



A Solitary Awakening: Book One of The Warren Files

Kevin Cady

Lulu (Apr 14, 2016)

Softcover \$14.99 (230pp)

978-1-4834-4867-1

A Solitary Awakening is a feverish orchestration of mystery, violence, poetry, and even love.

Kevin Cady's gory psychological thriller *A Solitary Awakening* recounts the terrifying pursuit of a mastermind killer.

FBI agents Elijah Warren and Aurelia Blanc race from one revolting crime scene to the next, analyzing clues that were meticulously left behind. A man who wears black—branded the Poetic Murderer—creates a trail of carnage that is not only inhumane but part of an intricate puzzle as well. As every piece is unearthed, momentum builds and fear intensifies. Warren and Blanc must work together, and fast, to solve a case that will forever change both their lives.

The Poetic Murderer's killing spree spans time and space. He grabs his victims, then travels hundreds of miles before systematically planting their bodies. Warren and Blanc fly to locations all over the map trying to track down this predator. During the most horrific investigation of their careers, Warren and Blanc are brought together in a way neither of them imagined, and the stakes just keep getting higher.

Cady's nuanced prose scintillates and intrigues from beginning to end. The novel opens with a shattering boyhood event without disclosing whose past it belongs to. The manner in which fragments of information are strategically withheld creates a nail-biting effect that equally shocks and satisfies. Chapters shift between viewpoints, illuminating either the detectives' strategy or the maniacal acts of the man who wears black.

Several literary works are incorporated into the narrative and present a fresh guise to the classic poet John Keats. Mechanisms such as riddles and anagrams are expertly utilized. The stylized language fuses with an elaborate plot and creates a concrete world. Grotesque dreams and frightening hallucinations slice into an already brutal reality and add a profound dimension to the text. Descriptions are often picturesque and provide vivid backdrops to many grisly scenes.

Central characters have multiple layers that are expertly drawn out. Warren is a skillful detective known for putting his life on the line for his work. Blanc is a hard-hitting scholar who, much like her partner, prefers solitude. Minor characters are vibrantly portrayed, such as the bureau's private jet pilot, Captain Riff, with his Hawaiian shirts and crude yet winning personality.

Dialogue flows naturally and relationships feel organic. A twisted stream of consciousness is woven throughout the text and gives insight into the Poetic Murderer's callous persona. The final moments for the mutilated victims haunt and linger: "She pictured her dad's face, his off-kilter smile, Mom's hands-on-hips lean. She could hear her brother in a distant corner of her head, his gentle and rolling laugh."

A Solitary Awakening is a feverish orchestration of mystery, violence, poetry, and even love. This gut-wrenching thriller doesn't leave much to the imagination when relating these brutal killings.

BRITTNEY DECKER (May 15, 2017)

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