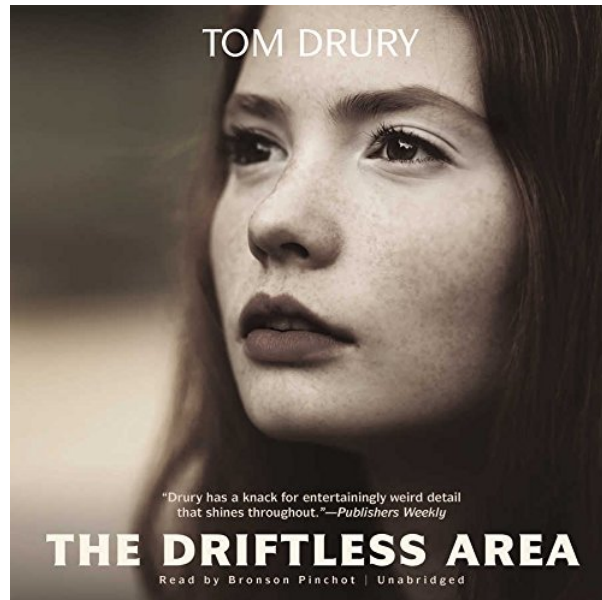
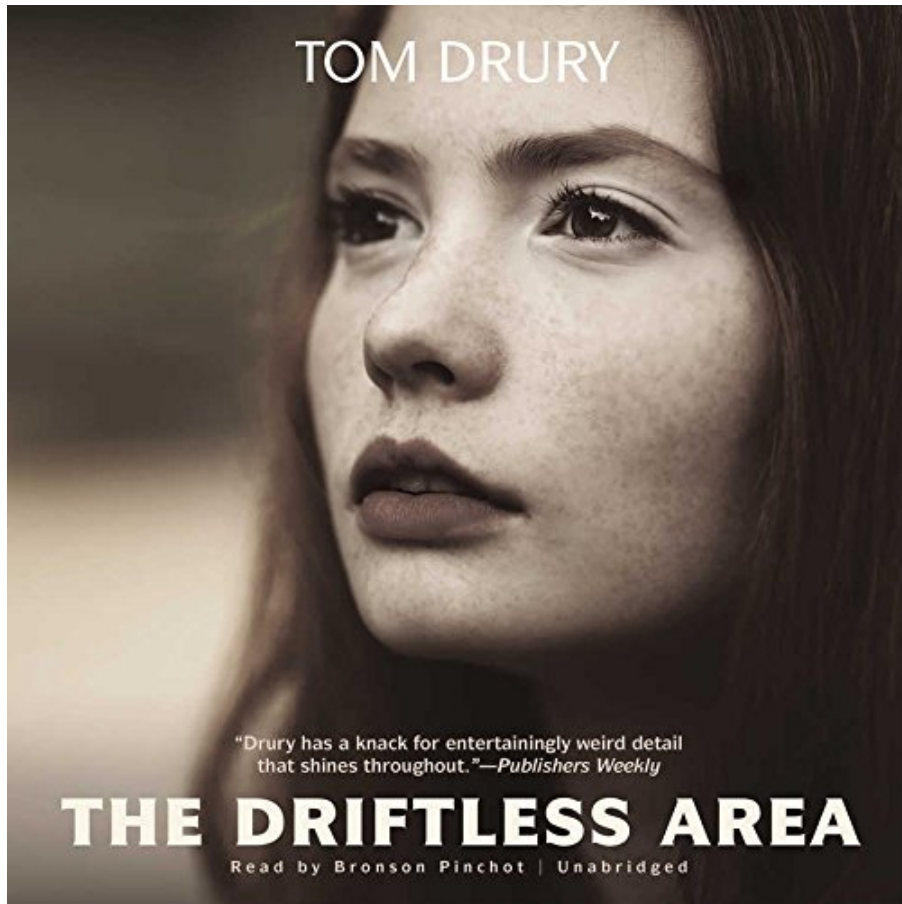


THE DRIFTLESS AREA BY TOM DRURY



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THE DRIFTLESS AREA BY TOM DRURY PDF

[Read by Bronson Pinchot]

From the award-winning author of *The End of Vandalism* comes *The Driftless Area*, a wry and sophisticated heist drama.

Set in the rugged region of the Midwest that gives the novel its title, *The Driftless Area* is the story of Pierre Hunter, a young bartender with unfailing optimism, a fondness for coin tricks, and an uncanny capacity for finding trouble. When he falls in love with the mysterious and isolated Stella Rosmarin, Pierre becomes the central player in a revenge drama he must unravel and bring to its shocking conclusion. Along the way he will liberate seventy-seven thousand dollars from a murderous thief, summon the resources that have eluded him all his life, and come to question the very meaning of chance and mortality.

