



## By Blood

*Tracy Banghart*

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## **By Blood** Tracy Banghart

For 17-year-old Emma Wong, spending a summer in England should be a dream come true. Gorgeous scenery? Check. Lots of hot guys with accents? Yes, please.

Throw in an estranged mom, annoying new stepdad, and drooling baby half-brother, and it's a disaster even her favorite cherry red leather jacket can't fix. Even worse, there's (hot) live-in research assistant Josh to contend with. The only thing more embarrassing than drunk-kissing him hours after they meet? Knowing he'll be witness to her family's dysfunction all. summer. long.

But when Emma meets a mysterious girl who happens to be a Druid, her vacation suddenly promises to be far more intriguing than she anticipated. Powerful rituals, new friends, an intoxicating sense of freedom...and Simon, the sexy foreign stranger she was hoping for. It's all a perfect distraction from dirty diapers and awkward family dinners.

Trouble is, intriguing doesn't often mean simple. And Emma is about to discover just how *not simple* her life really is.

*By Blood* is a novel about the ways that blood can bind us to others - or tear us apart.

## **By Blood Details**

Date : Published June 2013 (first published February 18th 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Tracy Banghart

Format : Kindle Edition 368 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Paranormal, Young Adult, Romance, Paranormal Romance

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## From Reader Review By Blood for online ebook

### David says

Tracy Banghart's novel, *By Blood*, is an expertly crafted YA contemporary that delivers on multiple levels. Fully drawn characters, vivid descriptions, sharp dialogue, skillful plotting, pacing and tension are among just a few of this novel's attributes. At the center of the story is seventeen-year-old Emma Wong, herself a study in contrast and conflict, an American high school student forced to spend the summer in Oxford, England, alongside her mother—a seemingly aloof academic, who both had an affair on Emma's father (a man Emma loves dearly) and then left him to remarry—her mother's oblivious new husband and this couple's new baby (who Emma's mother appears to regard as her only child). Suddenly, Emma finds herself stranded in a foreign country with no room to breathe in the house they're all sharing and half the time burdened with taking care of a baby she openly detests. Looking for escape, Emma embraces a circle of new friends, a group more than willing to take in a stray, only to find they are dabbling with ancient rituals that, at first, appear to evoke something magical but later start to draw the group into a potentially sinister cult-like dynamic. Add to this mix, Emma's dilemma as she tries to determine whether to return the affections of one, both or neither of two young men vying for her attention, and you find yourself immersed in Emma's world as she tries to navigate her way through late adolescence in a time and place where nothing is familiar or reliable. Told in a voice reflecting Emma's constantly shifting inner feelings—at times angry, at times hilarious, and at others lost—*By Blood* makes for a fully-engaging and wonderfully unique YA novel the reader won't soon forget.

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### Tee loves Kyle Jacobson says

Druids..... Druids.... Calling all Druid Lovers.....

Oh man I loved this book so much! Holy Druids I love stories with druids history in it. I love England and hope to one day go there for a few weeks. this book caught me by surprise because it had so many elements to it but they flowed flawlessly that the story flowed so smoothly I was at the end of the book and wanting no needing more because I did not want it to end. Then I remembered I would not have to wait long because I am on the tour and decided to read both books. So I loaded up my kindle and started on the second book straight away.

But I am getting ahead of myself and I need to review book one first. So here it goes.....

17 Year old Emma Wong is going to be spending the summer with her mother and step father and baby brother. Her mother is a professor and she has little time for Emma because she has her classes and her baby to deal with so Emma is by herself. But Emma has plans and she plans on enjoying the sights and sounds and life of Oxford. She is also going to enjoy the hot accented guys that are around her. She has one in mind her mother's research assistant Josh. They drunkenly kiss and man oh man is he hot as hell.

While hanging out Emma soon becomes friends with a mysterious girl who is a Druid and introduces Emma to the Druid rituals. Soon Emma is involved with powerful rituals, new friends that she is enjoying, and freedom. She has also met another hot guy Simon and soon she is torn between who she wants. Will it Josh or will it be Simon?

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## Beth says

Emma quickly discovers that her life is not as it appears. To find happiness Emma must choose to accept life changes and for a 17 year old this comes with lots of anxiety which makes for a very entertaining plot.

*By Blood* is a family drama with a side of paranormal. I found this story quite enjoyable. It precariously balances on the line of maybe its paranormal...but will keep you guessing well after it ends. The family situation is surprising and not quite what you expected. There is a fun romantic triangle that offer a temptation of complicated love... Making *By Blood* a completely enjoyable story.

