



## Bethany's Sin

*Robert R. McCammon*

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## **Bethany's Sin** Robert R. McCammon

Even God stays away from the village of BETHANY'S SIN.

For Evan Reid, his wife Kay, and their small daughter Laurie, the beautiful house in the small village was too good a bargain to pass up. Bethany's Sin was a weird name, but the village was quaint and far from the noise and pollution of the city.

But Bethany's Sin was too quiet. There were no sounds at all...almost as if the night had been frightened into silence.

Evan began to notice that there were very few men in the village, and that most of them were crippled. And then there was the sound of galloping horses. Women on horses. Riding in the night.

Soon he would learn their superhuman secret. And soon he would watch in terror as first his wife, then his daughter, entered their sinister cabal.

An ancient evil rejoiced in Bethany's Sin. A horror that happened only at night...and only to men.

## **Bethany's Sin Details**

Date : Published November 28th 1984 by Avon Books (first published 1980)

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Author : Robert R. McCammon

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Genre : Horror, Fiction

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## From Reader Review Bethany's Sin for online ebook

### Latasha says

well... this is an earlier book in Mr. McCammon's writing. I'm glad he kept working on it. while there is some good parts, this isn't his best.

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### Ken McKinley says

Written in 1980, McCammon's second novel is not one of the author's favorites. In fact, he felt that his first three shouldn't be reprinted due to the writing not being up to par with his work after that. Robert is his own toughest critic of his work. While this may not be his best story, it's still a really good read. That's McCammon for you. The bar is raised to the heavens. He's an amazing author and Bethany's Sin is chock full of what he does best - an interesting premise, full and vibrant three-dimensional characters, and a writing style that grabs a hold of you and sucks you in.

Evan, a writer and a Vietnam veteran who has seen his share of horrors, and his wife Kay, a math professor, and their young daughter Laurie move to the charming, well-kept small town of Bethany's Sin, Pennsylvania to start a new life. Evan's dreams have made a mess of their previous attempts in other cities. You see, he has a penchant for predicting danger through the recollection of his nightmares. His wife doesn't believe that he's having premonitions and that he's actually creating the problems by reading too much into his dreams. Soon after moving to Bethany's Sin, Evan begins having troublesome visions during the night again. Not wanting to cause problems so soon after moving into their dream neighborhood, he tries to stifle his visions. Kay takes a position at a local community college and bumps into the head of the history department, Dr. Drago. She learns that Drago is also the mayor of Bethany's Sin and a woman of mesmerizing qualities. In fact, Evan notices that the village is full of dominating women that are either single or married to a submissive husband. Oddly enough, there is a museum in town that is dedicated to the lost civilization of the Amazon women.

McCammon slowly unfolds his tale developing the characters and setting up the curious scenes in the first half of the novel and then kicks it into high gear during the second half. It's definitely worth picking up.

4 out of 5 stars

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## Kevin Lucia says

Another solid, entertaining outing. Love me some McCammon!

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## Jordan Anderson says

I'm sure that when McCammon first published *Bethany's Sin*, it was well received. It was, after all, released in 1980, at the beginning of the surge of American horror. The problem is, that 80's horror flicks were, for the most part, boring...and so too was this book.

In a way it pains me to say that. I've become a huge fan of McCammon in the last year or so, and I think he's constantly overlooked in a genre already too full of great authors. I also understand (and was pretty lucky to come across) that *Bethany's Sin* was only his 2nd novel (and one he actually had pulled from publication because it just wasn't up to snuff against his more nuanced and better written work). So yes, I'm not just some idiot who's never read McCammon or discovered the history behind his books.

It still doesn't change the fact, however, that at times this novel can be increasingly frustrating and tough to get through. I started reading this in the beginning of August 2015 and didn't happen to finish it for over a month, going back and forth with it in place of other books. It's not because McCammon isn't a bad author (and for a sophomore release, McCammon was still a hell of a writer), but rather because it's just so slow. At 348 pages, the book is fairly short, though nothing of any significance occurs until more than mid-way through. And even when the good stuff finally starts rolling, the basic plot and premise are just too full of holes to really grasp and cause far more questions than should be necessary. Like, for example, if the town is being constantly drained of men, wouldn't the other surrounding villages notice? And how can they stay so isolated? And if the spirits are able to exist outside the women's bodies, how are they taken care of by Evan?

Yet still, somehow, for the most part, this book does manage to work. I give most of that credit to McCammon. Like I said, the guy is a phenomenal author; he writes compelling characters and vivid scenes that draw the reader in and make us feel like we are there. This ain't *Swan Song* or *Mine*, but you can easily see the talent McCammon had and the way he has evolved over his career. Had anyone else tried to write this book, I'm sure it would have failed miserably.

