



# Red Lory

*Dave Newell*

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## **Red Lory** Dave Newell

Dave Newell's Southern literature debut chronicles love lost, hope taken, and the enduring consequences of selfish devotion. This dark, psychological literary puzzle has been described as "eccentric" and "beautiful" with an effortless plot.

Douglas Howard's days as a small-town physician are numbered. He is in debt, and the only way out he sees is to take up with the lonely, calculating wife of a dying patient who will leave behind a sizable fortune. As they wait, their lives become complicated by the troubles of Dr. Howard's desperate secretary, Miss Derringer, who has her affections set on the doctor.

What follows is a fatal scandal and an exploration of human expression, desire and manipulation all in the name of love. In the middle of it all is a strange and beautiful parrot, innocent from everything that goes on around her, but thoroughly involved.

## **Red Lory Details**

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Author : Dave Newell

Format : Paperback 306 pages

Genre : Fiction, Romance, Literary Fiction, Romantic Suspense, Gothic, Southern Gothic

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## From Reader Review Red Lory for online ebook

### Jordan says

A few weeks ago I had the chance to read *Red Lory*, the second novel by my friend Dave Newell. I had heard a lot about his first, *Nightjar*, but hadn't had a chance to read it, and I jumped at the opportunity to read a revised draft of the new one. I wasn't disappointed.

*Red Lory* tells the stories of Dr. Douglas Howard and his secretary, "Dare" Derringer. Douglas practices medicine in Hill, a small Southern town of the late 1940s or early 50s, and business is bad. An entire week may see only one or two appointments—with rarely anything more severe than a patient who refuses to accept that she has diabetes or the chronic knee pain of an obese woman—and the manager of the local bank is leaning on Douglas to repay his sizable loans. Douglas's only consistent patient is Mr. King, a comatose man with whose wife Douglas has been carrying on an affair. Gradually, Douglas and his paramour realize that the dying man, who owns the most successful business in town, is the means by which both can get a lot of what they want.

Dare has her own set of problems. Though cheerful and friendly—not to mention a bombshell—she is essentially alone in the town. Her few friendships are superficial and secrets from her past strain her relationships with family back home, as well as threaten to undo the new life she has built in Hill. Despite the attentions of the local soda jerk—whom she sadly regards as too young and naïve for her—she tries to interest her boss in a relationship, but the oblivious doctor is too wrapped up in his dying patient's wife, and Hannah—his pet parrot.

Hannah is the red lory of the title, and her presence in the novel is simultaneously dark and cheering. Douglas buys her in the opening pages of the book, in a brilliantly crafted scene that suggests a kidnapping or an extortion ring—or any number of other noir staples—only to introduce the lynchpin of the story.

Hannah belongs with the great animal characters in literature. Newell did not give into the urge of many writers to anthropomorphize animals, which alone makes Hannah unusual. While seemingly innocent, her activity around the office is filled with foreboding. Especially disturbing is her ability to release herself from her cage, a habit that both Dare and Douglas—both of whom have a particularly strong desire to keep secrets—find irksome. And it's Hannah that brings to Dare's attention a piece of evidence that changes everything.

*Red Lory* is fast-paced and well-written. The style was strong and direct but with a light touch lacking in a lot of fiction. It looks simpler than it is—its style is powerful but not distracting, the same way CGI and background music, properly used, support the story in film. That's the sign of a virtuoso at work. And while the novel is by no means a thriller or action story, my above use of "fast-paced" is entirely warranted. I finished it in two days, two days in which I was very busy.

And the novel is thematically rich. I'm still mulling it over after almost two weeks, and I can see generations of literature students debating Hannah's significance and the choices that Dare and Douglas make. If you're looking for an engaging story with a lot to chew on, read *Red Lory*.

Highly recommended.

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## **Tough Critic Book Reviews says**

### **This is what happens when I step out of my comfort zone...**

That's exactly what Dave Newell did. He took me out of my comfort zone and introduced me to something I didn't even know I liked. He didn't blow me away with romance or shatter me with emotion; he made me think...a lot. The story was simple. It was complex. At times, it frustrated the hell out of me.

