



Thief of Dreams: A Novel

John Yount

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The tender, engaging story of a family in pain and a boy whose quest for courage leads him deep into the wilds of Appalachia

In 1948 Madeline Tally leaves her philandering husband and returns home to North Carolina, where she and her thirteen-year-old son, James, move into an ugly purple trailer in the cow pasture behind her father's farmhouse. Smart and sensitive, James worries that he is somehow responsible for his parents' separation and feels out of place in the town where he grew up but has not been back to for five years. None of his old friends have time for him anymore, and his only new one is Lester Buck, a poor, peculiar boy who shares James's love of the outdoors.

In Pittsburgh, Edward Tally spends his nights drinking with his fellow construction workers in the bar downstairs from his new apartment. He tries to tell himself that he is better off without Madeline and James, that he wants to be his own man again, free of the expectations that he was never able to meet. But there is a burden on his heart that cannot be eased by booze or by Paris Pergola, the seductive, moody blonde he has taken up with.

Told from the alternating perspectives of the three Tallys, *Thief of Dreams* builds to a stunning climax as Edward comes to North Carolina to try to win back his family, and James and Lester get into a vicious fight with a schoolyard bully. With his friend in the hospital and his parents unable to bridge the divide between them, James heads into the frozen forest. What he discovers there will give him enough wisdom and experience to last a lifetime, if he can only make it back to his family alive.

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Richard Gary:

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Sharyl Nettles:

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