I received this ARC copy of *By Blood* from Tracy E. Banghart in exchange for a honest review. This book is set for publication February 17, 2014.

Written by: Tracy E. Banghart

Series: By Blood

Sequence in Series: 1

Page count: 368 pages

Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Publication Date: June 15, 2013

ISBN-10: 1490302484

ISBN-13: 978-1490302485

Rating: 3.5 Stars

Age Recommendation: Teen +

Learn more at: [Tracy E. Banghart's Website](#)

Find this book on: [Amazon](#) | [Barnes & Noble](#)

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## Books A-Brewin' says

I received an e-copy of this book for a book tour in exchange for an honest review.

This was one of the first book tours I joined when I first started blogging. The premise was intriguing and unique. I had never read anything that referenced Druid practices nor had I read anything that had an air of psychological studies that completely enthralled me as a Psychology major.

Emma is being shipped off for the summer away from her friends and the father she is extremely close to in favor of spending time with her mother who left her father for another man and had saw fit to create a whole new family without her. The animosity Emma carries from the airplane to the quaint home she will now share with her absent mother, her mother's new family, and an attractive research assistant to her new

stepfather, is incredibly thick and suffocating.

Needing an escape, Emma starts exploring her new surroundings in fantastic England. Along the way she meets an odd but sweet girl, named Ash, who introduces Emma to a new world of Druid rituals and a togetherness she never imagined possible. Among Ash's friends is the dark and mysterious, Simon, who Emma feels inexplicably drawn to from the very start.

As Emma dives further into the depths of her Druid family, she starts to wonder if Simon truly is as wonderful as he seems, or if the love of her life may just be spending the summer under the same roof as her. Josh or Simon? Welcome to the wonderful world of love triangles!

I didn't know what to expect when I started reading *By Blood*. I thought there would be more mystical magic as is usual in paranormal reads, but what I got was more of a mystery. What is real? What is only in Emma and her friends' minds? It was surprising how much psychology was found in the book instead of the paranormal being the main focal point. I was pleasantly surprised.

What I had issue with was Emma's boy hopping. She ultimately danced between Josh and Simon as is usual in a love triangle. But there were also other points in which she flirted and delighted in the company of others. I understand that she was struggling with her family dysfunction and was looking for some sort of comfort in any arms she could find, but that left me feeling like any sort of connection she feels with the two main male characters was false. When something went wrong with Josh, Simon was the one she was fawning over and vice versa. I have never liked girls that used men in that manner. My feelings for Emma were lacking, but my love for preppy and studious Josh made up for it a bit.

*By Blood* is the perfect mesh of ancient history and modern psychology. It causes its reader to question the reality of the paranormal as well as embracing the importance of family and having a strong support system. Sometimes the people one thinks care the least are actually the people who care the most.

Review Posted on: <http://www.ladybugliterature.blogspot...>

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### **Emily Anne says**

*By Blood* by Tracy E. Banghart was an extremely entertaining read, and I would definitely recommend the book to fans of Young Adult Paranormal. The story is one you will read in one sitting, and I will definitely get my hand on the sequel, *Moon Child*, sometime soon.

The main character, Emma, was fun to read about. She felt real, vivid, and she is in no way a wishy-washy character. Another one of my favorite characters was Josh, who I found sweet, and Emma's new friend, Ash. However, I did not like Simon, who I kind of hated from the start. I kind of wished Emma had the same feelings as me about him.

I also liked the family drama aspect in the novel. It is very relatable, and, as the author states in the interview below, both of the parents are alive. \*Whew\* Also, I found it more amusing than I should have that Emma called her brother Fermin "Vermin". I liked the way things turned out in the end.

Now, may I mention the setting? Oxford, England was an amazing place to set *By Blood*! I have always wanted to go to England... and it is England! Who couldn't love a book set there? I also feel that the author is

passionate about the setting, which brings much more life to the story and writing.

The only problem I had with this book is that sometimes Emma seemed a little too naive, especially about Simon. However, I know this was just a way to show she was flawed. That doesn't mean I didn't want to shake some reality into her sometimes. Fortunately for her, she continued to redeem herself with her bright personality.

The pacing was perfect, and kept me on my seat. The writing is mysterious, funny, scary, and an array of other type of tones. So, really, you will enjoy this book no matter what mood you are in. I would also call this a "quick and addicting read" so don't be afraid to pick it up! You will have it finished in no time. There are literally no boring parts.

