



The Vanishing

By Tim Krabbé

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The Vanishing By Tim Krabbé Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1232228 in Books
- Brand: Random House
- Published on: 1993-08-24
- Released on: 1993-08-24
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 5.75" w x .50" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 108 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Published in the Netherlands in 1984, this devastating exercise in psychological horror was the basis for an acclaimed Dutch film and a recent American remake that may have prompted the novel's long-overdue publication in English. Veteran Dutch author Krabbe works with an economy that only reinforces the terror inspired by his scarifying tale. En route from Holland to a vacation in the South of France, freelance writer Rex Hofman and his girlfriend Saskia Ehlvest bicker, make up and stop at a gas station, where Saskia goes to get soft drinks and never returns. Eight years later, Rex is engaged to be married, though he still feels helpless and desolated and remains obsessed with the disappearance. Almost halfway through the book, Krabbe introduces Frenchman Raymond Lemorne, a married high school teacher whose attempts to abduct a young woman are shown but not explained. Responding to ads placed by Rex in French newspapers, Lemorne first writes and then visits the bereaved man, using Rex's by-now-crazed curiosity to lure him to France. The decidedly unhappy ending makes use of a shocking twist. The portrait of Lemorne, who shoots two teenage campers to death then calmly resumes his role as an indulgent paterfamilias, is a chilling study of the banality of evil. This deceptively simple novel packs a wallop that will send readers reeling. Author tour.

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From Library Journal

In this finely wrought short novel, Dutch author Krabbe captures the texture of nightmares. A couple motoring in southern France stop at a roadside station; the woman heads off to the ladies' room. The man never sees her again. Years later, a stranger approaches him. The stranger admits to kidnapping her; he promises to show what happened to her if the young man puts himself in the stranger's hand. The evolution of the kidnapper from normality to madness is skillfully depicted; family and neighbors detect no hint of the monster he has become. This is a cunningly efficient tale of obsession, told in a flat, disinterested tone that makes the horror it narrates all the more chilling. A good Dutch film was made from this story; an American remake with Jeff Bridges and Kiefer Sutherland has just appeared. Recommended for general collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 12/92.

- *David Keymer, California State Univ., Stanislaus*

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Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: Dutch

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michelle Bachman:

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