Though I can't exactly recommend this as a first start to McCammon, it still marks an important book in his catalogue. And though it wasn't a rip-roaring, page turner, being able to read this was a plus, especially now that it's out of print (though still available in digital).

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## Horace Derwent says

## Alex says

Blah.

## Char says

This was another enjoyable read from Robert McCammon.

A small, beautiful town with an unusual name seemed to be a perfect place for a family to start anew. But, of course, it wasn't.

This book combined ancient mythology with present day horror.(Well, present day for 1980 or so, because that's when this book was originally written.)Oh, and did I mention the Amazon women?

I would recommend Bethany's Sin to any Robert McCammon fan. I also would recommend this one for any lover of horror set in a small town. This is one of those classic horror stories that grudgingly gives out clues to the secret the town holds close.

What is the town of Bethany's Sin hiding? Read it to find out.

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## Ken McKinley says

This was a re-read for me, as we're going through the Robert McCammon Challenge (reading his catalog in chronological order, one book a month). This time around, Bethany's Sin picked up an extra star. I found that I enjoyed the uniqueness of the story about the strange happenings of this out-of-the-way little hamlet set in rural Pennsylvania. McCammon does such a fantastic job tying the ancient civilization of the Amazons and transplanting them into 1980 suburbia.

Evan Reid is a Vietnam vet whose PTSD causes him to relive his past in his dreams. This causes him and his family a hard time staying in one place before Evan burns their bridges and they have to start all over. Now, Evan, his wife Kay, and their little daughter Laurie discover Bethany's Sin. An idyllic Mayberry that seems to be the perfect spot to "start over". Soon after moving in, Evan notices strange things about the residents of Bethany's Sin. All of the women seem to be the dominant ones in the neighborhood. Many aren't married and the ones that are have submissive husbands. Obviously, Evan finds this unusual for 1980 and brings it up to Kay. Afraid that her husband is overreacting and is going to spoil their attempt at a new beginning, Kay goes off on Evan. The guilt from these new accusations coupled with his past missteps clouds Evan's thinking. He desperately wants the life his family deserves and this causes him to dismiss what he sees as paranoia. But, no matter how much he wants the American dream for his family, it doesn't change the fact that there's more to Bethany's Sin than meets the eye.

I connected with Evan the most out of all the characters. I felt his grief and anxiety as he tried so hard to provide a wonderful life for his family. I've read some reviews where some have accused McCammon of being sexist because women characters are portrayed as the "bad guys". I would argue the opposite. I think his unique and strong portrayal of the women of Bethany's Sin as a paradoxical dig on the male dominated society that was the norm in 1980. I also found the writing to be much better than his first novel, Baal. You can really see the progression that led him into the great writer he is today. I've said it before and I'll say it again. I've read numerous writers who would kill to be able to write at this level. When you put it in perspective, it makes you truly appreciate his talent.

4 Electric Blue Eyes out of 5

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## Edward Lorn says

There are certain mysteries concerning the female of the human species that are better left uninvestigated: Tupperware parties, vaginal dryness, yeast infections, cervical mucus, and the most terrifying and disturbing of the unanswered mysteries, women's clubs. In *Bethany's Sin*, author Robert McCammon goes full Men's Rights Activist and postulates that women's clubs are denizens for sex-starved, lightning-eyed, Amazon-worshipping ladies who get their jollies by mutilating and raping male sex slaves. You know, as your average woman is wont to do. Luckily, McCammon's uber-male military-veteran hero, Evan, is on the case, and Evan will surely defeat this plague of independent women and send them back to the kitchen where they belong!

Let the sandwich making commence!

This book is dated as fuck, the writing is terrible, and the author has a strange penchant for repeating words like they're fuckin' song lyrics. An example of the latter would be:

*Her mouth opened, opened, and remained open even as that terrible flame of spectral power flickered, flickered, and died from her eyes.*

I can only assume this is a metaphor for how men are always having to repeat themselves because women don't understand the first time we say something. Silly women, with your bad hearing and horrible audio comprehension. Shame on you for making us repeat ourselves all the time. For. Shame!

(lulz please don't hurt me these are jokes omg send help and a divorce lawyer im sorry goddamn woman not my testicles then again keep doing that it feels good mind the fuckin teeth owwie)

The one positive I took from this book is that McCammon still has a career, which gives a writer like me, one who isn't very proud of his early output, enough hope to keep on pressing on. McCammon is one of my favorite writers because of books like *Gone South* and *Boy's Life*.