Overall, I really enjoyed *By Blood* and would award it a shining 3.8 stars! It is an amazing read, and highly recommended by me. There is a great heroine, an adorable love interest, and great mystery/paranormal aspects. Also, I loved the dialogue and the way it flowed realistically and didn't seem forced. Go pick up this book!

-----3.8/5 Stars-----

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### **Jessica Figueroa says**

After her mother left her father for another man Emma just couldn't forgive her mother. Now she's being forced to go spend the summer with her mother, stepfather and stepbrother Vermin in England. Emma is less than thrilled but has no other choice to go. When she meets the very strange and interesting Ash, Ash invites her to join her with a group ceremony involving druids. It was innocent enough at first, but as time goes one things start to happen and the little cult doesn't seem as innocent as she was led to believe.

"Since I was a child I'd always wished my imagination had gotten it right, that the world wasn't as boring and sad and broken as it seemed. That's why I'd gone with Ash, why I'd joined the Grove."

The covers to both the book was enough to interest me to check out the books but when I read the description of the book it sealed the deal for me and I just had to check out this book. I loved that this book had lots of drama, mystery, twists and turns that kept me guessing. I thought this book was well written and I just couldn't stop reading once I've started. I really liked that Emma wasn't so stubborn as to keep her mother out of her life even if she was stuck in a place she didn't want to be. I liked that eventually she trusted her mother to open up. I liked all the characters and look forward to seeing more about the characters in the next book *Moon Child*. I really liked that the main character, Emma, how real she felt. She acted like most teens her age, she was somewhat mature but still whiney. This is the first time I come across a book with druids in it, and found myself enjoying it.

Overall I enjoyed this book and believe you lovely readers will too. Highly Recommend. 4.5 Stars.

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### **Morgan says**

*By Blood* is the story of a Pennsylvania girl spending her summer in Oxford England. The problem is, she's

there for all of the wrong reasons and with all of the wrong people.

Emma Wong would love to be living in England with her best friends Diana and Helen, or even her small-town sheriff father, but she is stuck with her mom - who left the family for another man; Dr. Mike - the mom-stealing man; and their love child - disgusting. To make matters worse, Josh is living in the house. He is just too hot and too sweet to be true, but hands off because he's Dr. Mike's assistant. Gross.

She's hating life, mostly because she's hating her mom, her lack of friends, her ruined plans, and her role as the live-in babysitter. A chance meeting with a sweet, free thinking girl names Ash gives her a reason to like England, especially when she brings Simon; dark, sexy and mysterious, into the picture. In order to spend more time with both Ash and Simon, and to get away from cheating moms and dirty diapers, Emma agrees to join The Grove, a modern day Druid group headed by Simon.

The Druid Rituals bring more companions into Emma's world, not to mention some great make-out sessions with Simon, and everything in the world seems right. But that feeling is short lived when Dr. Mike reveals a devastating family secret. Then, The Grove seems to be pulling real power from Mother Earth causing some members to try calling on more powerful forces during the rituals.

Emma spends a great deal of time trying to sort through her world, wondering if The Grove is more than she thought, if Josh was less hand-off than she realized, and if Simon is really more sinister than sexy after all.

The narrative to Emma's crazy summer is full of emotion and pulled together so neatly that the story moves fast, and you're always wanting to know what comes next. Emma is one of the best characters I've met in YA fiction because she is so animated, self-assured, and strong willed - she's just the kind of character you want to invest in. I'd love a follow up novel! What adventures await her?

From an adult stand-point - this book made me revisit some of my own moments from those dreaded teenage years...and boy were they fun! It's good to have those reminders. :)

Overall, I highly recommend this book!

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### **Jennifer Walkup says**

Loved this book!

A fun, fresh contemp with an amazing main character, cute love interests and wonderful setting. Summer abroad, what could be better! Such a fun book and some really cool imagery and mystery to keep you turning the pages. I didn't know exactly where this book was going, but I couldn't stop reading until I found out. Great read!

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### **Susanne Winnacker says**

Review to come! I LOVED this book!

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## **Lauren (Northern Plunder) says**

**This review was first posted on Northern Plunder, if you want to see more reviews please click [here](#).**

I was fortunate enough to receive a copy of By Blood for part of a book tour hosted by Xpresso Book Tours, this will in no way effect my opinion on the book!

