

Restless Heart

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iUniverse (2010)

ISBN 9781450232517

Reviewed by Marty Shaw for Reader Views (08/10)

“Restless Heart” allows you to live an exciting adventure through the eyes of Konrad Quintero de Leon, a young man who is compelled to seek out and explore all that life has to offer. Konrad is hungry for life and shuns the contemporary lifestyle shared by those around him. That which is considered normal and traditional by others is viewed as boring by Konrad. His first escape from a ‘normal’ life occurs when he travels to England to continue his studies at Oxford. While he is a diligent student in the classroom, Konrad’s real education takes place outside the educational institution, where he learns the art of fencing from his uncle and uses summer vacations to discover new sites and cities throughout Europe. Konrad returns home to New York after graduating, but his reunion with friends and family is short-lived when he once more hears the unknown beckoning to him.

Konrad’s wanderlust leads him down many roads, and some of them go in unanticipated directions. From hunting Mexican bandits while riding as a Texas Ranger to fighting for survival as a prisoner of a Comanche tribe, Konrad finds the adventure he’s yearning for, and each new adventure makes him hungry for more.

Konrad and his undying quest to always see what lies just over the horizon fascinated me, and I couldn’t help but feel a mixture of envy and pity for him. For while he saw many things that most of his friends couldn’t even imagine, the simple pleasures that satisfied others were always just beyond his grasp. Neither friends nor family nor the love of a good woman can keep him happy for too long because he always wants to experience the ‘new’ and any semblance of a routine soon makes him feel trapped. In the wake of his travels, he leaves friends, family, and one special woman forever looking forward to his return and forever fearing the inevitable departure.

I found myself flying through the pages of this book as the author provided just the right amount of description to let the story come to life before my eyes, without burying the plot with too much detail. The characters are interesting, colorful, and realistic, and I enjoyed seeing how Konrad’s views and thoughts matured as he transformed from a naïve college boy to an experienced traveler who is familiar with both the good and the bad that the world has to offer.

The plot provides a few interesting twists that had me closing the book with a slightly bittersweet feeling, but it was a good ending that fit perfectly with the character of Konrad. There probably aren’t too many people in the world who travel the same endless road that Konrad walks on, but “Restless Heart” will provide a good glimpse at those who do and it will be up to you to decide if that road is a blessing or a curse.