. Additionally, Tarbell discovered that Gwen had turned him in. This infuriated him even more because Gwen had reneged on her promise. He vowed to destroy Gwen - first her job, then her family, and after she saw everything she held dear vanish he would take her life.

What followed was a methodical dismemberment of Gwen Farris' life. Tarbell was a sick and twisted man, and as the novel progressed became even more so. Gwen was ultimately forced to sink to Tarbell's level to save what was left of her life.

This was a very fine and well crafted story, and the scary thing is that people like Stephen Tarbell actually exist in our society. Some of the events in the book seemed a bit far-fetched to me, hence only a four star rating. Other than those small details, the book was enjoyable and hard to put down. The climax was very exciting and tied all the loose ends together. All in all, it was very much worth my time.

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### **Shevelle says**

#### **Great read**

Kept me on the edge of my seat and finished in s day...great! I will definitely be looking for other books written by this author!

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### **Shelley Futrelle says**

#### **What a roller coaster ride!**

This book kept me anxious the whole time. That's a good thing because it meant I was invested in the characters and storyline. Wow! Poor Gwen. It made me angry that so few took her side. Stephen was sneaky, manipulative and eventually deadly. I would highly recommend this book to those who love suspense and love action. This book has it all!

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### **Tammy Kaehler says**

Simon certainly crafts one killer plot, full of characters who become so real you feel every emotion right along with them. Occasionally this makes it a little hard to read his work (but only briefly), because his bad guys are just so creepy and as a reader you identify so much with the helplessness (to a point) of his protagonists. But then the downtrodden or intimidated good guys start kicking butt, and all is right with the world again. He takes you on quite a ride.

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### **John Marsh says**

Read on Kindle unlimited outline to remind me

Gwen Farris worked at Pace Pharmaceuticals as newly appointed QA manager and crossed the wrong coworker when she gave Stephen Tarbell a poor evaluation as his attitude was not great.

That was all it took to push Tarbell over the edge. Tarbell was an evil character waiting to happen. He already believes Gwen stole the promotion that was rightfully his. He won't let her take anything else from him. Now it's his turn to take...and take. By the time he's finished with her, Tarbell plans to take her job, her family--even her life.

Tarbell, out of visual site of security cameras do not cover area, threatens Gwen in the car park after work with a knife to her throat. She calls HR who get their exterior security consultants involved—Ingram's company. Pace, PSI -Ingram, police all fail to protect Gwen and family from Tarbell who ends up murdering his father, security employee who was watching his house (He initally threatens his wife including creating

an accident on an escalator thus turning the security sub contractor into collaborator and inside man so Tarbell appears to be in two places at once). Seriously injured people are Gwen, Gwen's husband coma and memory later a little, security plant at Pace Amanda and Parker an ex Con who ends up helping. Parker 15 years previously attempted to rape and murder of Gwen but does time.

Book is very clever. Shows how easily an employer can drop their employee and be deceived into protecting a monster instead. How police can easily be mislead. Security firm can underestimate their opponent and not have sufficient checks and balances to do their job. In this case the security firm had an employee murdered and one seriously injured and did not prevent three further serious injuries.

Book shows how quickly a family in the US can go from been extremely successful to been wiped out literally.

Parker is shown to be transformed. He gets \$10,000 to help protect Gwen. He does so almost with his life and Gwen ends up free knowing he still has murder and hate within. Thier is letting go by both parties.

Ends with Tarbell dead, Pace covering all expenses. Gwen been highly employable. Two interviews and old job at Pace open. Husband's opportunities not obvious immediately but at book's ending he is recovering and at home looking after daughter.

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## **Bernie says**

### **Terminated review**

Terminated is a fast-paced psychological action thriller written by Simon Wood. This author has created a fascinating story. I received this book from my Kindle Unlimited membership.

