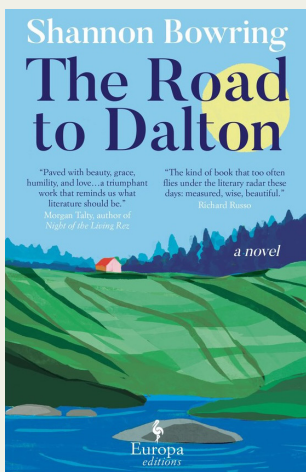




Read ME

THE ROAD TO DALTON

Shannon Bowring



SHANNON BOWRING

has appeared in numerous journals, including Best Small Fictions, and has been nominated for Pushcart and Best of the Net prizes. She is the recipient of the 2022 Julia Peterkin Literary Award for Flash Fiction. Her debut novel, *The Road to Dalton*, received a Kirkus Starred Review, was included in the June 2023 Indie Next List, and was chosen as one of NPR's Books We Love in 2023. The sequel to *The Road to Dalton*, *WHERE THE FOREST MEETS THE RIVER*, will be published by Europa Editions in September 2024.

ONLINE AUTHOR TALK
THURSDAY | AUGUST 15, 2024 | 7PM

Register @ mainehumanities.org

HAVE A QUESTION for SHANNON?
Submit it via our online form!



Read ME is a statewide summer reading program offered by the Maine Humanities Council, Maine State Library, and Maine Writers & Publishers Alliance that gets Maine's adults all reading the same books—by Maine authors and recommended by a Maine author.



THE ROAD TO DALTON

Discussion Questions (provided by Shannon Bowring!)

1. What role does place play in *The Road to Dalton*? How does it set tone, inform plot, and shape characters?
2. Why does the author tell this story through multiple perspectives? How does this structure reflect the book's setting?
3. Which characters do you most relate to? Which characters do you struggle with?
4. *The Road to Dalton* is set in an often-overlooked part of Maine. How does Northern Maine challenge your ideas of the Maine that is usually visible in books and movies?
5. In what way does Dalton itself contribute to Bridget's decline into mental crisis? What clues did other characters miss in the lead-up to her suicide? Could it be argued that in a different place or time, Bridget's PTSD and postpartum depression may have been recognized and treated?
6. Given the setting and time period in this novel, is it possible the people of Dalton recognize the romantic relationship between Bev and Trudy but pretend not to? Were the book set in 2024, how might this reaction differ? How might it stay the same?
7. How do your perceptions of Richard and Trudy, and Bev and Bill shift as the details of their marriages unfold?
8. Every major character in the story carries at least one secret. How (and why) does the environment of Aroostook County, Maine in the 1990s dictate that those secrets remain untold?
9. In *The Road to Dalton*, many kinds of trauma take place--suicide, infidelity, abuse, and depression. Despite this, the story feels hopeful. How did the author accomplish this?

“The Road to Dalton reads more like a collage than a singular painting —its a novel with so many tricks up its sleeve.”

Recommending author
J A E D C O F F I N