There were so many questions. Where is this story going? Where is it taking me? How did I get here? And dammit...WHAT'S WITH THE BIRD? I was pushed down the rabbit hole and the next thing I knew I was drinking the kool aid!

Did I read this book straight through? No...and I don't think I'd want to. It's a book that makes you stop and think. A book that makes you *want* to stop and think. I *needed* that time to stop and think.

Sometimes it's nice to take a fresh breath of different. Sometimes it's nice to read a book where people aren't clenching something around someone else's something while being shoved up against something else. Sometimes it's nice to experience something new.

I've never had a book that was so not for me be for me. Dave Newell has invented his own genre. It's a genre I'd most definitely read again. **READ ON!**

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## **Krystle Marie says**

**\*\*update\*\***

The more I'm thinking I realize I have to change this from 4 stars to 5. I haven't been able to stop thinking about this in days, that is greatness...5 stars it is...

**\*My original review\***

Holy moly this book is a crazy read! So glad Tarryn Fisher suggested this as a group read through book, it leads to great discussions! I can't even begin to explain how this book stretched my mind. I can't imagine this one will be out of my head any time soon. I'd say this one is definitely a dark yet brilliant book & I look forward to hearing others thoughts on the ending!

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## **Melissa says**

More often than not, when you read a book, your journey starts and ends with what the author tells you, **not** with what they choose to omit.

A scavenger hunt for the mind, *Red Lory*'s heart is solidified and brought to life by everything author Dave Newell, specifically chooses to not tell you. If you are looking for a lighthearted-easy-on-the-senses-sit-back-and-relax kind of read then look elsewhere. This book will only disappoint and frustrate you.

However, if you are looking for a challenge, something new and exciting, something that will make you question human nature and the world around you, then settle in. November 2nd, 2012 is the release date and *Red Lory* is your book.

Although complex on many levels, *Red Lory* is simplistic in voice and plot. There isn't a jungle of characters to keep up with nor is there an overuse of wordy dialogue or complex descriptors that leave you searching for your dictionary. Newell takes the simplest words of our language and weaves them into a poetic voice that everyone can understand. All you have to do is wake up and pay attention.

The most brilliant aspect of a book like this is the ability to read it over and over again, each time unveiling more secrets. The ending only brings you back to the beginning and you are left with so many concepts to ponder, question and wonder about. It's a book that stays with you.

Compelling and well-paced, *Red Lory* is a new breed within the realm of Indie Authors. My only fear lies within the consequences of readers not understanding just how deep this book travels. The choices we make when faced with something we deeply desire should not be taken lightly. You've been warned.

*"Crying on the kitchen floor, she looked up and gasped for breath, raking tears from her pale cheeks. "I need you," she whispered. "Someone."*

- Dare, *Red Lory*

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## **Martin Ver says**

I've had some time to think through this book all over again. I still find myself wanting to read it one more time.

When I was approached about reading an advance of an e-book I was thrilled at the thought of it but didn't realize what I'd encounter. Traditional publishing and self-publishing aside, *Red Lory* is well beyond anything out there today. I'll tell you why:

When my wife and I read it that first evening, I sat quietly in my chair and waited for my wife to finish. When she finished she looked at me, said "Damn," and we sat together not sure where to begin. The silence after we'd finished was appropriate because that is its tone. Somehow this book provokes silence and thoughtfulness in the middle of what would otherwise be a shocking storyline.

The only book of similar scale I've read is John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. The writing styles are comparable as well. *Red Lory* also leaves the emotions for you to decide in a way I've never experienced.

Steinbeck's style is one of clarity. One of the strengths of *Red Lory* is clarity. The first chapter is jarring at first in that sense, but that may speak more to how confused the English language has gotten than anything else. I can see though how others as noted in another review may find that chapter distracting. A matter of taste.

Enough has been said in the other reviews about plot so I won't explore it much. I will say the bird had my

heart. The lovely Miss Dare had my heart. I must also admit Mrs. King had it too. I'm still on the fence about Dr Howard.

This is such a beautiful book, and I hope that it climbs the ranks so others can experience it. *Red Lory* belongs with the classics.

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### **Luisa says**

Douglas Howard is a small town physician, with an even smaller practice on a decline. Dr. Howard is a lonely man, a survivor of heartbreak who finds comfort in the company of Hannah, a small crimson parrot. Hannah is a quick learner but also full of mischief.

