



In the Lake of the Woods

By Tim O'Brien

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In the Lake of the Woods By Tim O'Brien Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Tim O'Brien has been writing about Vietnam in one way or another ever since he served there as an infantryman in the late 1960s. His earliest work on the subject, *If I Die in a Combat Zone*, was an intensely personal memoir of his own tour of duty; his books since then have featured many of the same elements of fear, boredom, and moral ambiguity but in a fictional setting. In 1994 O'Brien wrote *In the Lake of the Woods*, a novel that, while imbued with the troubled spirit of Vietnam, takes place entirely after the war and in the United States. The main character, John Wade, is a man in crisis: after spending years building a successful political career, he finds his future derailed during a bid for the U.S. Senate by revelations about his past as a soldier in Vietnam. The election lost by a landslide, John and his wife, Kathy, retreat to a small cabin on the shores of a Minnesota lake--from which Kathy mysteriously disappears.

Was she murdered? Did she run away? Instead of answering these questions, O'Brien raises even more as he slowly reveals past lives and long-hidden secrets. Included in this third-person narrative are "interviews" with the couple's friends and family as well as footnoted excerpts from a mix of fictionalized newspaper reports on the case and real reports pertaining to historical events--a *mélange* that lends the novel an eerie sense of verisimilitude. If Kathy's disappearance is at the heart of this work, then John's involvement in a My Lai-type massacre in Vietnam is its core, and O'Brien uses it to demonstrate how wars don't necessarily end when governments say they do. *In the Lake of the Woods* may not *be* true, but it *feels* true--and for Tim O'Brien, that's true enough. --Alix Wilber

From Publishers Weekly

A politician's career is ruined overnight by revelations of his wartime participation in a village massacre in Vietnam while his personal life is undone by the sudden disappearance of his wife.

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From Library Journal

O'Brien, winner of a National Book Award for *Going After Cacciato* (1978), has written his most accessible novel to date. John and Kathy Wade are a young, idealistic couple living the American Dream until John's bid for the U.S. Senate is trashed by media reports of his involvement in the infamous massacre at My Lai during the Vietnam War. Still very much in love but without direction for the first time in their marriage, John and Kathy flee to a remote cabin. When Kathy disappears without a trace, a massive but fruitless search ensues. Did John murder her or did she simply flee? O'Brien develops several maddeningly plausible explanations, allowing readers to draw their own conclusions in this dark but wonderful novel that should gain him a host of new fans. For fiction collections both large and small.

--Mark Annichiarico, "Library Journal"

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Timmy Gallegos:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or read a book entitled In the Lake of the

Woods? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time with the favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have additional opinion?

Loretta Manson:

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Michael Johnson:

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