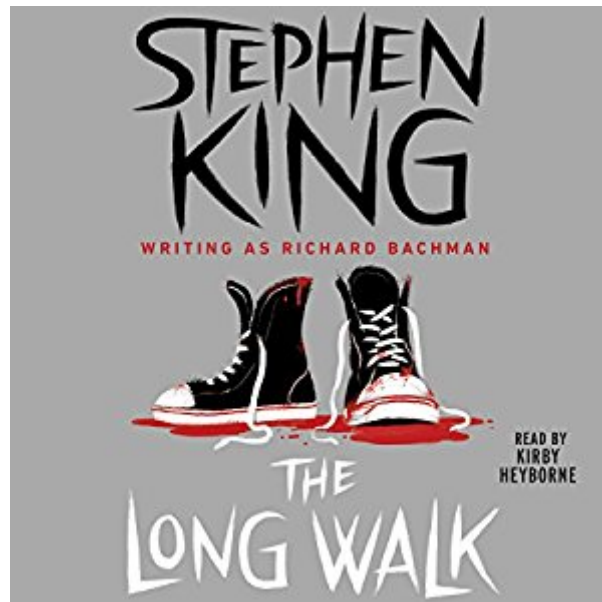


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The Long Walk



Synopsis

In this number-one national best seller, "master storyteller" (Houston Chronicle) Stephen King, writing as Richard Bachman, tells the tale of the contestants of a grueling walking competition where there can be only one winner - the one who survives. In the near future, when America has become a police state, 100 boys are selected to enter an annual contest where the winner will be awarded whatever he wants for the rest of his life. Among them is 16-year-old Ray Garraty, and he knows the rules - keep a steady walking pace of four miles per hour without stopping. Three warnings and you're out - permanently. With an introduction by Stephen King on "The Importance of Being Bachman".

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 10 hours and 44 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Audio

Audible.com Release Date: January 1, 2016

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B019NOEQGW

Best Sellers Rank: #152 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Horror #472

#1383 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Science Fiction #1383 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Horror

Customer Reviews

If you ask me, *The Long Walk* may well be the most fascinating novel Stephen King has ever written. Written back in 1966-67, while King was a college freshman, the novel earned the author nothing more than a form rejection letter. Finally, after a few years of dust-gathering, the manuscript was released into a much more welcoming world in the form of Richard Bachman's second novel. It's a magnificent story - not perfect, but magnificent nonetheless. It's a disarmingly simple tale centered on a seemingly mundane activity, yet in King's masterful hands *The Long Walk* burrows into the core of a number of characters, lays down miles of metaphors about the human condition, and absolutely mesmerizes you with its emotional force and power. The setting is an alternate, possible fascist America; King leaves things pretty murky on the sociopolitical end of things, almost

surely by design. The Long Walk is really one of your "it can't happen in America" kind of stories, and the horror of it all (and, yes, I would categorize this as a horror novel) is made more powerful by obscuring the lines between our America and this fictionalized America. Here, The Long Walk is the premier sporting event in the land. Spectators turn out in droves, bets are made left and right, and the whole nation watches and cheers. Obviously, this is not a regular walk, nor is it a race in the purist sense. Endurance - mental even more than physical - is the key to victory in this sport. To win, all you have to do is outlast 99 other competitors - and the winner receives nothing less than whatever he wants for the rest of his life. Before you yell "Sign me up," you'll want to hear about the details. You have to maintain a pace of at least four miles per hour; fall below the pace, and you get a warning.

The Long Walk is the second book I have read that was written by King under the name Richard Bachman. It is the in-depth story of how a boy named Ray Garraty must survive the greatest challenge of his life -- the Long Walk. This annual event is summarized as follows: 100 boys start walking; if you walk under 4 miles per hour, you get a warning; after 3 warnings, if you slow down again, you are shot dead. The winner of the Long Walk is the last boy left walking. Stephen King (a.k.a. Richard Bachman) introduces and develops the characters of many of the boys in the event. As a reader, you get to learn about Garraty, Pete McVries, Hank Olson, Art Baker, Barkovitch, Stebbins, and others, who each have their own personality quirks and ways of looking at life. Each boy has entered the Long Walk for a different reason and I found their discussions about life and death to be quite interesting (a social statement by King, perhaps?). The reader is led along the course and each significant event is mentioned along the way, with some unexpected occurrences that may surprise you. As the challenge narrows down from the original 100 competitors to less than 50, then to just a handful of boys remaining, the scenario becomes rather intense. Who will die next? How will he die? And most importantly, who will be left at the end to claim the Prize? Although the suspense builds slowly, it tends to add to the dramatic effect of the final moments and keep the reader wanting to read more to find out what happens (I was so eager to find out that I read the last half of the book in one sitting). Although the story is interesting and held my attention, there are a couple of criticisms that knocked it down from 5 to 4 stars. First, the ending was too predictable.

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