

THE MOVING WORDS REVIEW



Title: A Tall Dark Sin

Author: M. Anthony Phillips

"A Tall Dark Sin" by M. Anthony Phillips is a riveting narrative set against the vibrant and tumultuous backdrop of 1950s New Orleans. This novel entices readers with a complex web of secrets, societal tensions, and the relentless pursuit of justice and personal identity.

At the heart of the story is Oscar Broussard, a character whose worst fears materialize in a way that threatens his very existence within the close-knit, affluent Creole community of the Seventh Ward. The novel opens with Oscar navigating the societal pressures and racial dynamics of a community that is as rich in culture as it is in prejudice and rivalry. His journey quickly becomes more perilous when a dark secret he harbors risks being exposed, promising to shatter the fragile status quo and his place within the society he knows.

The narrative weaves through the lives of several compelling characters, including Dorian, a man caught between worlds and struggling with his identity and destiny. Dorian's interactions, particularly with figures such as Cleopatra, offer a deep dive into themes of love, race, and the power dynamics at play in relationships that cross racial and societal lines. His storyline is a poignant exploration of the internal and external conflicts that define the human experience, especially within the charged atmosphere of racial segregation and the fight for civil rights.

Phillips skillfully uses the setting of New Orleans, with its rich cultural heritage and historical significance, as a living, breathing entity that both complements and complicates the characters' lives. The city's unique blend of beauty and decay mirrors the novel's exploration of the complexities of human nature and the societal constructs that define and confine us.

The strength of "A Tall Dark Sin" lies not just in its plot or setting, but in its characters. Each character is meticulously crafted, with their motivations, desires, and fears driving the narrative forward. From Oscar's desperate attempts to protect his secret and preserve his family's legacy, to Dorian's quest for self-discovery and redemption, Phillips presents a cast that is both diverse and deeply relatable.

What sets this novel apart is its ability to tackle heavy themes—racism, identity, love, and betrayal—with both sensitivity and a deep understanding of the human condition. The narrative is rich with historical context, but the struggles and aspirations of its characters are timeless, offering readers a window into the soul of a community and the individuals who inhabit it.

"A Tall Dark Sin" is a masterclass in storytelling, blending historical fiction with elements of romance, mystery, and social commentary. Phillips' prose is both elegant and accessible, drawing readers into a world that is at once beautiful and fraught with tension. It is a story of resilience in the face of adversity, the quest for truth, and the indomitable spirit of love.

M. Anthony Phillips' "A Tall Dark Sin" is an engrossing tale that captivates from the first page to the last. It is a poignant reminder of the power of secrets to both bind and break, and the enduring quest for identity and belonging in a world that often seeks to categorize and control. This novel is a significant contribution to the genre, offering a story that is as thought-provoking as it is entertaining.

- *The Moving Words Review*