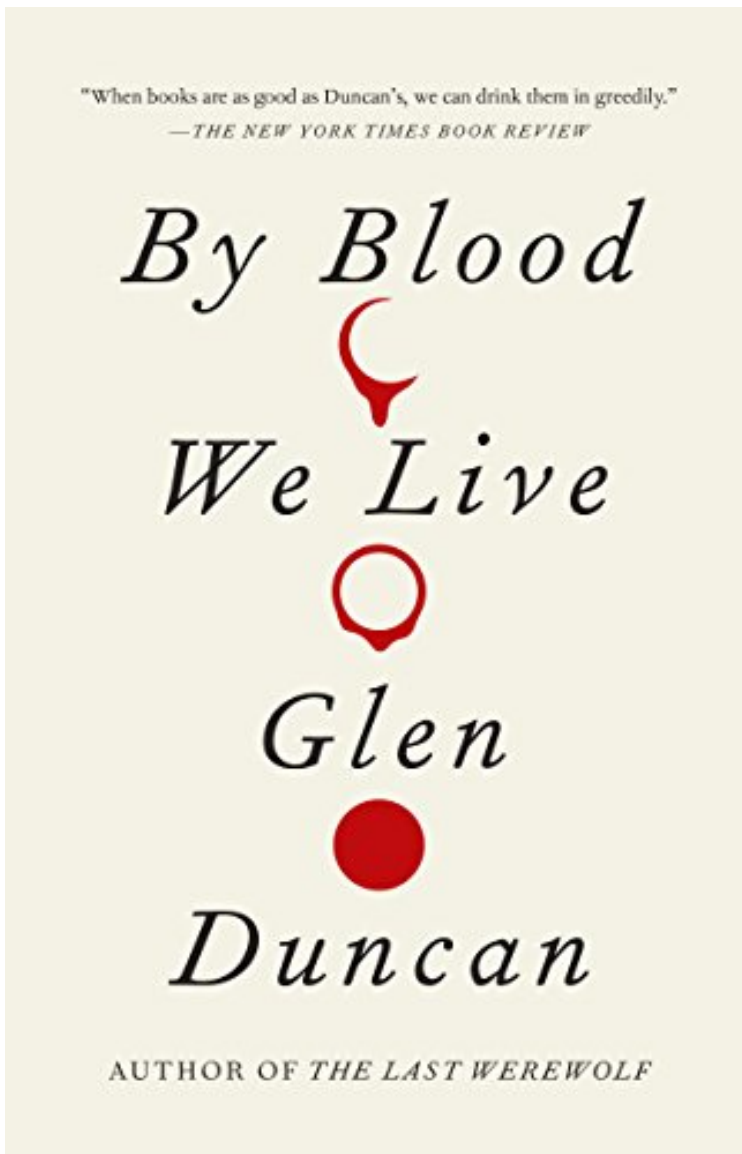


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By Blood We Live



Par Glen Duncan
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThe final battle between werewolves and vampires has an unexpected twist: love. With twenty thousand years under his belt, Remshi is the oldest vampire in existence. He is searching for the werewolf named Talulla, whohaunts his dreams as a memory from his ancient past.But he is not the only one seeking Talulla: She is being hunted by the Militi Christi, a fanatical Christian cult hell-bent on wiping out werewolves and vampires alike. Inexplicably pulled toward one another, and with no other choice, Remshi and Talulla must join forces to protect their families, fulfill an ancient prophecy and - through a love that should be impossible - ensure the survival of their species.Extrait1RemshiIts better to kill people at the end of their psychology. They have nothing left to offer themselves or the world.Not that I should have been

