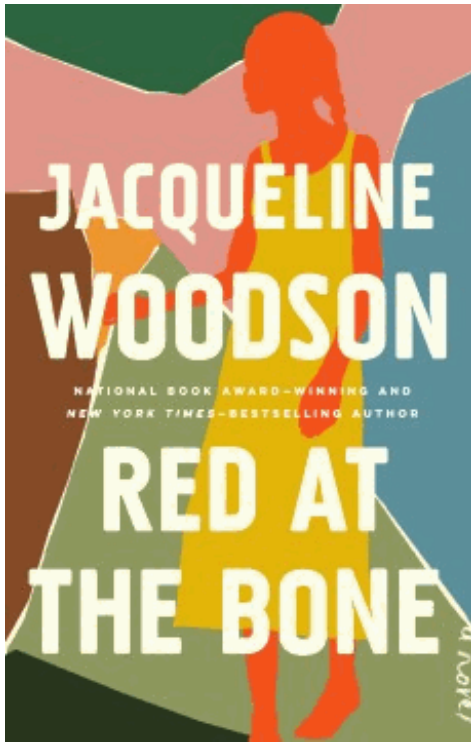


# RED AT THE BONE



*Young Adult*

## Summary of Concerns:

This book contains explicit sexual activities; sexual nudity; and profanity.

**By Jacqueline Woodson**

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## CONTENT WARNING

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**3** / 5

**Minor Restricted**  
BookLooks Review Rating

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30	<p>He caught a glimpse of Malcolm’s hand brushing over Melody's butt and something turned over inside of him. A new fear like a dragging bruise moving in his stomach. Were they fucking already? Not Melody. No. She would have talked to him. She would have given him something, dropped a few coins of info into his pocket. Yeah. His girl would talk to him before she did anything. Wouldn't she?</p>
66	<p>I love you, he whispered into her ear as they lay side by side on her bed. I love you so much, Iris. Because maybe this was what love felt like—a constant ache, an endless need. He waited for Iris to tell him she loved him back, but instead, she reached inside his pants, then into his underwear, and wrapped her hand around him. He bit down hard on his bottom lip, closed his eyes, and waited for what came next. He was terrified of what came next. He had only done this to himself. His own Vaseline'd hand in the bathroom, with the door locked and water running in case he cried out to the images of girls he had Only seen fully clothed reimagined naked playing in his head. He had imagined Iris naked, but no matter tightly he closed his eyes, no matter how fast he moved his hand, her body was never clear. It was as though his own imagination waxed over when he tried to see her. Lying beside her, her hand moving slowly, his fingers moving up her belly and beneath her bra, he was grateful that she felt so surprising beneath her clothes. So perfect. When he opened his eyes again, Iris was smiling, that sloe-eyed smile that scared the hell out of him and made him love her more. She pulled his pants and underwear down below his knees, and because he didn't know what else to do, he closed his eyes again and let her. Praying silently that she'd stop. Hoping she wouldn't. I love you, he said again, because if he whispered anything else, he was sure he would cry. He didn't want to cry. He wanted to laugh. No, he wanted to cry.</p> <p>Open your eyes and take my shirt off, she said.</p> <p>He started unbuttoning her shirt slowly. In the movies he'd seen, this was part of the love scene, the guy looking into his girlfriend's eyes as he took off her clothes. He wanted this part to last forever. He wanted everything to be slow and perfect and right.</p> <p>You mess around, my dad's gonna come home and find you in my half-naked. Iris moved his hands away and quickly undid her own shirt. He didn't know what to do with his hands.</p> <p>Take your clothes off, Aubrey! You acting like you don't want this.</p> <p>He stumbled jumping off the bed, steadied himself against her dresser as he removed his pants and T-shirt. A fan whirred in the window, but the room was still hot. Other than the whirring, though, the house was quiet. He could hear his own panting as he climbed in beside her—so much excitement and fear. And then he was naked on top of her, just outside of her, and then, by some strange grace of God, he was inside of her. And that quickly, he wasn't a virgin anymore. That quickly, he had something to understand now—about how doing it felt. Painful. It hurt. Why did it hurt? But then the pain was gone. And it felt good. So good. So, so good.</p> <p>But Iris wasn't crying.</p> <p>The guys on the court said it hurt for girls the first time. They said there was some</p>

Page	Content
	<p>skin wall you had to break through. Like a pearly gate, they'd said. And then you in Heaven! He'd laughed with them, gave high fives as they lied about their first times. One brother went on and on about how this girl made him stop but he told her if she didn't let him finish, she'd have to walk around the neighborhood with a half-popped cherry and what kind of look was that. But they were wrong. There wasn't a skin wall, just Iris pressing up and him pressing down and the feeling like nothing he ever believed could exist on earth. His body exploding first inside of himself, then into Iris. He could feel himself shooting into her, her own body, swallowing him whole. This had to be love. It had to be.</p>
160	<p>When she woke up again, Jam's mouth was on her breast, moving toward her nipple. Iris jolted upright. During their night of lovemaking, she'd been able to keep the girl's mouth away from her breasts, moving it instead back up to her own lips or down between her legs. Jam had smirked into the semidarkness but complied. But now, they were both looking down at her breasts in the bright daylight, milk seeping out over her belly. Iris tried to cover them with her hands, but Jam pulled them away, staring. When she looked into her eyes there were so many questions rising there.</p>