

Full Breach

N. Lawrence Mann

N. Lawrence Mann (Sep 1, 2017)

Softcover \$14.95 (423pp)

978-0-692-91175-4

Brennan's journey out of drug addiction is equal parts wondrous and believable.

An addict, a cult, and supernatural powers make N. Lawrence Mann's *Full Breach* addictively thrilling.

Through an ex-girlfriend, Brennan Reynolds discovered a methamphetamine derivative called The Glow. Years later, he's still addicted to The Glow. He ekes out a living running a recording studio out of his small apartment and driving part time at night.

After a strong dose of the drug, Brennan dreams of an old friend. On waking, he learns that she was murdered, and he contacts her family to offer solace. He becomes the number-one suspect.

Life goes from bad to worse when he encounters a young woman on the run from a power-hungry cult leader; he is drawn into her dilemma. When The Glow activates his unusual powers and alters his perception of reality, Brennan winds up in even more danger. Between the cult and an unstoppable serial killer who believes that Brennan is the next savior, Brennan and his allies have no safe haven.

The novel is an interesting blend of several genres. It starts off with Brennan's descent into addiction, then introduces a unique villain pursuing those who prey on believers. Instead of becoming a standard mystery thriller, though, Brennan's story comes to incorporate elements of a crime drama, a supernatural horror, a romance, and an introspective faith story, all of which build upon each other wonderfully.

Supernatural elements blur the line between religion and the unexplainable. Brennan's ability awakens when he dreams of his murdered friend, but it quickly expands into powers that allow him savior-like gifts that cannot be understood through science.

Characters are thoroughly drawn, from a tattooed gentle giant of a drug dealer to the second in command of the cult. The mysterious Snippet, a stray cat with unusual abilities of her own, is not as fully explored. Snippet can somewhat communicate with Brennan and his allies and even manages to meow out simple words. Her abilities are not adequately addressed. Conversely, Dr. Diana Navarro, who wrote a book that attempts to reconcile the supernatural with science, is fascinating and fully fleshed out, even as she functions to introduce conflict for Brennan and his allies.

Colorful phrasing and engaging dialogue enliven the text. Quirky characterization crops up in the midst of action, with descriptors like "a spoiled child punting a soccer ball away after losing a big game" following fired shots. Scenes are set with just enough details.

Brennan's journey out of drug addiction is equal parts wondrous and believable. A vague ending hints at possible sequels. *Full Breach* is a stellar novel.

JOHN M. MURRAY (February 2, 2018)

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