killing anyone just then. Having fed less than twenty hours ago I should have woken slaked and mellow, indifferent to blood for at least a week. Instead Id woken in a state of not to put too fine a point on it complete fucking pandemonium. Voices in the head (repeating, God only knew why, He lied in every word... He lied in every word...), earthquake in the heart, Sartrean nausea in the soul and thirst such as I hadnt felt in centuries. Not the domesticated version, to be fobbed off with a half-dozen pouches from the fridge. No. This was The Lash, old school, non-negotiable, the red chorus that deafened the capillaries with its single moronic imperative: GET LIVING BLOOD NOW, OR DIE. Traumatically baffling though all this was it wasnt the main mystery. The main mystery was the dream Id had. Do not start with a murder. Do not start with a dream. I know. But my defence is two-pronged: One, Im a murderer. Two, the dream was a colossal anomaly. Not the content. Just the fact of it. I dont, you see, dream. At all. Ever. Not since Vali died. And that was a long, long time ago. No chance to consider that now, however. The thirsts virtue is that next to the need to satisfy it everything else becomes laughably secondary. It gives you, as would a gun pointed at your head, focus. So here I was. The house of Randolph Moyser, pornographer, was, not surprisingly, the pornographers house: Milanese sofas in cream leather, jade side tables, cowhide rugs, chandeliers, planes of carpet the colour of Bahamian sand, mirrors it wouldve needed a crane to hang. Id chosen it for its location, a mile northwest of Malibu Springs, high on an unoverlooked hill with pinewoods cover on the eastern side to within fifty yards of the ground floor terrace, and on the west uninhabited scrub all the way to the nearest neighbours tree line a quarter of a mile away. I say chosen, but thats not true. The Lash applies suave guidance, finds the ethers invisible vectors and drifts, the spaces in space that lead to fulfilment. The bloods dialogue yours and theirs (or rather mine and yours) starts before youve quite set eyes on each other. Like a love story. Like the moments just before I first saw Vali, seventeen thousand years ago. (Yes, you read that right.) I left the car in a lay-by on the country road and walked up through the woods. Randolph, known in the industry as E. Wrecked (and known to me ever since a production company I own made a documentary about him), was at the end of his psychology. Hed just turned fifty-eight, and for more than two decades had been rich enough for it not to matter what he looked like. Letting himself go, physically, had been part of the psychology: there mustnt be the slightest chance that the twenty-two-year-old on her knees with his cock in her mouth could possibly want to be on her knees with his cock in her mouth. Therefore unkempt toenails. Therefore waxy belly and flaccid bubs. Therefore yawning pores. It was quite something to be able to go bald not only without anxiety, but with satisfaction. Yet his psychology had betrayed him. His psychology had said that if he got enough women to do things they didnt want to do no force (force was cheating), just persuasion, seduction, money, psychology then the great burning formless question of his being would be answered. He didnt know where this equation had come from that the degradation of women was the doorway to revelation only that it was his and that it was beyond contradiction or doubt. He hadnt shirked it. After thirty-five years in the business there wasnt much he could think of that a woman wouldnt want to do that he hadnt got a woman to do. But his psychology had lied. His psychology had been like the Devil, full of false promises. Leaving aside the problem of the small number of women who, for whatever reason, wanted to do all the things all the other women didnt (in their performances you could glimpse impatience or irritation that they werent degrading themselves enough, a frantic desperation at the limits), leaving aside this small number of women who were useless to his psychology (and who were frankly ruining the industry for everyone else), leaving these aside, the fundamental problem didnt alter: degrading women or getting women to degrade themselves did not, in fact, answer the burning formless question of his being. It was Eve biting into the apple to discover only that it was an apple and she could bite into it. His psychology had no other methods on offer. His psychology was a one-trick pony, and the trick had failed, every time. Randolph, or E., wasnt alone. His gofer was on the phone in the downstairs office, and two sharp-kneed escorts in bikinis and strappy stilettos were drinking mojitos by the opalescent moon-pool. Randolph was in one of the upstairs bedrooms (Corinthian pillars, a fireplace like a wedding cake) shouting at his web manager about problems with the recently launched site, [imsorrydaddy.com](#). His production company was facing legal action from a Christian counselling service who courtesy of domain registration meltdown had a site of the same name devoted to reconciling rebellious daughters with their churchgoing fathers. I dont fucking care what fucking Anthony fucking told you, he was saying, while examining a possibly cancerous mole on his Tiresian chest. Im telling you we get those assholes to change the name. What? No, [imsorrymommy.com](#) isnt a viable fucking alternative. Jesus fucking Christ. Why doesnt any? What the fuck? He was having the moment of disbelief. That he hadnt seen or heard me come in. But there I was. His mouth was open, breath a hot mix of Bookers Bourbon and a meat-packed bowel. Youre on CCTV, Randolph said. I didnt contradict