When Douglas is confronted with the reality of his financial troubles, he confides in Miss Derringer, his office assistant, who is not only dependent of Dr. Howard's income but also dependent of their friendship. Miss Derringer sets to do whatever is needed to keep both afloat.

Life in a small town is not always simple. A place where everyone knows everyone, reputation is your best currency. *Red Lory* will take you to the heart of the town and let you decide what to make of it.

As usual, I never read synopsis of books, so when I first started to read this book, I realized that this book was not contemporary fiction. Literary fiction indeed, I guess it could also be classified as historical fiction even. While there is a romance element, this is not chick-lit.

Dave Newell's writing is clean and descriptive without being overbearingly wordy. I love how the author set the scene in a small town at a time where the best transportation method was walking to and fro. You really get the sense of the happenings of a small community when everything and everyone is within walking distance. I noticed that while the characters were not physically described in great detail, I had no problem picturing their faces and manners. The character development was consistent and the narration was uniform too.

The main reason why I gave this book 5 stars is because the author finished the book like a magician. He finished the act with an illusion of resolution to satisfy the reader without ever giving away his secrets. A great debut novel.

<http://goodbaduglybooks.wordpress.com/>

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### **Sarah Stone says**

I have a rule that I never reject a book until I have finished the first 100 pages. *Red Lory* had me hooked before page 30. Newell has written a book that captures the aura of a 1940's movie - not with explaining current world events, but with character habits, noir narration, and darling dialogue. Reading *Red Lory* feels like reading a TV mini-series set in a rural town in the 1940's; it's written to paint that black and white picture for you with the occasional (and significant) pop of color. If you are looking for a simple story and a quick, exciting read, *Red Lory* is definitely a book you should pick up.

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### **Lisa says**

Halfway through the 20th century, America was in the midst of a massive moral and economic resurgence.

WW2 was over, "evil" had been defeated, and shiny blue brand new factory-produced automobiles were in every driveway of suburbia. After 2 decades of social depression, American citizens felt they should be victorious in every area of life. Is it any wonder that the image they outwardly presented was vital to not only others' perception of them but to their own mental health as well?

#### THE SCENE:

Early 1950s sleepy town of Hill, USA.

#### THE CHARACTERS:

Douglas Howard - The town's only doctor; a whiskey drinking, chain smoking, hardened, middle-age man who has spent his entire career RX'ing remedies for others, yet he is unable to cure the deepest ailing inside himself.

"Dare" Derringer - The doctor's bosomy 20something single secretary whose baggage runs far deeper than her cup size, and who's basal needs conflict starkly with the Christianized restrictive outward morality that she strives to live within.

Mr King - Wealthy founder of Hill's largest department store; and a man whose future depends on the kindness and morality of humans around him after his brain is damaged in a misfortunate accident

Mrs King - Beautiful, elegant, and talented. In a patriarchal era that denied many social freedoms to females, this brilliant not-so-doting wife has played the social game of life extremely well, allowing her to meet her own needs for wealth, security, love, fame, and satiation in ways that would raise eyebrows. Caveat though, is that there are always costs when one neglects to calculate the free will and personal deprivation of others involved.

Donnie - Fresh, just-out-of-high-school, naive, ambitious; helps his father run their family-owned Mom & Pop Diner. His trek into the world of human desire is seen through rose-colored glasses and it would not be surprising to find his name a decade later as inspiration for the song "All You Need is Love"

Hannah - the sweet, watchful Red Lory parrot who's unchanging character presence throughout the story offers a moral temperature gauge and obvious conscience for not only the omniscient reader but for the residents of Hill as their secret deeds emerge.

#### THE THEME:

Hitchcock meets Poe meets LOST.

Humankind has always lived in two opposing worlds.

The first "world" is a superficial one in which we strive to maintain an image of normalcy around our chosen peer group, garner admiration from those in a wider social sphere, and appear to avoid cultural taboos at all costs.

