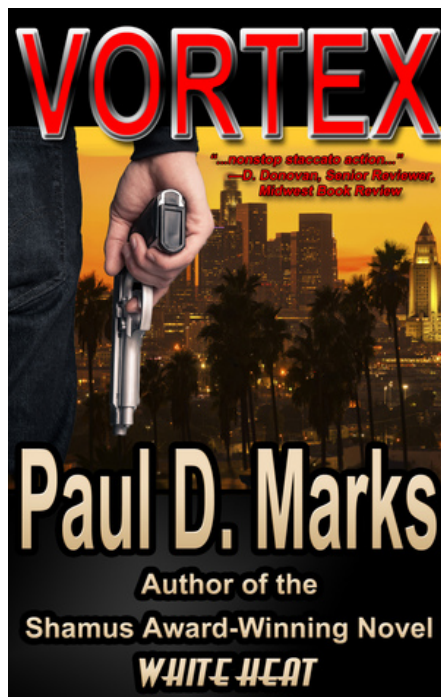




Vortex

Paul D. Marks

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Zach Tanner is on the run. He can run from the war, but he can't run from himself.

Zach and his girlfriend, Jess, careen down Sunset Boulevard, trying to get away from a red Camaro that's hot on their tail. But it's hard to get away from your best friends, who think you've stolen their spoils of war.

A novel from the mean streets of Los Angeles by the Shamus Award-Winning author of WHITE HEAT.

Vortex Details

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Author : Paul D. Marks

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From Reader Review Vortex for online ebook

D.J. Adamson says

...The brakes locked, the car reeled out of control, swerving erratically all over the road. Brian wrenched the wheel from me, trying to regain control. Carlos banged again the door in the back. We were hurtling off the road, into the scrub. ...

Another Shamus Award Winning Author

What could be worse for an Afghanistan veteran than to come from the horrors of war to find himself in a battle with veteran buddies who look to cash in on their war effort. Only, Zach Turner returns a changed man, no longer wanting what he thought was important— money and celebrity—but a peaceful, normal, self-rewarding life. What Paul D. Marks does best is offer his readers credible protagonists, someone a reader would meet in life, and places them in worse case scenarios. The pages turn quickly as Zach races through the streets of Los Angeles.

Kathy Jund says

3.5 stars! When money is involved, you have guaranteed to find out who your friends are, band of brothers or no! The scenes of Los Angeles come alive as returning from his tour of duty, (although recovering from his injuries sustained while serving in the Army), Zach Tanner finds his freedom may have just come at a higher cost. The enemy you know is deadlier than the enemy you don't. After all his time away, dragging his long time (supposed) girlfriend Jessie, into the danger befallen him, Zach is torn between having her by his side in order to protect her or to keep him sane. The race to safety just may kill them both as they are caught up in a vortex which is out of control.

Michael Blanton says

A wounded vet, Zach Turner, returns from a tour of duty in Afghanistan. While there, he and three buddies - aka The Four Musketeers - commit a crime, which will effect him, his family, and childhood friends, upon his return to Los Angeles. Paul D. Marks' page-turning novella, "Vortex" (2015), puts you smack in the middle of the City of Angels as we follow Turner's return home, which immediately turns into a non-stop night nightmare from its get-go opening to its bloody, chilly resolution. Filled with witty patter, this visual, lean neo-noir novel, in the right hands, will make an exciting cinematic thriller. Fans of novels with LA locales - Chandler, Ellroy - and films like as diverse as The Treasure of Sierra Madre, A Simple Plan, Lost Highway, To Live and Die in L.A., should find much to enjoy here. Re: Los Angeles mystery/noir novels, Author Jonathan Kellerman noted "I'm going to expand the parameters from Los Angeles proper to southern California: LA isn't a city, it's a concept which applies anywhere in the Golden State where nice weather abounds, a chasm yawns between the haves and the have-nots, and delusional blind ambition is habitually confused with work ethic and wisdom." Marks' "Vortex" fits right into this tradition.

Paul's "White Heat" (2012) a neo-noir P.I. Duke Rogers murder mystery set in the aftermath of the 1992 L.A. riots is being re-released by Down & Out books on May 21, 2018, either as a paperback or e-book. Amazon has the paperback up for pre-order. White Heat won the first Shamus Award for Independent Private Eye Novel from the Private Eye Writers of America. "Broken Windows," the follow-up to "White

Heat" is due out this fall.

Stephen Campbell says

Zach Tanner returns from a stint in the military as changed man. Physically changed from an injury, and mentally far different from the boy he'd been prior to leaving his home in Los Angeles.

Zach's dreams and ambitions may have changed but those of the Jessie, the girl he left behind have not. She still dreams of fame, easy money, and the Hollywood Life.

But all is not what it seems with Zach and his homecoming quickly turns from awkward reunions with family and friends, to something else entirely. Zach finds himself sucked into situations he doesn't want with friends he no longer recognizes.

VORTEX is a riveting noir novella that leads the reader through the darker side of Southern California. Highly recommended.

William Deakin says

The action never stops in this thriller. The perfect crime book for the playstation/ xbox generation. I await the film!

Lawrence Maddox says

Zach Tanner, a vet returning home from the frontlines of Afghanistan, is stalked by his past in Paul D. Marks' walloping noir thriller Vortex.