I'm currently fighting my way through McCammon's novels in order of publication, and I do mean *fighting*. There is little-to-no evidence that the writer who wrote this book would go on to be one of the best writers in all of horror and supernatural suspense. Up next is *The Night Boat* and I'm not looking forward to it, mainly because, while it was published *after Bethany's Sin*, it was written *before Bethany's Sin*, so color me a'scaart.

In summation: All men's-rights-activist and sandwich-making jokes aside, this book is pretty terrible. One of my friends (Paul Nash, I'm looking at you) said he liked this one better than McCammon's first novel, *Baal*, but I don't see why. This is definitely the lesser of the two books, in more ways than I care to count. Recommended for completionists only.

**Final Judgment: Get in the kitchen and make me my supper, book!**

## Tobin Elliott says

Damn. Has it really been 35 years since I read this novel? I was in Grade 12 at the time. I'm *old*.

In my quest to go through all those McCammon books I never read back in the 70s and 80s because I was too hooked on King and Masterton, this is the third in fairly quick succession (the first was the out-of-order **Usher's Passing**, then back to his first, **Baal** and now his third-written-but-second-published, **Bethany's Sin**).

This was my very first exposure to McCammon, back in the day and I have absolutely no memory of the story, aside from women and horses. It obviously didn't leave an impression on me then, because I never picked up another McCammon until the excellent **Boy's Life** eleven years later.

I'm not sure why. Going through this novel now, the first thing I can say is, it is a *much* better story and *much* more well-written story than the two I read before it. The story held together much better. Yes, there were still holes (no one noticed the underwhelming male population? No one noticed all the missing males?) and the writing was still a touch green (count how many times McCammon emphasizes a point by repeating the verb three times: *His lungs were burning burning burning*.).

However, my biggest issue was with the explanation of the town's name. We're entering spoiler country here, so...

(view spoiler)

But overall, I thought this was an above-average horror novel. Well done, Mr. McCammon. Now I'm excited for **Night Boat**.

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## Paul Nash says

I'm reading the McCammon's in chronological order and this was better than Baal. Not amazing or anything, but a good creepy read. Next up, The Night Boat! Boy's Life was AWESOME....I'm really looking forward to Swan Song and the Wolfs Hour.

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## Melki says

**"They'll come for you! Oh, yes they'll come for you just like they came for me!" A thread of saliva had broken from the man's lip, and now it hung down over his chin onto his shirt. "In the night! They'll come in the night when the moon's strong and full and they'll take you to that place -- God, that awful place!"**

Evan and Kay have moved to idyllic Bethany's Sin to save their festering cesspool of a marriage. (Okay - I exaggerate slightly, but these two are *clearly* not meant to be together!) The town is quiet. *Too* quiet. Where does everyone go after dark? And why are so many of the menfolk missing limbs? Are those hoofbeats I hear?

Dun-dun-duh!

This is the first time I've been disappointed by a McCammon title. The mystery was just not intriguing enough to keep me spellbound. And then there was the fact that I honestly didn't care if the main characters lived or died. The pacing was deadly slow, which can occasionally serve to build suspense, but in this case, the payoff was not only not worth the wait, it was laughable instead of horrific.

Oh, well . . . there are plenty of good reading days left before Halloween.

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### **Aaron Nash says**

An above average horror romp by a writer that was starting to find his feet. Chocked full of cliches, and with a tendency to repeat words over and over and over and over..... again. Still though, theres a lot of fun to be found here. Well worth a read.

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### **Charles says**

This is not McCammon's best, but it's still pretty damn good. In fact, this is my least favorite by him, but it still gets a 4.

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### **David says**

After reading the reviews posted here, I approached Bethany's Sin with a degree of caution as it wasn't that highly rated. But having enjoyed almost every other Robert McCammon book I've read, I didn't think it could be all bad. I'm happy to say that I found this book most enjoyable. Bethany's Sin is a small Pennsylvania town where the main character Evan, his wife Kay, and his daughter Laurie move. It's soon apparent that life in this town is not as quaint and peaceful as it first appeared. Kay begins having horrific and violent nightmares after meeting the towns mayor and primary antagonist, Kathryn Drago. It's up to Evan to unravel the dark secrets of the town before its too late to save himself and his family from the horrors of the coming "killing month". Sin is fairly quick read and has an interesting slant on the legend of the Amazon women and their hostile relationship with men. Some of the descriptions of this are downright brutal. It's a good horror story with some very creepy moments. Well worth reading in my opinion.  
(originally posted on Amazon.com)

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