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## **Lynne Perednia says**

Gwen Farris has a good life and appreciates it. She and her husband have a young daughter, who they consider a miracle baby after Gwen's severe injuries inflicted years earlier. She has a new supervising position in a pharmaceuticals company and loves her job. Too bad she gave an honest employee evaluation to the office misfit.

Stephen Tarbell is more than irritated. This young Farris woman came to the company, took the job he deserved and gave him a less than stellar job performance review. He's done being walked all over. After all, he's the one who really gets the work done. He's the one who the company should reward. He's the one who will get what he deserves.

And so will his new supervisor.

This is the setup to a brilliant new thriller by Simon Wood, newly nominated by the Crime Writers Association for a short story Dagger award. Tarbell first accosts Gwen Farris in the company parking lot one evening after she's worked late, pulling a knife on her. She reports the incident and a private firm is brought in to investigate, promising they will serve her Tarbell's head on a platter as long as she doesn't go to the police and is quiet. Mustn't cause any bad PR for the company, after all.

Wood employs his excellent descriptive ability to keep the story moving, to explain why Gwen doesn't go to

the police for starters. There also are plausible reasons why her employer is willing to take these steps to find out exactly what happened and deal with it in this manner. And there's groundwork laid early for why Gwen is even more rattled by the attack. It's a familiar situation. Those injuries that she recovered from happened when a would-be rapist plunged a knife into her stomach years ago.

Everything works together to keep the pages turning and the action believable, because Wood does such a good job setting everything up. So when the action gets twistier and trickier, the reading adrenaline kicks, past actions are portents to the present and everything comes rushing up to an action-packed climax. That the reader will have to choose between cheering the main character on or urging a different course of action is part of the rush.

A thriller about work place conflict are benign words for what are horrific actions in this case. The story also shows what changes a victim can go through, especially one who has gotten up once and who has a lot to fight for -- and whether the end justifies the means.

Wood adds additional layers with the compelling supporting characters, especially a retired cop whose actions play a pivotal role, and scenes showing Tarbell's life away from the office. The latter add to the creep factor in an affective way, avoiding the overused first-person monologues set *italics*. And Tarbell's line of thinking after a particularly vile act is especially chilling.

Most terrifyingly, *TERMINATED* shows how easy it is for the person being harassed to not be believed, especially if she stands up for herself.

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### **Lisa Baynes says**

Excellent read. Total page turner but actually a little too scary in places, especially the dark office scene. Highly recommend.

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### **Connie Bussey says**

And why isn't this book a movie yet? I literally could NOT put this down. Bad employee, bad review gone bad ... a must read.

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### **Quetzi Fernald says**

*TERMINATED* by Simon Wood is one of the best Suspense Novels I've read this year. Let's face it, we've all met that oddball person that gives you the creeps either at school or at our work place, but what do you do when there's no way of avoiding them? This is what happens to Gwen when she had to give a poor performance evaluation to her coworker, Stephen Tarbell. This book is so intense that you'll find yourself biting your nails down to the knuckles! I just couldn't put this book down until I finished it! It will make you think twice about how you deal with people like Stephen. This is a heart pounding adrenaline rush that will have you gobbling down the pages to the very end! What makes this story so thrillingly (of that's even a word) intense is the idea that this is something that can actually happen to anyone! Simon Wood is one of my

favorite authors in this genre. Read TERMINATED, you won't be able to put it down!

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### **Cat says**

#### **Terminated**

A good read , a disgruntled employee takes out a vendetta against his boss . Keeps the suspense going until the end

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### **Tasha says**

Ok this is one of those books that you could see happening at your job. I always wonder when its going to happen at mine. Its about a woman doing her job for the company she had to give an employee (who thought he should've gotten the job instead of her) a bad review. He attacks her in the parking lot with a knife and all hell breaks loose after that. See what happens when you think you are just doing your job for the company and you suddenly realize they don't give a damn about you! HA!!! Defending sounds like my company and so does the maniac in this book. Definitely worth reading!!

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