Back home in LA and recovering from war wounds, the good times are long gone for Zach Tanner. His movie star good looks are marred by a nasty facial scar he got in combat, his former girlfriend Jessie seems distracted, and his younger brother Chris hates him for leaving home to fight a war while their parents needed him. More lethal yet, Bryan and Carlos, Zach's two best pals who served with him in the National Guard, rough him up badly, trying to get their hands on some mystery loot from Afghanistan. If Zach doesn't cough it up soon, they threaten to kill him and Jessie.

Zach admits to Jessie that while in Afghanistan he, Bryan, Carlos, and Matt, a fourth friend, had skimmed two million dollars from funds the U.S. used to pay off warlords. Now Matt has vanished, and so has the money. With former friends hunting him down, Zach must untangle a web of deceit that pits lovers, friends and family against each other. When the secrets to Zach's mystery are finally unveiled in a climactic finish, long-standing bonds are put to the ultimate test.

Zach's pursuit takes him on a Tourist Guide jaunt of LA's hot spots; a car chase down Sunset; a shakedown at Grauman's Chinese; a cat and mouse game with a treacherous psychic on the Venice boardwalk. Each stop pulls the rug out from under LA's glamour, revealing the broken dreams that scurry beneath. "Tourists still found the place intriguing," Marks deftly writes about Hollywood's iconic Chinese Theatre. "They

compared their hand and footprints to those of the stars of the golden age embedded in the cement. Had their pictures taken with out of work actors and bums dressed up like Wonder Woman and Spider Man.”

Marks is a Shamus Award winner for *White Heat* (2012), his stirring debut novel about a white detective chasing down a case in South Central as LA erupts around him after the Rodney King verdicts. Marks continues to be a faithful and canny purveyor of fate and doom in the City of Angels. *Vortex* evokes a sundrenched LA whose denizens, often like the town itself, are caught between past glories and a bleak present. Zach and his friends, naïve partiers growing up in Hollywood, “just wanted to be famous-rich and famous.” The war changes Zach, who no longer wants the illegally obtained money, but yearns for a normal life. “What’s normal?” Jessie asks. Though stoking the gloom, Marks never lets up on the pacing. *Vortex* is a page-turner that amps up the tension while unveiling the darkness that begins where the stars on Hollywood Boulevard end.

Larry says

In high school they were called the Four Musketeers, and were stars in the secondary education firmament, with big plans of real fame and fortune to come. When Zach, one of the quartet, decides to go off to war, the other three go along. War engenders dramatic change in those it touches, and, lying wounded in Army hospitals, Zach rethinks his life lying ahead, and wants nothing more than to return to his Southern California home, his girl, and live a 'normal' life.

But, "you can't go home again." Having, while in Afghanistan, become involved in a scheme to acquire big wealth quickly, Zach finds himself trapped in a plan he no longer wants to be part of, and hunted by those he'd called friends. In a maelstrom of violence and betrayal this noir tale plays out against the backdrop of masterfully depicted Southern California, in its tattered and faded finery. Love of money is said to be the root of all [kinds of] evil, and it certainly bears its bitter fruit here. Paul Marks has written a noir thriller that is well-nigh un-put-downable.

Denise says

'Vortex' was one of those stories that pull you in and keep you guessing throughout. It was well written and the way it played out had quite a few twists and surprises. Each character was well defined and some of them truly took me by surprise. Zach thought he had the perfect plan, but he forgot to factor in greed. It came in the most unlikely people and yet, it came from the obvious people. Full of action, a lot of stand-offs, mystery and thrilling scenarios. A good add to your tbr list.

Lance Wright says

This relatively short novel is well-structured and paced, getting off to a quick start before settling in and moving the plot forward in what seems to be a familiar, if also unexpected direction. Though the endgame can be guessed early on, this is on balance an intriguing, nicely crafted, and quite satisfying crime noir. Read our full review, here: <http://www.mysteriousreviews.com/myst...>

Diane says

Zach Turner is home from Afghanistan and the horrors of war; but getting away from conflict just isn't on his horizon. While all he wishes to do is forget the past, it's right on his tail in the form of a speeding red Camero operated by a former best friend who accuses Zach of betrayal and treachery.

In a chase scene typical of the classic detective/noir thriller style, Zach races through L.A. with a hapless girlfriend at his side. And that's just the opening salvo in a nonstop staccato action noir fiction story that, in less than a hundred pages, packs in a mystery/thriller that can't be beat.

From the dry, dusty L.A. basin atmosphere to the perceptions of a wounded veteran whose combat doesn't end with service, events of the war return to haunt Zach's life at home.

It's not easy to capture and build atmosphere while crafting a complex noir plot using a limited number of words; but what might take other writers hundreds more pages to spin, Paul D. Marks creates with just a few deft swipes of his pen.

A superior writer can create believable protagonists, settings, and inject a smoky, fast-paced mystery into everything using a minimum of words to describe and capture experiences. Vortex lives up to its name, quickly creating a maelstrom of action and purpose to draw readers into a whirlpool of intrigue and mystery centered on a believable protagonist and his dilemmas.

Noir detective readers looking for a short work that is immediately gripping and well-written will find the perfect item of choice in Vortex, but be forewarned: once picked up, it's nearly impossible to put down before the end.