By Blood follows Emma Wong on her summer vacation in London, with the half of her family she isn't too fond of lately - her Mum, Vermin (baby half-brother) and Dr Mike (the new fella). Don't broken families suck? Luckily, my parents split when I was very young so whilst it probably effected me at the time, I didn't harbour any negative feelings towards either of them. Unluckily for Emma, she was old enough to witness her family get torn apart as her Mum left her and her Dad for this new man, and also to see how badly it effected her Dad too.

I feel that was worth mentioning because I remember reading the start of the book and feeling all this anger that Emma felt towards her Mum (especially when she got the cupboard room - boo hiss that sucks) and I highly doubt I would have felt that if the writing hadn't been as great as it, it has a lovely flow to it.

As mentioned in the blurb there is also another tenant in her family house - Josh. Not only is he hot, him and Emma click from day one, whether she wants to admit that to herself is a completely different story though and whilst I would like to say its frustrating when people don't recognise their own feelings, in this case it didn't bother me.

It still didn't bother me even when another guy was introduced on the scene - Simon - even if it did mean it now had one of those YA Love Triangles going on. This one I was happy to read about.

We're introduced to Simon after Emma meets a strange girl called Ash, who is part of a Grove that practise and follows Druid beliefs, interesting huh? Yes very.

I was thrilled to read about the Druid rituals (have you read the House of Night series and they perform the ritual asking and thanking the elements for strength and such? Yeah its similar to that but it adapts over time), how they effected Emma and the others, emotionally and physically, and how they adapted over time. It was really interesting and I'm afraid I can't really expand more than that because of spoilers. You have no idea how I wish I could.

Instead, lets focus on the boys. I really enjoyed the development of friend/relationships between Emma/Simon and Emma/Josh. First up Simon, \*squeals\*. So ahem whilst he might be drop dead gorgeous and British (represent~) is he all that he lives up to be? Is there more to his history with one of the other Grove girls? hehe. Oh yes Simon is pleasantly surprising. I can say that much. To me however, Josh is perfect. From day one. He does what he sees as the right things to do to help Emma out with her tense family situations and isn't the geeky assistant that Emma expected him to be.

As the story comes to a close, Emma learns a lot about herself, her family and the boys. It sucks that I can't really delve into these things too much for fear of giving them away, but her vacation in London is certainly an eye-opener for many parts of her life and its great to see just how much she evolves, and learns about herself from this trip.

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## pinK says

Wow! This book is absolutely an amazing good time! Emma is such an interesting and easy to relate to character, struggling with her new family after her mother leaves her father and creates a new family with her new husband. As a child of divorce, this was really easy for me to get into. I could feel Emma's pain as she dealt with "Vermin" (Fermin, her new half brother).

I can't imagine how awkward it would be to not only try to get used to your new family, but to get used to your new family in a new country? None of the comforts of your old family around, just new places, new people and new family. Emma's inner strength was amazing, but she still fell victim to a very interesting "cult".

Now, quite honestly, I figured out the twist fairly quickly into the book, but part of me really didn't think that was the way it was going to end. I was really hoping the "bad guy" had some sense of ethics and that I was worrying over nothing, but WOW! Talk about a psychological thrill!

This book is a perfect example of what can happen when someone with too much knowledge uses it in unethical and downright evil ways. Book two? Here I come!

Note: I received a free copy of this book for honest review.

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## Jess at Such a Novel Idea says

For this review and more, visit Such A Novel Idea.

This was my first book about Druids. In fact, I had to do a Google Search when I first came across the book just to find out what they were. If you don't know, here's a quick blub:

*The Druids were priests who carried out religious rituals in Iron Age Britain and France. The Romans, who visited and later conquered France and Britain, met Druids and wrote about their beliefs and rites. Although these writings may not always have been completely truthful, it is clear that the Druids were an important group of people in many Iron Age societies. A little is also known about the Druid's beliefs and rituals, including the importance of mistletoe. Archaeologists rarely find direct evidence for priests in the Iron Age. But they often find evidence for religious rites and sacrifices and many of these were probably carried out by Druids.*

*There are no pictures of Druids - what did they look like? Did they wear special clothes or were they dressed the same as other Iron Age people? Some archaeologists have argued that special headdresses or crowns such as that found on the head of the Deal Warrior may have been worn by some priests or Druids.*

*Modern Druids have no direct connection to the Druids of the Iron Age. Many of our popular ideas about the Druids are based on the misunderstandings and misconceptions of scholars 200 years ago. These ideas have been superceded by later study and discoveries. In particular,*

*there is no link between the Iron Age Druids and the people who built and worshipped at Stonehenge, Wiltshire. This ancient monument was part of a religion that ended before the Iron Age began.* - **British Museum Website**

