



Down River: A Novel

By John Hart

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Down River is the winner of the 2008 Edgar Award for Best Novel.

Everything that shaped him happened near that river....

Now its banks are filled with lies and greed, shame, and murder....

John Hart's debut, *The King of Lies*, was compelling and lyrical, with Janet Maslin of *The New York Times* declaring, "There hasn't been a thriller as showily literate since Scott Turow came along." Now, in *Down River*, Hart makes a scorching return to Rowan County, where he drives his characters to the edge, explores the dark side of human nature, and questions the fundamental power of forgiveness.

Adam Hase has a violent streak, and not without reason. As a boy, he saw things that no child should see, suffered wounds that cut to the core and scarred thin. The trauma left him passionate and misunderstood---a fighter. After being narrowly acquitted of a murder charge, Adam is hounded out of the only home he's ever known, exiled for a sin he did not commit. For five long years he disappears, fades into the faceless gray of New York City. Now he's back and nobody knows why, not his family or the cops, not the enemies he left behind.

But Adam has his reasons.

Within hours of his return, he is beaten and accosted, confronted by his family and the women he still holds dear. No one knows what to make of Adam's return, but when bodies start turning up, the small town rises against him and Adam again finds himself embroiled in the fight of his life, not just to prove his own innocence, but to reclaim the only life he's ever wanted.

Bestselling author John Hart holds nothing back as he strips his characters bare. Secrets explode, emotions tear, and more than one person crosses the brink into deadly behavior as he examines the lengths to which people will go for money, family, and revenge.

A powerful, heart-pounding thriller, *Down River* will haunt your thoughts long after the last page is turned.

Praise for John Hart and *The King of Lies*

"Treat yourself to something new and truly out of the ordinary."

---*Rocky Mountain News*

"A top-notch debut. Hart's prose is like Raymond Chandler's, angular and hard."

--*Entertainment Weekly* (grade A)

"A gripping performance."

---*People* magazine

"A marriage of carefully crafted prose alongside have-to-keep-reading suspense."

---*The Denver Post*

"A masterful piece of writing."

---*The News & Observer* (Raleigh, NC)

"A gripping mystery/thriller and a fully fleshed, thoughtful work of literature."

---*Winston-Salem Journal*

"*The King of Lies* moves and reads like a book on fire."

---Pat Conroy

"John Hart's debut . . . is that most engrossing of rarities, a well-plotted mystery novel that is written in a beautifully poetic style."

---Mark Childress, author of *Crazy in Alabama*

"Grisham-style intrigue and Turow-style brooding."

---*The New York Times*

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Scott Sowers delivers a solid performance reading Hart's powerful second novel. Five years ago, Adam Chase was put on trial for the murder of a local teenager. Although he was acquitted of the crime, the majority of Rowan County, N.C., was never convinced of his innocence. The resulting hostility and humiliation compelled him to leave his hometown and escape to the anonymous streets of New York. A phone call from one of his oldest friends brings Adam back home, where he finds himself embroiled in a thick web of old family secrets and lies that lead back to that murder and to a death that has haunted him and his family for more than two decades. Hart writes with an intimate sense of melancholy and loss that Sowers resonates perfectly. Using a low-key, Southern accent to good advantage, Sowers draws the listener into the story from the very beginning with his simple, earnest delivery, and holds them tight.

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

John Hart's 2006 debut, *The King of Lies* (**** Selection Sept/Oct 2006), earned an Edgar nomination for Best First Novel. Most reviewers agree that his sophomore effort is a worthy successor. The plot moves energetically through interesting terrain: a southern county torn apart by the possibility of easy wealth, a family ruptured by suspicion, and a community that despises the book's protagonist. The New York Times criticized Hart for overblown writing and stale imagery but grudgingly praised the story's vigorous plot and feverish pace. With *Down River*, Hart garners comparisons to Raymond Chandler, John Grisham, and Scott Turow. This illustrious list should be recommendation enough for most readers.

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review *King of Lies* (2006), Hart's debut, was gripping and stylishly written, but it pales in comparison to this complex, emotionally charged novel. Adam Chase returns home to small-town North Carolina after five years living in New York City. He left his hometown—or, in fact, was run out of town—after he was acquitted of murder. He has returned home because his family is there and because everyone he has ever loved is there. But when his oldest friend goes missing, and Adam is beaten to a pulp by his friend's father's stooges, he begins to regret his decision. As he tries to reconnect with family and friends, Adam learns that some people he's known all his life are hiding dark secrets—and that the truth surrounding the murder he was accused of five years ago is more frightening and closer to home than he could have imagined. *Down River* is a beautifully constructed story of personal redemption, family secrets, and murder—a small-town epic, if there is such a thing. Hart dexterously juggles a large cast of characters and several intricate plotlines, and when he starts to tie together the threads of the various stories—well, that's when the real magic begins. A truly splendid novel with a deep emotional core. Pitt, David

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Cary Burgess:

Hey guys, do you would like to finds a new book you just read? May be the book with the headline Down River: A Novel suitable to you? Typically the book was written by well-known writer in this era. The particular book untitled Down River: A Novel is a single of several books that everyone read now. This book

was inspired a lot of people in the world. When you read this book you will enter the new dimensions that you ever know just before. The author explained their concept in the simple way, so all of people can easily to be aware of the core of this reserve. This book will give you a lots of information about this world now. To help you see the represented of the world within this book.

Paul Erdmann:

Reading a publication can be one of a lot of exercise that everyone in the world adores. Do you like reading book therefore. There are a lot of reasons why people like it. First reading a publication will give you a lot of new information. When you read a e-book you will get new information mainly because book is one of various ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, examining a book will make you more imaginative. When you looking at a book especially fiction book the author will bring one to imagine the story how the characters do it anything. Third, you can share your knowledge to other individuals. When you read this Down River: A Novel, it is possible to tells your family, friends along with soon about yours publication. Your knowledge can inspire the mediocre, make them reading a book.

Gladys James:

Down River: A Novel can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this e-book has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in vocabulary, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to put every word into joy arrangement in writing Down River: A Novel however doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and also based confirm resource data that maybe you can be one among it. This great information can easily drawn you into completely new stage of crucial contemplating.

Michael Torres:

Can you one of the book lovers? If so, do you ever feeling doubt when you are in the book store? Attempt to pick one book that you never know the inside because don't judge book by its include may doesn't work here is difficult job because you are scared that the inside maybe not since fantastic as in the outside seem likes. Maybe you answer may be Down River: A Novel why because the wonderful cover that make you consider about the content will not disappoint anyone. The inside or content is actually fantastic as the outside or perhaps cover. Your reading sixth sense will directly assist you to pick up this book.

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