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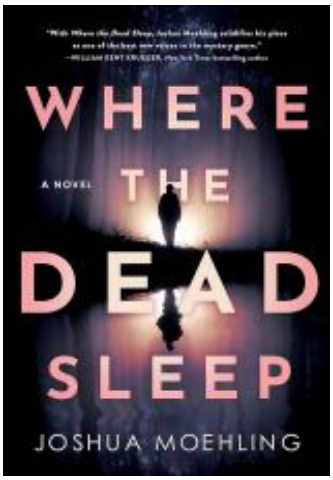
Where the Dead Sleep

by Joshua Moehling



About the Book

A small town's dark secrets turn deadly...

When an early morning call brings Deputy Ben Packard to the scene of a home invasion, he finds Bill Sandersen shot in his bed. Bill was a well-liked local who chased easy money his whole life, leaving bad debts and broken hearts in his wake. Everyone Packard talks to has a story about Bill, but no one has a clear motive for wanting him dead. The business partner. The ex-wife. The current wife. The high-stakes poker buddies. Any of them --- or none of them --- could be guilty.

As the investigation begins, tragedy strikes the Sheriff's department, forcing Packard to make a difficult choice about his future: step down as acting Sheriff and pursue the quiet life he came to Sandy Lake in search of, or subject himself to the scrutiny of an election for the full-time role of Sheriff, a job he's not sure he wants.

There's a hidden history to Sandy Lake that Packard, ever the outsider, can't see. Bad blood and old secrets run deep. But an attempt on Packard's life means he's getting uncomfortably close to the dangerous legacy of the quiet Minnesota town. And someone will do anything to keep it hidden.

Discussion Guide

1. Describe why Packard, as an outsider, is at a disadvantage during the investigation.

2. Bill and Sheri have a tumultuous and even unhealthy relationship. Would you characterize what they have as love?

3. Outline the reasons Packard is so reticent to run for sheriff. Why do you think the election went the way it did?

4. Discuss the three Gherlick sisters: Carrie, Sheri and Mary. What are their similarities and differences?

5. The Gherlick family is an integral part of Sandy Lake. Consider their legacy. How have they shaped the town?

6. Packard?s friends push him to run for sheriff, despite his hesitancy. Which of his qualities make him a good leader? Conversely, which might make leadership a challenge?

7. Consider Paul?s role in this story. Do you think his actions were justified?

8. How much blame should we place on Carrie for Bill?s death?

9. Packard ultimately learns more about the evidence around his brother?s disappearance. Why do you think the evidence was handled this way? Do you think it was worth it?

10. The damage Margaret inflicted on her daughters and, peripherally, on Paul is extensive and influences their adult lives beyond measure. In what ways have these characters continued the cycle of abuse or trauma? Do you think there is a way to end it?

Author Bio

Joshua Moehling is the *USA Today* bestselling author of the Ben Packard series. The first book, AND THERE HE KEPT HER, was a Barnes & Noble monthly Mystery/Thriller pick and a finalist for the Lambda Literary Award for Best LGBTQ+ Mystery. The second entry, WHERE THE DEAD SLEEP, was described as ?a well-paced whodunit? and ?devastating? by the *New York Times*. A LONG TIME GONE and BENEATH A BROKEN SKY are the next two installments in the series. Joshua lives in Minneapolis.

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