Nothing is as it seems in *The Driftless Area* -- identities shift, violent secrets lie in wait, the future can cause the past, and love becomes a mission that can take you beyond this world. In its tender, cool irony, *The Driftless Area* recalls the best of neo-noir, and its cast of bona fide small-town eccentrics adrift in the American Midwest make for a clever and deeply pleasurable read from one of our most beloved authors.

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Most helpful customer reviews

18 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

Great, surreal, but short

By Brad Root

I'm a big fan of Drury. I think *The Black Brook* is one of the finest novels I've read, so I was really excited about *The Driftless Area*.

The Driftless Area seems to be a much shorter novel than his others, as if Drury was holding himself back from describing nearly twice as many small experiences the main character undoubtedly went through. His other novels tend to meander through his character's lives rather leisurely while this one almost feels like you're being shoved through the lives of a few characters that you would like to know better. This is actually probably a blessing, possibly Drury saving you from becoming attached to several key characters. I almost feel the need to thank him for this.

Driftless introduces a lot of surrealistic concepts that were mostly absent from his other works, if I recall correctly, but Drury handles them gracefully, if not beautifully. I have to commend him for that.

There's not much else I can say about the plot than is already given away by the summaries present on Amazon, as it stands I almost think they give away too much. I managed to avoid them for the most part (even on the inside jacket cover) and I would suggest the same for most others. As it stands the main plot of the novel doesn't begin until half way through (if not past the half way point) but, like Drury's other works, the plot of his novels isn't the driving aspect.

Drury achieves something in his novels that sometimes I feel only I can truly appreciate, and maybe that is his gift. He writes general life experiences in such an ironic, dry, but somewhat comical way that they feel like I am actually living them. In fact, most of the time I can see my own life as being a Drury novel that I am acting out. *The Driftless Area* is no different than this.

I have trouble recommending anything by Drury to anyone I know. This is mostly due to the fact that their reading habits are so different from my own, and the aforementioned fact that I almost feel like Drury is writing just for me.

Regardless, I think *The Driftless Area* would be a great introduction to Drury. If you can enjoy the small details of life, the eccentricities of the conversations had in this book, and you find yourself laughing at things and you're not even sure why you are laughing at them, then I suggest you dive into his other work. Regardless, it's a fairly short novel that is highly entertaining, and you would be missing out if you pass over it.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Supernatural Smalltown Neo-Noir

By A. Ross

The title of Drury's fourth novel is taken from its ostensible setting: a roughly 20,000 square mile area mostly in western Wisconsin, with chunks protruding into northeastern Iowa, southeastern Minnesota, and northwestern Illinois. This area was bypassed by glaciers during the ice age and so theoretically remains a window into a prehistoric past -- however the towns mentioned in the novel are entirely fictional. The title is also a pretty fair description of the mental state of the story's protagonist, 24-year-old Pierre Hunter. Both his parents have died within the last few years, and he finds himself several years out of college and bartending in his small hometown without any sense of purpose. His state of being is central to the slender book's central theme, which revolves around the question of whether we really "drift" through life, or whether our fate is written from the start.

Pierre's the kind of guy who lets life happen to him rather than the other way around, so it's not exactly surprising that the story really gets going when he falls through some ice and is rescued by a beautiful woman living on her own in an abandoned house. He falls under her spell, although she's a little strange and more than a little mysterious. The next plot point comes when he hitchhikes to California to visit his cousins, and on the final leg coming home gets into a fight with a petty criminal. This cascades into the final third of the book which heads straight into neo-noir turf, when a trio of deadly but somewhat unprofessional criminals come gunning for Pierre. As befits the neo-noir framework, it all ends in a climactic gun battle in the dark in which many people die. However, Drury brings a supernatural twist to the rather conventional tale. (Although anyone who's kept up with Japanese horror films of the last ten years or so will have seen what's coming a mile away.)

Drury's prose is super-duper sparse -- in a good way. There's not really any fat here, which is a nice change of pace from a lot of modern fiction. One reviewer described the characters as "Coen brothers-meet-David Lynch", which isn't a bad description except that Coen brothers characters are much more entertaining and Lynch characters are much much weirder. Yes, they get into interesting, quirky conversations, with the occasional memorable line, but don't expect quite the flair or fireworks of the Coen brothers. Ultimately, it's a nice little book, but it's not going to blow anyone away who's not predisposed to quirky little stories about semi-lost souls. If you're looking for some truly dark stories about truly lost men in small backwaters, check out Scott Wolven's debut collection "*Controlled Burn*."

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

perfection

By Steven Becker

I'm also new to Drury. I plucked this book off the Border's shelf of new fiction a few weeks ago, admittedly intrigued by the sultry, alluring woman on the jacket cover. Then I cracked it open, read the first couple paragraphs, and was like, "Done." I bought it, and it was just the sweetest, most satisfying read--funny, suspenseful, seamlessly absorbing right up to the final page, with countless characters that Drury, in no time flat, summons to life deliciously. I was thirsting for a novel like this, and it more than quenched me. I can't recommend this book highly enough; it delivers.

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