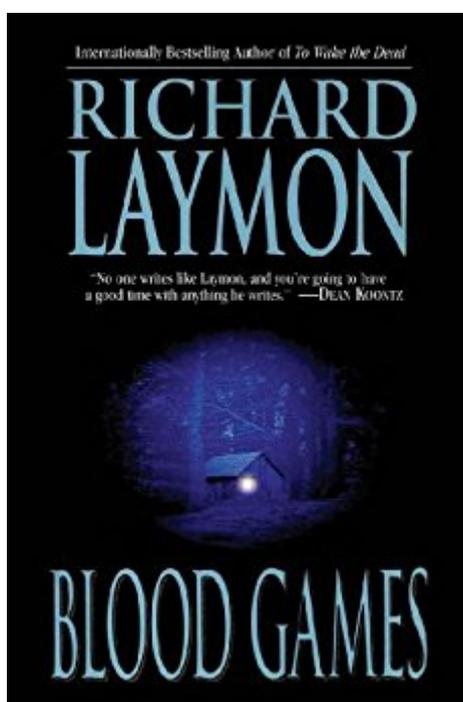


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Blood Games



Synopsis

They meet for one week every year, five young women, best friends since college, in search of fun and thrills. Each year they choose a different place for their reunion. This year it's Helen's choice, and she chose the Totem Pole Lodge. Bad choice. The Totem Pole Lodge is a deserted resort hotel deep in the woods with a gory, shocking past. Helen has a macabre streak and she can't wait to tell her friends all about what happened at the lodge and why it's now abandoned. But Helen and the others are in for a nasty surprise. The resort isn't quite as deserted as they think. And not all the gruesome events at the Totem Pole Lodge are in its past. The worst are still to come...

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Customer Reviews

Different people read Richard Laymon for different reasons, but I read him because he combines those bastions of the horror genre, sex and violence, with a sense of fun that is infectious, making his novels more pleasurable than most other horror. Of the three novels I've read (the other two are *Island* and *In the Dark*), *Blood Games* is the least of the bunch, but it is also the one which seems to be the most typically Laymonesque, as if he had cranked up the output on all the things for which he is known. One of the best known aspects of his work (whether it is appreciated depends upon the

individual reader) is that his female characters have a tendency to disrobe early and often. After all, why else would Blood Games feature five lead female characters, if not to have them be comfortably nude with each other? (In fact, they first meet as a group in a dormitory shower, with one of them videotaping the rest.) This is a major aspect of the novel, with many loving descriptions of exposed, swaying breasts, and wet, clingy clothing showing that Laymon is interested in raising more than just his reader's heart rate. It certainly stretches the suspension of disbelief, but I believe that Laymon is merely following a popular novelist's maxim of writing the book he would like to read. But there's also enough suspense to carry over those readers who have had their fill of vivid descriptions of feminine anatomy. Actually, Blood Games is mostly suspense, with very few nasty events occurring, but their potential everpresent. Five college friends -- known for their rowdy escapades back in the day -- gather for annual reunions at one's choice of location, in order to continue their adventures.

Let me first state that I am a fan of the horror genre; I love thrillers, horror, all of it. Every blood-drenched word. Richard Laymon has never even spoken to a woman. Never, not in his entire life has he ever even observed how women interact with each other. I would bet he is an only child. His portrayal of five adventure-seeking women is plastic and unbelievable. These are professional women, a model, a film major who records everything for posterity and works at Universal, a PE teacher, an English major with a PhD in Chaucer and a married woman with a college degree and an inheritance. None of them have been in prison or the military or in any other occupation to give them the skills to do what they decide to do after one of their numbers is killed by a "hillbilly" in the woods of Vermont. Do they spend time really searching for their lost friend? No. Do they spend time looking for the lost car keys, so they can get the heck out of there? No. Instead, they hike off into the woods convinced that Helen was kidnapped. When they are directed back to the lodge and do find Helen, naked, slaughtered with a knife still stuck in her belly do they find the missing car keys and leave? No. Do they put their clothing back on and hike out of the woods? No. They decide to hunt down the killer of Helen and "gut the bastard." For all these women know, the woods are teeming with backwoods people. What, do they plan to kill them all? Not believable, not on any level. I am from a fairly street-smart, rough, up-bringing. I just don't buy a fashion model and an assistant film director, along with a Chaucer major suddenly getting a rabid desire to kill everyone in sight. None of them have enough testosterone to do the job.

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