



# Bloodline

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Reviewer:

[Valerie Coghlan](#) [3]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Set in 7th-century Britain, **Bloodline** is the story of a quest for family, identity and love. Essa, a boy on the cusp of manhood, has at the conclusion of this gripping narrative, gained a greater knowledge of his parentage, his place in his society, his understanding of his unusual powers and eventually, the girl he cares about. His rite-de-passage is, however, achieved only by considerable mental and physical endurance throughout an arduous and dangerous journey and a culminating bloody battle.

Moran writes with vigour and clarity; her descriptions of the landscapes through which Essa passes and the settlements in which he lives or lodges are well-realised, evoking for the reader a great sense of the habitations and life of the people of Britain, also on the cusp of change, as the older religions are put aside and Christianity begins to spread. In fact, the multifaith and multi-ethnic dimensions of the story may resonate with present-day readers; in particular Essa's friendship with Wulf, the son of a king who is the enemy of his kind, and the resulting struggle between loyalty to his lord and to his friend has many parallels. The cruelty and ultimate pointlessness of the wars waged by opposing tribal groupings may also resonate with Moran's readers, especially in the brutality of a battle which leaves neither side much better off.

While one can understand Moran's desire not to spoil a good story, her note at the end of the narrative explaining something of its setting and historical background might have been more useful at the beginning for those like me whose knowledge of the period is somewhat sketchy. This, however, is a small point; her research appears to be thorough and well-translated into a gripping debut novel.

Running Order:

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