The second "world" is one which quietly lies beneath. The deeds of this secret world are pushed to the back cobwebbed corners of our mind, hidden in a conglomerate of small coverups so that we do not suffer the crass judgement and abandonment of those from whom we desire approval. It is the deeds of this secret world that are supposed to be checked by human conscience and feelings of guilt. And it is these deeds that society assures us will always be brought to justice.

...But what if they're not?

Reality shows that affairs are not always found out, family abuse remains undetected for decades, and

criminals of some of the most heinous atrocities in human history live out their natural days, undetected, swimming in their South American backyard pools and happily playing with their grandchildren. The seas of life are heavily littered with the broken bones of unchecked depravity, and it is entirely possible for many to thwart their inward moral compass in the quest to alleviate the pangs of desire.

The author of Red Lory has succeeded in creating a simple story that combines these two worlds... one light, one dark... with beautiful dignity. The writing is crisp, the dialogue succinct, and the characters are entirely believable through the heavy use of time-period vocabulary and descriptives. It's a mark of a very talented writer when they can craft detailed, interactive characters from the depths of imagination as a God bringing Adam and Eve to life in a newly formed world.

Red Lory is not a story with a sharp, definitive ending, but is designed instead to bring the reader full circle in order to challenge the stereotypical views we all have of life, interpersonal relationships, societal mores, and justice.

And finally, if for no other reason, read it for the parrot. I myself am a parrot owner and I feel the simple nuances of life with a parrot was captured quite nicely. That, and the poor sweet bird made me cry.

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## **D says**

\*I was given an ARC for an honest opinion and review\*

Every once in a while you come across a book that leaves you thinking about things all day long. Dave Newell's Red Lory did just that. While reading his book, I couldn't help but be reminiscent of Carson McCullers, *A Heart is a Lonely Hunter*. The style and voice of the dialogue between characters is almost disconcerting in its delivery; in that it is so literal and obvious that it becomes evasive. There is no inner monologue to guide you through the characters thoughts and underlying intentions. You are left bare and stripped to ascertain what is implied by the direct conversations. In such a case many ideas and developments play in your head. Thus making for an extremely interesting story in itself. Many times, I felt like I was second-guessing what was actually intended. Then I would think well, the very notion of my second guessing is what is intended. This is what I truly loved about Red Lory. You are, in a sense, invited into the story.

Again because there is no inner dialogue, the characters are simple yet so complex. The tense and awkward relationship between Douglas and Mrs. King is infuriating and frightening. The co-dependency upon one another so dysfunctional that they made each other do things so unforgivable and almost without conscience. Miss Dare and Douglas-- what can be said? I wanted them to see on another level what they needed each other for.

I cannot review this book without mention of the Red Lory. The parrot named Hannah that started it all. So much significance in her presence. The notion that we often find life and all that is endured throughout our lives comes full circle whether we want it to or not. It just manifests itself at another time, in another place and with different people. But it never really evolves to become anything different than it was. It just gives us the illusion that it does.

Dave Newell's novel is beautiful in its eccentricity.

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## **Kathy says**

## A Smooth Read with a Plot So Thick, It Will Swallow You Whole!

First, let me say that Red Lory is not about parrots....well, not exactly. The Red Lory parrot, Hannah, is a significant character in the book and relates to the theme of the story very nicely. So, what is Red Lory about aside from the synopsis? Well, it is a twisted tale with romantic undertones along with betrayal, jealousy, and an almost love triangle. The fact that I can't really put it into the romance genre, along with the 1950-ish setting, puts this book completely out of my normal bookshelf material, so why did I read it? Well, I was intrigued by the description, so I contacted the author, and he was kind enough to supply me with an ARC in exchange for an honest review. What I got was a piece of literature that I immensely enjoyed and kept me guessing throughout the story.

Dave Newell hooked me in the first few pages by leading me to think I was about to lay witness to the human trafficking of a captive young woman. Then, I admit, I was a little worried after reading farther into the first pages of this book, because the focus became Douglas's purchase of a parrot for a measly \$.10. I thought, "What?" Did I just commit to read a story about a bird...and a man's constant petting of said bird?! I immediately had the preconceived notion that I was not going to like this book. But...I stuck with it, and I'm glad I did! I'm saying to you, now...Stick with it, people! Little did I know that the parrot, Hannah, would be such an integral part of the story...yet, it is not a story about parrots. Let me make that clear. So, I read on and at 9% into the story, I already had feelings of distaste for the main character, Douglas. I thought what is this man doing? My stomach twisted into a knot reading about Douglas and his patient's wife, Mrs. King. But, my distaste for Douglas dwindled as I discovered he really did have a conscience...and integrity....until he didn't. He is a twisted man overshadowed only by his greed and stress, driving him to the brink of \*spoiler\*. I loved hating him...except when I loved him!

