



Oyster: A Novel

John Biguenet

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With comparisons to Flaubert, Chekhov, and Faulkner, O. Henry Award-winner John Biguenet earned wide acclaim for his debut short-story collection, *The Torturer's Apprentice*. In his astonishing first novel, *Oyster*, he demonstrates the same mastery of craft and rigor of vision that led critics across the country to join Robert Olen Butler in praising this "important new writer."

Set on the Louisiana coast in 1957, *Oyster* recounts the engrossing tale of a deadly rivalry between two families. To avoid ruin after years of declining oyster crops, Felix and Mathilde Petitjean offer their young daughter, Therese, in marriage to 52-year-old Horse Bruneau, who holds the papers on their boat and house. Bruneau has spent his life as Felix's rival for both the Petitjeans' century-old oyster beds and, as we learn, Mathilde. But as Therese explains to Horse one night as they float in a pirogue alone in the marsh, "I don't get bought for the price of no damn boat."

The spiraling violence of *Oyster* and the seething passions behind it drive an unpredictable tale of murder and revenge in which two women and the men who desire them play out a drama as elemental and inexorable as a Greek tragedy.

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