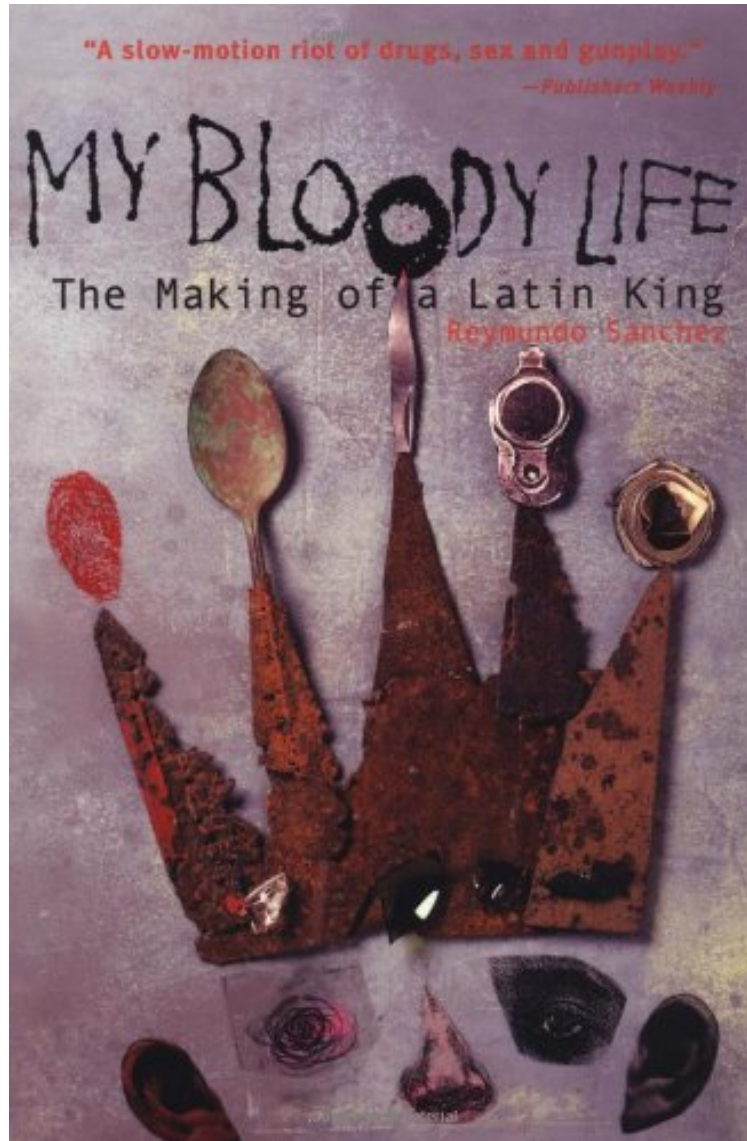


(Download pdf) My Bloody Life: The Making of a Latin King

My Bloody Life: The Making of a Latin King

Reymundo Sanchez

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Reymundo Sanchez : My Bloody Life: The Making of a Latin King before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Bloody Life: The Making of a Latin King:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I couldn't believe what a terrible life Sanchez had before he even started going to ...By BhondaI'm not giving this book 5 stars because of the writing, but because the events were so eye-opening. As a middle school teacher in the Chicago area, Sanchez's story reminded me of how much kids are affected by the neglect and abuse of their parents. Sanchez's absences from school made me sick with worry about

some of my own students who miss a lot of school. I couldn't believe what a terrible life Sanchez had before he even started going to school. It's unfortunate that his mother not only allowed abuse to happen to her child, but also participated in it. At the end, Sanchez says he blames his mother, and I completely agree with him. Throughout the retelling of the experiences Sanchez had as a gang member of the Latin Kings, I felt really conflicted. I rooted for him because I knew he has such a hard life and was doing what he needed to do to survive, but I was also sick to my stomach with how many people he killed and the way he disrespected and abused women. I kept checking myself by reminding myself that he was a teenager throughout the telling of this story and that he does reflect and say that drugs and alcohol made him "brave" and that he now understands his actions were wrong. I also think about how Sanchez CHOSE to get out, even if it took him six years. That's a really hard thing to do, and I think that takes courage. Throughout his whole retelling of his time as a Latin King, I was amazed at how long Sanchez survived and after finishing the book, I still don't completely understand gang life. While the content of his story is wildly inappropriate for Middle and high school students, unfortunately, those are the kids that need to read it to truly understand the lifestyle of a gang member, and I have nothing but respect for Sanchez for telling his story to help save someone else. Given Sanchez's background, I didn't expect great writing; however, I do think more sophisticated writing would enhance the emotional effects of his story. Of course I was sad about what happens, but despite all the tragedy in the story, I didn't cry at all or ever come close, and I feel like maybe I should have.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Brilliant
By Steve D SacI found this book completely by accident. I was searching for "My Reviews" and this along with a thousand other books and gadgets popped up. I saw this (not sure why it came up on a search of "My Reviews"), and it sounded interesting so I ordered a sample. The sample is all it took - I didn't hesitate to order the book, and immediately ordered his next book (Once a King Always a King) when I finished this one. His third book will be next (Lady Q). Sanchez's story telling is brilliant - a clean, crisp, and remarkably detailed history of the events of a hardcore gang banger whose life revolved around alcohol, drugs, violence, and sex. Although there is plenty of abuse, it's not a "woe is me" tale of abuse or how the system beat him down. He doesn't glamorize the lifestyle. It's simply a tragic story of a kid who didn't know another life but somehow found a way out. It reminded me, "There but for the grace of God go I." I literally couldn't stop reading this book - I read it walking to work, eating lunch, and every spare second of the day.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Terrible reality
By Pamela TAlthough Reyes presents a more violent and crude picture of gang life than Always Running and Down These Mean Streets, I appreciate his honesty. His story is sad and true for many young Latino men and women growing up in these neighborhoods. It is a devastatingly accurate portrayal of how we as a society and "the system" continue to disproportionately fail our minority youth. Accounts like these are a must read for everyone regardless of race, socio economic status, gender, religion etc. we should all know what our role is in putting a stop to racism in our communities and fighting for equality for all. No child should ever be allowed to grow up in these conditions, much less to become killers and/or drug addicts. Also Highly recommend, 13th documentary on Netflix