him, though it had taken me less than a minute to disable the system. I didnt speak at all. There was nothing for me to say. At this moment there never is. He found himself on his back on the floor, with me on top of him. He didnt know how that had happened. It was an awful magic, the blur, the compression, the two statesupright/on the floorwith no causal apparatus between them. And of course he knew what I was. Humans always do, when the time comes. Vampire. Vampires. In spite of governments and Christmas and Microsoft. Well, Ill be. When their time comes theres always a disinterested part of them ravished by such things being real after all. They think: Damn, this wouldve made quite a difference to my life. It wouldnt, in Randolfs case, but there was no point going into it with him.I hoofed him in the balls and broke his left arm.The last moment before the bite is like the last moment before coming: stopped time and shrugged-off space, an instant of seeing how it is for God. Its why people in sexual extremis say Oh, God. Its not a cry to the Divine, its a recognition of their own divinity. I was very aware of my mouth open, my heartbeat in my teeth, the obscene ease with which I held him, the room like a frozen grin around us, and beyond it the Californian night and the orange blossom and the desert and the sprawling dark continents indifferent consciousness gathering to a kind of Meaning. All Randolfs details huddled in him like a terrified village crammed inside its church. This is what happens: the particulars gather, exude their fraught vibe like an odour and before you bite, before you drink, you get an inkling of what its going to give you, the base notes, the exploded secrets, the finish. All your victims decisions and imprecisions and crimes and losses gather and singin this momentof the tiny and unique ways in which this life will, once youve drunk it down, change you.He was trying to say something, but my hand around his throat reduced it to abortive sibilants and fricatives. He was struggling, I suppose, but he might as well have been a sack of oatmeal for all the good it did him. I shifted my grip to cover his mouth, lay fully on top of him, looked him in the eyes, oncethen sank my fangs into his throat.Dark and sweet and total. Surrender like the guillotines drop. The universe comes in through those eye-teeth as it does to a suckling babe through the nipples of its mother. You want more, you want it all. So you take more, you take it all. Randolfs life.If Id got a woman to kill her own child while I fucked her in the assThis was one of his last thoughts, unfortunately. It was unavoidable, once he knew he was dying. In the wake of every failure his psychology had said it was his fault, he hadnt gone far enough, and hed thought that would be about as far as you could possibly go. Only hed never gone that far, and now he was dying this thought along with others (his mothers powdery face, the Jersey tenement stoop, the hot flank of a big dog that had knocked him down when he was small, a million TV fragments and hoarding slogans and womens faces spattered with come) flashed brief and vivid against the wall of fear. Hed thought hed known fear. But I showed him the end of his psychologyworse even than a handful of dustand he realised hed never known fear before.You dont let the heart stop. Anne Rice got that right. But I know when there are a dozen beats left. Ten. Six. Three. Two... Naturally you push it. Naturally the last draughts are precious, carry the yolky taste of the souls torn caul, the residue of its confused farewell. The swallowed life fans out in your blood, exhales its wisdoms and losses, its poignant incidentals that enlarge you, force you to find shelf-space in the groaning stacks. Your hearts library, whether you like it or not, expands. I used to see it as a woeful irony that murdering humans increased my love for humanity. Now I accept it, drink, make room, get bigger, love them, go my ways. Because someone has to bear witness, the voice of my maker had said, long ago, in the darkness of the cave.I sucked hard, went wholly seducedwent wantonly into the drink. If the soul was immortal it left its memories behind in the blood, shed consciousness and passed on, naked and pure, to the realm beyond image and word, to be wrangled over by God and the Devil, or to reach final dissolution in the void. But I didnt need the soul. Only the blood. Always and always and always the blood. I drank and felt the rhythm of the drinking in my eyelids and fingertips and nipples and feet. I drank and swam down into Randolfs goodbye pulse, softened into the beat, systole, diastole, systole, diastole, at last lost myself, went, for a time, out of time.But the sixth sense hauls you back. I stopped with two heartbeats left. Watched his eyes flutter, observed the last moments. His psychology had brought him all the way to death then turned and left him with nothing. Now he was going, desperate, terrified, unready, like the last grains of sand sucked through the hourglasss dainty midriff. Gone.Randolfs life had woken the other lives in me and my heart was a rose of fire. Cells bloomed, the song of my dead throbbed in the tissues. The universes half-revealed Meaning surrounded me. The busy clues to the grand architecture that was like an irresistible enigmatic smile.I stood up, hilariously strong, a glut of sly power in the shoulders, the thighs. You forgot how good it was. You forgot it was everything. You forgot it took possession from soles to scalp, refreshed fingerprints, eyelashes, pubes, the queer little papillae of the tongue. You forgot it let Meaning bleed back in like colour returning to a monochrome world. You forgot it was something perfect, and in the

way of perfect things the pole-vaulters flawless clearance, for example, the skaters nailed triple salchow made you want to laugh. I might have laughed, too, had the memory of the dream not suddenly flashed and fractured me again, had He lied in every word not buzzed like a wasp in my ear then whizzed away, leaving behind in me a feeling of knowing that I knew something without knowing what it was. Downstairs, the gofer dropped ice cubes into a glass. I took a last look at Randolphs shocked face (his formidable head was the centre of an expanding Rorschach butterfly of blood), wished, briefly, that I could always take the lousy ones, pick the human race clean of its wretches like oxpeckers rid Cape buffalo of their parasites, then I leaped across the room to the window, slid it open and jumped. One of the angular escorts looked up, thought, Jesus that was some fucking... Do eagles fly at night? No, thats... thats owls. Anyway, whatever...

2 Stunned and symphonic with new blood, I retraced my steps through the woods to the car, a humble Mitsubishi (the trophy vehicles went years ago, novelty exhausted; I regretted it just then, remembering the lurch and grip of the bronze 68 Camaro, its smell of gasoline and vinyl and the stoned end of the decade, Jimi on the eight-track) and within minutes was heading east on the 101. The moment rolling darkness and the empty LA hills, me wide-eyed and stinking rich with stolen life needed music (O Fortuna from Orffs Carmina Burana and Guns N Roses Welcome to the Jungle both sprang to mind), or rather, it would have needed music, had not the quenched thirst left me at dreadful liberty to consider the madness of everything that had happened since I'd opened my eyes in the vault less than three hours ago. The inexplicable thirst. He lied in every word. The dream. Oh, yes. While I'd slept. As opposed to the flashbacks and fugues my head goes in for when I'm awake. A dream? Impossible. Impossible. It might not seem much to you, but I have to repeat: I don't dream. Categorically: I do not dream. Not since... Not since you were very young. Not since

Vali died... Sadness swelled, suddenly and I knew if I let myself I'd start crying. (I'd been prone to little weeps, of late. You're a bit fragile, Fluff, Justine had said, not long ago, having discovered me in tears in front of a TV movie starring Lindsay Wagner dying of leukaemia...) I didn't dream. I did not dream. But there it was. Last night, I'd dreamed. In the dream I was walking barefoot on an empty beach. It was twilight and the sea was black. There were a few lonely stars in the sky, as if the bulk of the constellations had been swept away. I was walking towards... Towards what? Revue de presse Reading a book is a dangerous thing, says Remshi, the protagonist of *By Blood We Live* . . . [And] *By Blood We Live* really does feel sort of dangerous, in a way that genre horror almost never does . . . When books are as good as Duncans, we can drink them in greedily, as Remshi does, and still live with ourselves. Terrence Rafferty, *New York Times Book* Glen Duncan is back at the top of his game with *By Blood We Live* . . . [The novel] elevates the lurid pleasures of a straightforward, if unconventional, horror story by means of Duncans elegant, even rapturous prose and his knowledge of art and literature . . . Stylish. *Washington Post* Duncans werewolf trilogy is vigorous, funny, sexy and necessary at a time when so much genre fiction is drowning in melancholy vampires and self-serious teen dystopias. The books share a great deal more DNA with James Bond and the John Landis classic *An American Werewolf in London*. Kirkus s Where was an educated, mature adult supposed to turn for his own vampires v. werewolves fix? Enter Glen Duncan . . . The series offer[s] two rarified qualities that the Gothic genre often lacks: exquisite writing and a refined literary sensibility.

Richard Times-Dispatch *By Blood We Live* is a page-turner with heft. A smart, fast yet thoughtful read. There are plenty of plot twists if that is what you are after, but much of the fun is in the way it applies literary tricks to genre tropes. That and the bone-crunching and skin-tingling physicality of the writing . . . Storytelling to chill the blood. *Sunday Herald (Scotland)* Once more, Duncans elegant, striking prose is the star in his enthralling conclusion to the *Last Werewolf* trilogy . . . There are plenty of battles, blood, and sexy escapades; but the real treat continues to be Duncans beautifully twisted way with language and the profound thesis he poses about humanity. Defiant and dramatic to the last, Duncan wraps up his finale with a flourish. Booklist