



Dreams of Leaving

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New Egypt is a village somewhere in the south of England. A village that nobody has ever left. Peach, the sadistic chief of police, makes sure of that. Then, one misty morning, a young couple secretly set their baby son Moses afloat on the river, in a basket made of rushes. Years later, Moses is living above a nightclub, mixing with drug-dealers, thieves and topless waitresses. He knows nothing about his past - but it is catching up with him nevertheless, and it threatens to put his life in danger. Terror, magic and farce all have a part to play as the worlds of Peach and Moses slowly converge.

Dreams of Leaving Details

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Author : Rupert Thomson

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Sionnain says

'Dreams of Leaving' Hit me in a strange way. At the time I read it, the expression reflected my desire to leave home, move, travel go anywhere.

Although the nature of drawing out those dreams is the same is being hit in head with a brick.

Rupert Thompson writing is magical in the sense that the words he uses create this euphoric sense of fantasy. At the same time he hit perfectly on the pessimistic reality that grounded and tied the book together.

Jil says

Absolutely loved this! It's sad and beautiful and funny.

The characters are wonderful and you feel like you actually know them and properly care about them. It's a book about family and what that means and about growing up and changing.

Highly recommended

Grant says

I had to give this book 5 stars i have discovered the most wonderful writer. Somebody described his writing to Me like a box of wonderful chocolates and that is correct. The writer transports you to another world his characters are so strong his writings is stunning the book is just wonderful.

Now like a box of chocolates you wouldn't want to eat them every night so I don't need to go straight on to another one of his books. I need a gap but my aim is to read all of his books.

Jade says

This was the first rupert thomson i ever read and i've probably re-read it five or six times. beautiful book.

Dancingsocks says

A deeply infuriating book. So many things were good but I think the author just tried to throw a sink and bath mat at it too.

The idea of the village itself is fascinating, yet half of the book is set away from it and at the end the story of

the village is left hanging.

And the random placing of sudden things to help the plot along - like a darkroom handily available after 400 pages. Drove me mad.

There is some really beautiful writing and ideas. But it swung too far between 2 and 4 stars on a pagely basis.

Brenda says

This book was well written and an interesting plot. I was disappointed in the main character of the story who didn't seem to have much personality. Too much description went into drunken and drug influenced thoughts, and not enough went into the people of new Egypt and what kept them there.

Ugh says

It all starts out so well... The first 150 pages or so are great: a gripping idea, for the most part very well executed, and with likable, convincing, interesting characters. But then that's it - the quality ends there. There are things that Thomson does very well here: England, boisterous young men, and those small ideas and observations that can be used to good effect to make writing that bit more writerly... You know the ones I mean.

But he also doesn't know how much is too much when it comes to inventing pointless excursions for his characters, he resorts to simple coincidence far too often, he lets main characters fall by the wayside and introduces new ones seemingly for no reason, he ties things up in too much of a hurry, and - oh yeah - he doesn't seem to think that the final 200 pages or so require any kind of a point or any plot development.

I stuck with it for the final two-thirds because I very much liked the set-up, and I hoped it would return to something like that kind of quality. It didn't. No more Thomson for me.

Jessica says

I loved this book and recommend it to as many people as I possibly can. The characters in here are brilliant! Especially Moses and George Highness.

I can't begin to do the author any justice by trying to explain what the book is about, it's just a fantastic story. Read it please!!

Mark Walker says

The writing throughout is brilliant, with some of the most arresting similes you'll find. Rarely is a book so uneven. The New Egypt bits are an inventive dystopia and much more could have been made of this. I didn't care about the hedonistic flaky characters Moses meets in the world outside New Egypt. This isn't the only book by this author that has this problem, both Divided Kingdom and The Insult have brilliant ideas but dissipate away into characters literally wandering aimlessly. On the evidence of this book and some others he

has very good ideas but is unable to sustain them over a whole novel.

Callum Jacobs says

This is Thomson's first, and I think his best work. That's probably not what a writer wants to hear, and don't get me wrong, he's written some great books, but this one just worked on a different level. Thomson is all about creating a parallel world, recognisable, in many ways as mundane and confused at the real one, but always with a few nice, weird differences. In *Dreams of Leaving*, he creates this little village in Sussex (I spent a lot of the book looking for clues exactly where it was, 'cos it was pretty damn close to Lewes, my home town) where the inhabitants are powerless to leave, living under the control of insane police chief Peach. Moses, the hero, was smuggled out as a baby by his parents, and the book is his journey to find the truth behind his strange history. As with all Thomson's writing, the beauty is in his exquisite descriptions; whether its the natural world or the urban shit-scape, he nails it every time.

Fennarama says

This is one of the worst books I've ever read, which is sad, because the writing isn't terrible. It's the story that's terrible. The story rambles and detours and runs away with itself and tortures you as you believe the ending will resolve the story but it never does. This book would've been so much better as a short story. It is predictable and every piece of it that is new or interesting is never properly addressed. Skip it!

Philip says

My entry to Thomson. A good place to begin.

Robert Wechsler says

Thomson's first novel and the second of his novels I've read. It was his writing alone that kept me interested for more than 400 pages. The beginning, about a village whose police officers have prevented any contact with the outside world, is fantastic, but the other story, about the adult life of a baby who was sent out of the village by his father, didn't interest me much. The fact that Thomson's writing could keep me going is truly amazing.

Thomson is very talented. It's too bad Thomson, with nine long novels and only 57, is not better known and respected in the U.S. In fact, his new novel (2013) isn't even available here.

Pragya Jain says

Quite an interesting plot. The way he has written and explained the plot it's very interesting. There are moments when you're just into the book and there are some dull moments as well. I would say the ending

didn't blow me away and it leaves a lot of questions unanswered. Nothing which can make you question the writer but something which will leave you imagining a lot of things. The read is interesting, I must say!

Sue says

It started out with one story and then flipped to something totally unrelated and not interesting at all. Sorry but the main character was just a stoned, drunk scrounger with no sense of women and I just kept skipping through to get back to the bits about the original story. When I hoped the story might get interesting it didn't and I don't even feel it arrived anywhere at the end so all in all a disappointing read.