Mrs. King, on the other hand, well...I just wanted to slap Mrs. King! I should have felt sorry for the woman, dealing with a dying husband, but I didn't. She was selfish, spoiled, and an extortionist in my eyes. She used her money as a means to extort whatever...or whomever...she wanted. Do you hear control freak? She had no scruples, no integrity, and really came across as a charlatan who would dance on her dying husband's future grave if it granted her access to Douglas....and her husband's fortune. Her relationship to Douglas came to light later in the book, and I learned so much about these two characters that I never saw coming, yet it all made perfect sense.

Dare is the loyal secretary of Douglas. I really liked Dare and her sweet disposition. She is most popular with the men due to her looks and build, but she is very lonely. She has a secret crush on Douglas, but has no idea how he feels, so she is forced to seek refuge from her loneliness in Donnie, the young drug store clerk who is ten years her junior.

Dave Newell's character building in this book is stellar, as he gradually gave me an in depth look into the lives of each main character in this twisted tale of secrets, deceit, betrayal, and jealousy. Dave Newell writes a compelling story of a man driven to depravity only to have his world crash around him, and a female schemer who acts as puppet master for the events that unfold.

I loved this story and the journey to where it took me. But, I wouldn't be an honest reviewer if I didn't mention a couple of things that bothered me. It took me a while to get into the writing in and of itself. By that, I mean that I felt as though some of the sentences were choppy, and the unnecessary descriptions in the beginning of the book left me aloof. I realize that the descriptions of Dare's clothing were to paint Dare's character, but the author did a wonderful job of building Dare's character without the detail of her blouse, skirt, and shoes. Also, the description of Douglas's walks to visit his patients made me feel as though I was reading a map (Main to Elm...turn right on Elm...cross Willow)...well, you get the idea. But, again...this was

only in the first chapter that I was bothered with it. The rest of the book was beautifully written and well worth reading. The way the author took Douglas from a mild mannered, small town doctor to a man on the brink was nothing short of brilliant. His portrayal of Mrs. King and Dare...along with the little snippiness that tends to accompany a jealous female...painted a near-love triangle with Douglas at the vortex.

So, what of the title, Red Lory, and Hannah, the parrot? How does it tie in? Well, Hannah is a significant part of this fictional web of lies and secrets, and ... parrots are talking birds, aren't they? I give this book 4.5 stars and hope to see a sequel in the future. There is definitely room for this story to go farther. Kudos to you, Dave Newell. I look forward to reading more of your work in the future.

Look for Red Lory to be released on November 2, 2012. I will update my blog post with purchase links upon this book's release. In the meantime, you can add it to your Goodreads bookshelf.

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### **Charles Sheehan-Miles says**

Red Lory is a remarkable and disturbing book by debut novelist Dave Newell.

I've read a number of comparisons between Red Lory and old Hitchcock films, but if I had to draw a literary parallel, Douglas Howard reminds me the most of Ethan Allen Hawley in the Steinbeck's Winter of Our Discontent. It has the texture and feel of a film from the 1940s, and I couldn't help but imagine much of it in black and white, except for the bird, which was clearly Technicolor.

Red Lory is not a light read, though its very short length might lead you to think so, at first. In fact, it has heavy undertones, dealing with love, family misunderstandings, and above all moral questions of right and wrong.

The book is very understated in its emotional tone and intentionally leaves unanswered questions and thought provoking moments, though toward the end there are a couple of gasp worthy moments. Dave Newell is very economical and careful about every word, and they are executed perfectly. Well worth reading more than once.

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### **Jim says**

The characters you will meet in Red Lory earn your acquaintance through the magic of literature. Unlike even our closest friends, the mind and motives of these authentic personalities are exposed in the words of this skillful author. Still, you would like to be their friends. Well, all but one of them, and you'll have to read it yourself to find out who.

