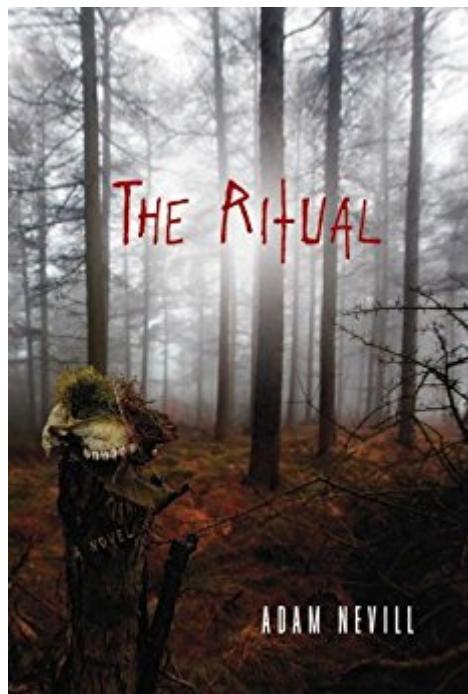


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# The Ritual



## **Synopsis**

When four old University friends set off into the Scandinavian wilderness of the Arctic Circle, they aim to briefly escape the problems of their lives and reconnect with one another. But when Luke, the only man still single and living a precarious existence, finds he has little left in common with his well-heeled friends, tensions rise. With limited experience between them, a shortcut meant to ease their hike turns into a nightmare scenario that could cost them their lives. Lost, hungry, and surrounded by forest untouched for millennia, Luke figures things couldn't possibly get any worse. But then they stumble across an old habitation. Ancient artefacts decorate the walls and there are bones scattered upon the dry floors. The residue of old rites and pagan sacrifice for something that still exists in the forest. Something responsible for the bestial presence that follows their every step. As the four friends stagger in the direction of salvation, they learn that death doesn't come easy among these ancient trees . . .

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I got this book because of a recommendation made in a Facebook Group. This is definitely a horror.

It's filled with such desperation, sorrow, rage, uncertainty and death. It's not a gore-focused book which I thoroughly appreciate. It gives you the feeling of constant fear. Constant insecurity. Constant nightmare. If you like reading well-written, deep and nail-biting stories, this is a must.

I had a really hard time deciding between 3 and 4 stars on this one. The opening of the story was breathless, relentless; it had me utterly enthralled, and even a little bit spooked out, which is rare nowadays. The author's sometimes jarring style worked well, I thought, during the beginning stretch when momentum was high and the chapters were tight. However, at the halfway point the book takes an abrupt turn into the bizarre, and the pace of the book utterly stalls for over a hundred pages. Interesting characters are replaced by insane; meaningful dialogue swapped for nonsensical; and the description--so fine tuned in the beginning--becomes severely bloated, to the point that I was unable to connect emotionally with anything. One particular scene in the attic, which in concept was deliciously creepy, drags on with repetitive and clumsy description. There's a sentence that reads, "One of her small arms then withdrew from his belly that she pushed at." The reader learns that she was pushing the character's stomach after she stops pushing it, for some inexplicable reason. Things come together well in the final act, and as a whole, I came out happy that I read this book. The beginning was so strong that I still get that good, shivery feeling thinking about it, but the book as a whole doesn't feel cohesive, and it could use more editing for clarity's sake.

I didn't even remember putting this on my Kindle but I can see why I did and was great because I didn't remember what it was to be about. Nevill is a good writer for starters. Good character build up without too much junk, nice pacing, and does not overburden the descriptions. The story is almost a 2 for 1 as one reviewer stated. I was about halfway through the book and though it was about to end only to get a fresh dose with some very unique twists and turns. It is certainly all creepy and horrific, but without overused gore or brutish language (which can also be fine, but this didn't need it). One could almost buy into the story and anyone who has been alone, lost, or scared in the woods can certainly identify with the chill factor here. Furthermore, the Nevill does a good job of putting the reader in the forest and scaring the hell out of us. I don't think any horror or thriller/horror fans will be disappointed with this read.

I've read a 100 pages of this book until now. I like the writing style and the first pages put me in a really curious mood, cause the author arrives to give the reader the impression that something evil is always present. BUT the story doesn't make any progress. Pages wasted in describing always the

same...well,I've decided to give the book a chance and I will read til I reach page 200.And if I then feel the same bored and disappointed like I do at the moment,I'll throw the book in a container of the recycling center.Ok,I've read now another 100 pages of the book-about page 120,the story really starts to get scary and interesting.It begins to move on.The first 100 pages are well written,but some waste of time

Bravo! This is the third novel I've read by this author. His stories go far beyond just being horrifically frightening - and I say that because the characters are so engaging. In this particular story, I actually felt badly for leaving them alone, when I had to take a break from the book, due to necessities, like sleeping, eating, working, etc. I found myself thinking about them during the day, and hoping they were okay (although I knew they were not ever really going to be okay), and couldn't wait to pick-up where I'd left off, and start reading again. Maybe this story resonated with me so much because I grew up going on camping trips, and know how dark and scary a forest can be, without some huge, mean, blood thirsty creature hunting after you. My mind cannot imagine what the characters in this novel endured, and the author painted a perfect description of their horror - right down to the very last page. Bone-tingling good, page-turner of a great story. Not sure if I'll be going on any camping trips anytime, ever again!

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