Looking for an escape from childhood abuse, Reymundo Sanchez turned away from school and baseball to drugs, alcohol, and then sex, and was left to fend for himself before age 14. The Latin Kings, one of the largest and most notorious street gangs in America, became his refuge and his world, but its violence cost him friends, freedom, self-respect, and nearly his life. This is a raw and powerful odyssey through the ranks of the new mafia, where the only people more dangerous than rival gangs are members of your own gang, who in one breath will say they'll die for you and in the next will order your assassination.

.com In My Bloody Life, Reymundo Sanchez tells a chillingly sad tale, from his birth in the back of a pickup truck in Puerto Rico to the day he quit the Latin Kings gang, 21 years later. From the first page, his narrative is unpretentious, disarmingly honest, and horrifyingly riveting. His early years were so full of pain and abuse that by the time he opts, at age 11, to hang out with the local gang, the Latin Kings, it seems a perfectly logical choice. In his shoes, any one of us--smacked nightly by a mother and beaten ragged whenever the stepfather got the chance--would likely have chosen the same path. The gang was the family that accepted him as well as the peer group that offered girls who didn't say "no." Any violence that went with the territory couldn't match the atmosphere of brutality that permeated his own home. Sanchez was a Latin King for six years and participated in innumerable bloody gang battles--years rife with sex, drugs, booze, and acts of gang revenge. He finally got up his pluck to leave (and the only way was to be "violated" out through a gang beating), but admits in his conclusion that life since then has, in some ways, been even harder. He's had to quit drugs, lose the only community he's known, support himself, and deal with the nightmares of all the horrors he's seen and done. Though Sanchez still hasn't accomplished his dream of completing college, he has managed to leave the Kings, leave Chicago, leave behind his mother's legacy of violence, and write an impressive first book. -- Stephanie Gold
From Publishers Weekly
Chicago in the 1980s provides the setting for this extremely disturbing and raw account of a Puerto Rican teenager who lost himself to violent gang activity. Now repentant, Sanchez (a pseudonym) writes in a voluble voice, replete with operatic asides declaiming the immorality of his actions. But he offers a forceful and unusual perspective on Chicago. In Sanchez's telling, it's a place of territorial graffiti and racist

cops, in which a slow-motion riot of drugs, sex and gunplay constantly unfolds. Sanchez recounts his family's arrival in Chicago's Northwest Side in the late 1970s, when he was a small boy; he describes the beatings his grifter stepfather regularly doled out; and he portrays the allure of the mysterious and ritual-bound lives of tough, teenaged gangsters. When his family returned to Puerto Rico, he stayed behind. Soon, he joined the fearsome Latin Kings, and his given street name "Lil Loco" attested to his youth and ferocity. While graphically describing what he witnessed as a gang member—senseless killings, inter-ethnic hatreds and sexual abuse of gang-affiliated women—Sanchez also pursues harder truths, arguing that it is a minority of promiscuous drug-users accompanied by community-wide silence that keeps the gangs in business. In the end, he condemns his former gang for masquerading as a Latino "public service" organization while high-ranking members become rich from their youthful recruits' drug dealing. And he scoffs at their reliance on conformist rituals and violence (violations of the rituals were punished with full body beatings). Offering very little hope, this book captures the dark, self-destructive lot of countless urban teens. Like other gangland memoirs (such as *Monster* and *Always Running*), it is significant because it takes the reader deep inside a secretive and brutal ethnic gang subculture. (Aug.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Sanchez, who had been raped at age five by a cousin, left Puerto Rico for Chicago when he was seven, and reveled in his new home, excelling in school and at baseball. But his unloving mother married a monster, and by the time Sanchez was ten, he was taking to the streets to avoid their vicious beatings. Frightened by the bloodshed, he resisted joining the Latin Kings, the largest and most violent gang in the city, but by the time he was 13, Sanchez was drinking and getting high and training himself to suppress his compassion and embrace the very brutality he had suffered. Initiated into sex by a woman nearly three times his age, he became a sexual predator and soon felt no compunction about shooting his rivals. A survivor who turned his life around, Sanchez writes plainly and powerfully, and what is shocking about his tragic tale is not the barbaric actions of young gangbangers but the appalling collusion of adults, from criminally abusive parents to mercenary gun dealers and immoral cops. Donna Seaman Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved