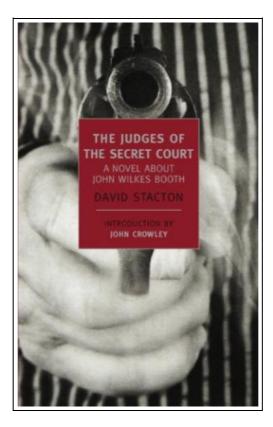
# The Judges of the Secret Court: A Novel About John Wilkes Booth



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## Reviews

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#### THE JUDGES OF THE SECRET COURT: A NOVEL ABOUT JOHN WILKES BOOTH



The New York Review of Books, Inc. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Judges of the Secret Court: A Novel About John Wilkes Booth, David Stacton, John Crowley, Out of print for a half-century, David Stacton's long-lost novel The Judges of The Secret Court will allow contemporary readers to discover for the first time a hidden masterpiece of American fiction that is one of the finest books ever written about the Civil War. Stacton's gripping story centers on the brothers Edwin and John Wilkes Booth, members of a famous theatrical family. Edwin is a great actor, a Hamlet-like character whose performances of Hamlet will make him an international sensation. Wilkes is a blustering mediocrity on stage who is determined, however, to be an actor in history, and whose assassination of Abraham Lincoln will change America. Stacton's novel about how the roles we play become, for better or for worse, the lives we lead takes us back to the day of the assassination, immersing us in the farrago of bombast that fills Wilkes's head while following his footsteps up to the fatal, but weirdly anti-climatic, encounter at the Ford Theater. The political maneuvering around Lincoln's deathbed and Wilkes's desperate flight and ignominious capture then set the stage for a political show trial that will condemn not only the guilty but the-relatively-innocent. For as Edwin Booth broods helplessly many years later, and as Lincoln, whose tragic death and wisdom overshadow this tale, also knew, "We are all accessories before or after some fact .We are all guilty of being ourselves.".

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