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**IM**



## Synopsis

The Internet Is the New Meat Market for Gay Men Now a Killer Is Turning the Meat Market into a Meat Wagon. One by one, he's killing them. Lurking in the digital underworld of Men4HookUpNow.com, he lures, seduces, charms, reaching out through instant messages to the unwary. He's just another guy. They invite him over. He's just another trick. Harmless. They're dead wrong. When the first bloody body surfaces, openly gay Chicago Police Department detective Ed Comparetto is called in to investigate. Sickened by the butchered mess of one of his brothers left on display in a bathtub, he seeks relief outside where the young man who discovered the body waits to tell him the story of how he found his friend. But who is this witness...and did he play a bigger part in the murder than he's letting on? For Comparetto, this encounter with a witness is the beginning of a nightmare. Because this witness did more than just show up at the scene of the crime; he set the scene. And maybe, he's more than just a killer...maybe he's dead himself. Comparetto is on a journey to discover the truth, a truth that he needs to discover before he loses his career, his boyfriend, his sanity...his life. Because in this killer's world, IM doesn't stand for instant message...it stands for instant murder.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Ripe with suspense and an escalating momentum that doesn't let up..." -- Vince Liaguno, author of *The Literary Six*  
IM is one intense and super wild thrilling ride...A definite and astounding 5 stars! -- Terry South, Quality Book Reviews

"IM" by Rick Reed is a fast-paced page turner that I could barely put down. The title is the abbreviation for "Instant Messaging" but in this case, the instant messaging results in instant murder. While it is a mystery concerning a series of crimes against gay men, and featuring a gay detective and a questionably gay killer, the plot twists, character development, and suspense make it a story any fan of mystery or crime fiction will enjoy. Tyler R. Tichelaar, readerviews.com

Based on the cover of the book and the blurb on the back, IM sounded like just another mystery novel about a detective chasing after a serial killer of gay men. So I was shocked at how fricking gruesome this book is! This killer is sick! There's genital mutilation, cannibalism, and necrophilia! But don't get me wrong. This is not an exploitation novel. There's a real plot here and real characters. First we have Ed Comparetto, the main detective. Openly gay and facing some homophobia on the force as a result, Ed begins to investigate the heinous murders of men who frequent an online hookup site. When it seems one of Ed's main witnesses was a fake—or worse, real but deceased, Ed gets booted off the force. But now he wants to clear his name, find his witness, and find the killer. And along the way, he might even find some romance. IM is also about the killer. We get inside the head of the killer. We learn more about the killer's past and more about the killer's motives. And we get to see many of the murders play out in graphic detail with classic horror nuances. However, rather than just a body count, What Rick R. Reed does is introduce us to victims before they die. Within the length of a standard chapter, we meet them, we get to know them, and we get a better understanding of why they are looking for sex online. These aren't cookie cutter victims. Each man has his own doubts, fears, insecurities, and needs. And while we might know who the killer is as the story unfolds, there are plenty of surprises and twists on the way to the vicious, tension-filled conclusion. The only disappointment is that it leaves you wanting more! The rather abrupt ending deprives readers of a resolution to the dilemmas the surviving characters were facing! I can't help but wonder if Rick was (and maybe still is?) planning to write more stories about detective Ed Comparetto.

I bought this thinking it would be a light to read over the holiday weekend. Wow. It was anything but. More graphically violent than I am used to (I prefer the cozy mystery genre with minimal blood and guts), but it worked here. The gave interesting insights to even the most minor characters and I was guessing almost until the end. I was not able to put this down and stayed up way past my bedtime to finish. I would love to read more about Ed and his adventures on the Chicago PD. The only thing I

would have liked that was missing was an epilogue to let us know how it all ended up. I thought the ending was a little too abrupt. Other than that, a winner and I plan to read more of this author's work.

I gave this 3 stars because the suspense in this story definitely kept me interested. The only reason I withheld 2 stars was I felt the story was incomplete at the end. I needed an epilogue to have that emotional resolution with everything that happened with his career. The main character basically went beyond the call of duty to prove himself for his job but the story just ended without finding out what his boss thought, if there was an official apology or....well I don't want to give the story away. Just wish the author had given us an after thought for what happened in the main character career after everything that happened. Hey, it's still a great thriller though!

Rick Reed's take on a sociopathic serial killer who finds his victims in m2m hookup web sites will make one think twice about chatting someone up. These types of murders are happening frequently all around us, but what makes this read so gripping is getting inside the mind of the twisted killer. He is not a subject one can pity or empathize. He is pure evil. He is the bad seed!! I loved the novel and look forward to reading more of Reed's tales.

Rick R. Reed has concocted a mystery/horror/suspense tale as only an artist could do. Not only is the story a major page-turner, but the reader comes to know the characters as three dimensional human beings -- and one tends to care about them. I read at least one book of mystery fiction per month. I tend to enjoy the most those works which shed light on a certain culture or role: being Amish, being a guidance counselor, being a maid, being an Irish inn-keeper, being a journalist, etc. In recent years writers such as John Morgan Wilson, Mark Richard Zubro, and RD Zimmerman have invited readers into the gay community with all of its wonderful and interesting attributes, as well as its demonic dimensions. I believe Reed has done the finest work, however, in the cause and effect within human relationships. Also, the reader cares about the characters, and flinches at some of the events which have formed their experiences. Definitely, this is not a "cozy." A reader does not have to be gay, however, to share in this story, any more than one needs to be Catholic to understand THE DIVINE CODE. The author develops the meaning of psychosis, displays the technology which is such a great influence in our current culture, and empathetically focuses on the effect of life minus loving relationships. As well he develops a budding relationship which adds an element of hope to the story, as well as an invitation to further stories flowing from this love. As a Chicagoan I was excited about the use of so many places in the story which are only blocks from my home. He

so well describes these settings, however, that one could live in Newcomerstown, Ohio or Rim-of-the-World, California and still share in the adventure with the same high interest. Again, this is an artist who has developed this tome. I have already recommended this story to my friends. I want to encourage any mystery buff to explore this novel. Thomas P. Hull, Chicago

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