

RUNNING IN THE DARK by Sam Reaves

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My latest book recommendation is '*Running in the Dark*' by Sam Reaves. It is a tense and chilling thriller highlighting the consequences of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

MY REVIEW

Traumatised by the suicide of her boyfriend Evan, Abigail Markstein leaves New York to take up the post of mathematics teacher at Tippecanoe College in Lewisburg, Indiana. Like so many small towns, everyone in Lewisburg seems to know each other and news soon spreads of her arrival.

Unfortunately, the only place available for her to stay is a seedy motel whose clientele leave a lot to be desired.

Unhappy with her accommodation and still to meet her future colleagues, Abby attends a small reception at the college, where she is introduced to Lisa Beth Quinton, a local newspaper journalist and wife of the psychology teacher, Jerry Collins. Horrified to learn where Abby is staying, Lisa Beth immediately suggests she should check out a basement flat, which a friend of hers has available to rent. Keen to leave the motel, Abby eagerly agrees to view it. Fortunately, both the flat and the landlord, Ned McLaren, turn out to be to her liking, so she moves in.

Having been a keen runner back in New York, Abby decides it is time to start working her idle muscles again. So, waking early before dawn, she heads off along the suggested route she had been given by Jerry. Beginning to feel slightly uneasy in the darkness of an unfamiliar road, she is surprised to hear a car approaching from behind her. Letting it pass and continuing to run, her surprise soon turns to horror when she hears an explosion and discovers the same car, consumed by fire in the middle of the road with the driver still inside. Worst still, a man is standing by the roadside, staring at her. He then smiles and disappears into the darkness.

'*Running in the Dark*' is a gripping and unsettling thriller that will make you think twice about walking alone in unfamiliar dark places. Not afraid to portray the darker side of human nature, the author's graphic descriptions bring a chilling reality to the story, allowing the reader to not only share the anxiety of running alone through a dark and unfamiliar countryside, but also the fear of being alone in a flat with a possible stalker outside.

Together with skilfully drawn characters, each with their own agendas and secrets, the story is both engrossing and disturbing in equal measures. *'Running in the Dark'* is a novel well worth reading – although it is probably best not to be alone when you do.

THE AUTHOR

Sam Reaves was raised in small towns in Indiana and Illinois but gravitated to Chicago upon graduating from college and has been there ever since, when on US soil. He has lived and travelled widely in Europe and the Middle East and has worked as a teacher and a translator. He has published fiction and nonfiction as Sam Reaves; under the pen name Dominic Martell, he has written a European-based suspense trilogy. He is married and has two adult children.

'Running in the Dark' is published by Thomas & Mercer and is available in ebook, audio book and paperback format from Amazon. It is also available in paperback from Waterstones and Foyles.