

Here in the Night

Rebecca Turkewitz

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Rebecca Turkewitz limns the haunting nature of everyday occurrences in her rich literary collection *Here in the Night*.

These thirteen short stories survey the impact of ghost stories, disquieting relationships, marginalized identities, and spooky places on ordinary people. Their heroes range from adolescent girls to women who carry childhood experiences into adulthood. In the understated flash piece “Search Party,” police detain an American teenager traveling across Europe with her stepfather, mistaking her for a missing girl. “The Attic” looks at the impact of an impending long-distance move on a shy transracial adoptee who explores her queerness with her best friend.

“Warnings” measures the emotional shock waves when a young runner leaves her teammates in the dust and then disappears. In “Here in the Night,” a lesbian couple faces terror when they get a flat tire on a deserted road and men in a pick-up truck stop for them. “Northwood” interlaces a girl’s yearning for her absent father with lore about a creature who lives at the edge of her small town. In “Crybaby Bridge,” the local legend of an unwed mother who drowned herself and her infant is resurrected when a new girl with a sexual past moves to a conservative town.

Some stories tread parallel ground: the “beast-man” who haunts one piece feels similar to the “webbed-arm man” in another, and a lot of creepy things seem to happen in New England. But the plots distinguish themselves well, and the book avoids repetitiousness. On the simplest level, the collection reads as a stunning mix of creepy tales; on a deeper level, its hauntings double as metaphors for the dangers that girls, women, and those viewed as outsiders navigate on a regular basis.

In subtle but striking prose, *Here in the Night* captures the psychological terrors laced throughout people’s everyday lives.

PAULA MARTINAC (July / August 2023)

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