One of the theories about Stonehenge is that it was the work of the Druids. So, if anywhere, that is probably where you've heard of them. As you can tell, my academia is showing. \*Back to regularly scheduled reviewing\*

So, going in I was really excited/interested to see how this book would go. From the beginning we get a real good sense of who our main character, Emma, is. We get a great opportunity to get inside her head -- and it's a mess. She has lots of family issues (mom left dad after cheating, had a baby, hasn't seen her in years, and now has to spend all summer with her. In a foreign country). There are a lot of the details about Emma's life that speak right to your heart. Emotionally, she had me in her world, and near tears a couple of times. This dynamic was one powerful story line within the book, as she found out more about the family secrets and her parents. If this would have been the only thread of the story, without the Druids, I still probably would have read (and enjoyed it!)

Next there are the loooooove interests. Emma has two guys (of course). However, the love triangle was warranted in this situation. We needed that tension. Plus, one of the boys LIVES with her family, so obviously it is something the two want to avoid, for the sake of awkwardness. I really like how this part of the story played out. Both boys were unique and had a personality that drew me in. The other members of the Druids were interesting -- it was great to hear the slang of England (and try to figure out what it meant!) Although the parts described of Oxford brought up great imagery, I wanted MORE. Here we are in this beautiful country and I'm not getting a great sense about what it looks like. And the characters seem to take up more of the attention than the scenery.

Then there is the Druids. I loved how open the members of the Grove were about who they were and what they did. It was interesting to see why each member was drawn to the group. I also loved how something so innocent could be quickly turned into something sinister. And just as in the real world, once that innocent facade is stripped away, you are suddenly in something too deep to get out of. I felt like that is how the characters felt as the rituals progressed into something more sinister. After doing some research (yes, I'm a nerd), I found out that modern Druids still practice, and are not sinister, but focus on the commune with the earth and its elements. Interestingly enough, they also state in their "About" information that they are not a cult. This is a big part of the book, so it was cool to see how all that played into the story and how the book divulges from reality. (If YOU want to know more, visit the Druid Grove, Order of the Bards Ovates and Druids website.

There were definitely some twists and turns I saw coming, but I wasn't expecting everything to happen the way it did. The Druids parts were fascinating and when they started losing memory the book started to feel a

little like a psychological thriller. Overall, Tracy has some strong characters, emotions, and story lines happening in this book. You most definitely will NOT be bored. If you like paranormal or even contemporary, you will love this book!

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Rating: 4/5

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### **Shari Arnold says**

This book was awesome!!

When Emma is forced to spend the summer helping her mom she's not all that excited about it. But she is in Oxford after all. And I have to say I loved spending time with Emma in Oxford. And once she meets Ash there wasn't a moment I could put this book down. This is an exciting debut for Tracy Banghart. Between the romance, mystery and adventure I read this book in one sitting. Can't wait to read her next book!

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### **Tracy Banghart says**

I guess it's, like, a thing for authors to rate their own books? So...sure! Why not. :-)

I loved writing BY BLOOD...Emma is the kick-ass, fashionable girl I wish I'd been in high school...with two sexy boys I'd have loved to have fighting over me. She's flawed, full of "piss and vinegar" as my grandfather might have said, and she finds it all too easy to get into trouble, a talent I definitely had at her age.

The setting - Oxford, England - is also dear to my heart. I spent a year there attending graduate school and absolutely fell in love with its architecture, sense of history, and numerous pubs! Not to mention the largest bookstore in the world (supposedly). Oh, and that cookie Emma enjoys with Josh from the covered market? It's gooey deliciousness comes from a real place, Ben's Cookies, and I highly recommend the dark chocolate and ginger if you ever find yourself in town.

I hope you enjoy reading BY BLOOD as much as I enjoyed writing it! If you have any questions, please leave me a comment!

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### **Andrea says**

I got a copy in exchange for an honest review , so here it goes .

This book I would give a 3.5 stars . Only because the beginning was quite long and boring . Didn't grab my attention. Although I was pleasantly surprised on many details that made me enjoy the book. It had an interesting plot twist and plot in general that I really liked . The characters were developed very precisely and I fell in love with them . I felt connected in the story and it almost felt real . Nothing seemed forced , except for the beginning ( whiny girl at dinner ) . I have to say if there was a sequel I would be all up in that book and the companion novel I'm excited to read . With sweet surprises around the corner , tempting offers of love and friendship , you can't go wrong but u will be surprised .

