



2018

Dark Roads: Bloodline

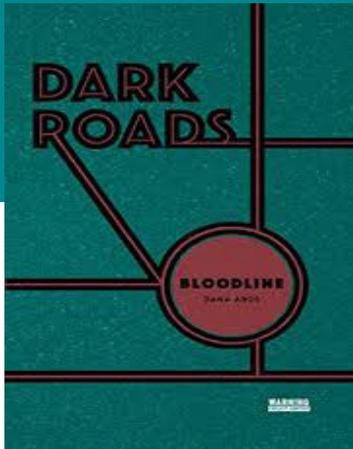
Kenny Deem

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Book Review

Dark Roads: Bloodline

You, the reader, are John “Juan” Carlos Garcia and must decide how to best navigate the crushing weight of your mental illness and the pressure of being gay in a severely homophobic community and family. Every day, things get to seem worse and each decision you make seems to have more severe consequences. The author leaves the decisions up to you. At the end of each chapter, you turn to the specified page that corresponds to the decision you make, allowing you to step into John’s shoes.

Writing the book in the second person and formatting it to allow the reader to make decisions for the main character makes the story much more impactful than it would be by more traditional means. However, this format is not without its drawbacks. Allowing for a wide variety of potential paths the plot could take artificially increases the book’s length dramatically. As a result, the plot and characters are left underdeveloped and themes and ideas are left unexplored. The primary theme of the story—a gay teenager’s struggle for community, family, and self-acceptance—is openly and explicitly treated in an emotionally-charged way. Unfortunately, the very tool used to make it so compelling also stands in the way of it being a more nuanced commentary.

*Contains moderate language, moderate violence, and mild sexual content.

Author

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Illustrator

Reviewer

Kenny Deem

Rating

Dependable

Level

Young Adult

Pages

208

Year

2017

Publisher

EPIC Press

ISBN

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