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Roy, Lori. Bent Road

Lori Roy's debut novel is creepy from the start. It opens at night on a lonely road full of shadows and tumbleweeds where Celia Scott struggles to follow her husband's disappearing truck around unfamiliar twists and turns. The plot of the novel is similarly dark and serpentine with a few twists of its own. The Scott family returns to the Midwest from Detroit to find a better life for their children and instead finds themselves mired in domestic violence and haunted by family secrets. Arthur struggles to protect his sister Ruth from her violent, alcoholic husband Ray who becomes even more sinister once he is investigated in connection with a young girl's disappearance. What's more, the new charges call to mind the death of another sister, Eve, years before. Many suspect Ray had something to do with Eve's murder as well.

Although the ending may seem over-the-top to some, this dark, gothic tale of family secrets makes compelling reading. Roy develops interesting characters and keeps the plot moving. Readers will be drawn into the dual mysteries, past and present, that Roy so skillfully creates.

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