As another reader has said of Red Lory, it also ended too quickly for me because it is so enjoyable and easy to read and not at all because it is rushed. It does not feel rushed because Mr. Newell captures so well the atmosphere of the small town called Hill. You, as a reader are the resident walking down the sidewalk, eating lunch in Travers and even the fly on the wall of the King's house.

The novel is easy, not because it's written for young adults but because it's written in a style that engages all

your senses and emotions, some of them between the written words. One of the hallmarks of a successful author is the ability to get a reader's imagination rolling with sufficient momentum to keep it going without further instruction from the text. Dave Newell does that with his writing.

Someone asked me why I would read a story that exercises my emotions so thoroughly. Those story-stirred emotions open up humans in a way that rarely happens in the real world where we keep our splinters under layers of whitewash. Done well, fiction can remind us to be sympathetic toward others, even while it entertains us. Red Lory hits the bullseye in that department.

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### **Tarryn Fisher says**

What just happened? In my opinion, that's a great thing to be thinking after finishing a book. Red Lory bent my mind. It's short and sharp and it tastes like a Hitchcock/Somerset Maugham cocktail. This book makes me proud to be part of the Indie community again. It's not quite like anything else. There are no cheap words, filler characters or smut. It's just art. Well thought out art. Brilliant.

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### **Angela McLaurin says**

Not a romance, not a mystery, not a suspense, but yet it was all of those things in one beautifully simple story.

What a brilliant novel! I am still trying to wrap my mind around the story. Your scalp tingles, the hairs on your arms stand on end, you glance over your shoulder.....something is about to happen and silence fills the air leaving you terrifyingly unsettled. Dave Newell truly has a gift for writing that I have yet to experience from any other author! This story was so simply told, but it was what he didn't tell us that has my brain warped. So much was left for the reader to figure out and "read into." Even hours after finishing I'm still not sure that my interpretation is correct, but that's what made it such a brilliant novel. The pacing was slow, on purpose, and only added to the chilling plot. Then there was the red lory bird.....it mocked the characters and left me even more unsettled as the story unfolded. This one is sure to have readers debating and discussing and questioning to no end. Five beautiful, simple, and complex stars!!

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### **Karma♥Bites ^.^ says**

*"The sunlight illuminated a world of dust confined to hovering about the stream of light like fine, floating carpets."*

RED LORY is a rather ambitious and well-written debut novel by Dave Newell. I highly recommend it for readers who can enjoy a book without being spoon-fed material facts and having everything neatly wrapped up in the end. It is not a romance (although love and lust certainly play a role) and there is no HEA (except perhaps for one character). Instead, RED LORY is a cautionary tale about the lengths to which some people will go as their lives and circumstances begin to close in on them. As one character repeats at different times, "I can't take it anymore".

Best classified as *noir* fiction, RED LORY's style, pacing and storyline are evocative of *film noir*. One reviewer mentioned Alfred Hitchcock's films; however, for me, the ending brought to mind Nicholas Ray's *In a Lonely Place* (my father's favorite Bogart film).

Nonetheless, the analogy to the old black and white films is apt as RED LORY reads and feels like a screenplay—which is both its strength and its weakness. Dave Newell's writing is clean and precise, giving the reader just enough to visualize the story as it unfolds, and at times, it is poetic. The author does a fine job of recreating the feel of small-town life and its people. There is almost a deliberate slowness to RED LORY—perfect for the novel's time period and setting, as well as the pace with which the inner thoughts of the primary characters are revealed through bits of dialogue.

My only criticism would be that the book's similarity to a screenplay was a major shortcoming when it came to the characters. Lacking the audio and visual cues which add depth to the acting and the dialogue in a movie or play, the primary characters in RED LORY felt somewhat flat and unfinished. Perhaps it was meant to tantalize the reader or to leave certain things wide open to interpretation, but I felt that there was a bit too much left unsaid, especially with such flawed characters. So as much as I enjoyed the story and Newell's writing, I found it difficult to connect to, or sympathize with, any of them, (view spoiler) and by the end, only Hannah remained in my good stead.

*\* Advance copy provided by the author for an objective review.*

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