

Darkly Dreaming Dexter

Jeff Lindsay

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Crime Fiction

288 pages

Relating to a Killer

The dark and gruesome tale of Jeff Lindsay's *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* is truly one of brilliance. This bloody, gory novel keeps you hanging on the edge with its numerous plot twists and heart-racing storyline. In it, Lindsay takes you into the life of a psychopath who will test your morals and ethics on every page. However, a warning in advance of its gruesome and horrifying scenes which are truly not for the faint of heart, but if you are brave, fearless and love a good crime novel, it will be one that you treasure forever.

Dexter Morgan is just your average ordinary occupant of Miami, Florida who you would not give a second glance, but things are not always as they seem. The truth is that he lives a second life, a life of a serial killer driven by his dark passenger to kill. There's a catch though, he only kills other killers. Guided by his foster father from an early age, he learned how to channel his urges and use them for avenging the deaths of the innocent. Now grown up, he works as a blood spatter analyst, has a girlfriend, a relationship with his sister Debra, and kills when he needs. However, his life is turned upside down when the Tamiami butcher comes to wreck havoc on Miami and Dexter's personal life.

One's ability to relate to the main character is a key part of a novel that most writers have, but Lindsay is not one of these writers. Instead he created a character that many would not be able to relate to, a serial killer. I feel that when I read I like to try to get a sense of understanding of the character, but in this novel it was much harder. This is because everybody has emotions, and trying to understand a character like Dexter who does not is very difficult. However, it did make the book interesting because it did have a character that is much different than usual. For example, in the novel there is the constant motif of Dexter being a monster because he kills for a hobby. He even goes to say "I thought about the nice clothes that I always wore. Well of course I did. I took pride in being the best dressed monster in Dade County". This gives insight as well into his psychological state and showing that he truly believes a monster. From giving in to this he makes it a fact so that he can give himself an excuse for what he does. So while a character that you cannot understand may give the novel a weakness it can prop it up if the character is much different than a normal character, per say a monster.

However, even though people may not be able to relate to the character it does not mean they cannot relate to his life. In his everyday life he must deal with work, family, relationships, and secrets, which everybody deals with. An example from the novel can be when he is challenged with his relationship with his girlfriend Rita. It was going great for him until the passage "I kissed her...she pushed away. 'No'" she said." and ends up with Dexter thinking that the relationship was over and that he ruined it. Many people have gone through these moments, making it something that people can relate to and create interest in the novel, it is moments like this which give *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* its intensity and satisfaction.

Personally, I loved the book. However, to say if other high school students would want to read it is debatable. I can already tell you that if you don't like books that have murder and

violence, you will not be able to stand this. However, if you are a person who likes crime novels, homicide, and serial killer vigilantes I would recommend this book to you.

Jeffery Lindsay had written numerous novels before *Dexter* like his first *Tropical Depression a Novel of Suspense*. The novels he had written before were not as greatly popular and had not won any awards unlike *Dexter*, which were the Mystery readers international Macavity award and the Mystery Booksellers Association Dilys award. It was *Dexter* though that had set him apart from any other author.

Lindsay's highly praised novel is one that keeps the reader hooked and can show how much you can relate to a killer. So, if you are into vigilantism in a different more twisted way *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* is the book for you.