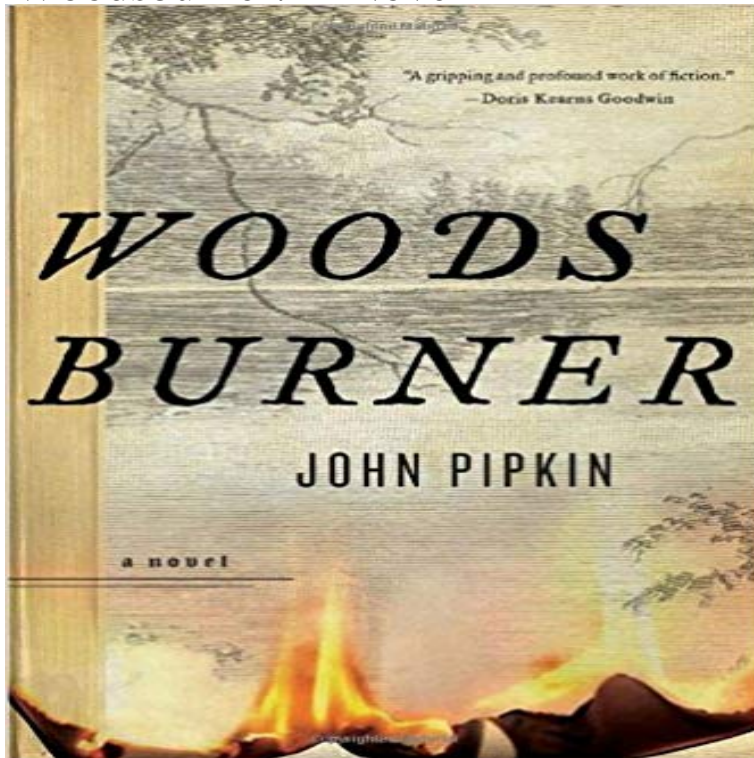


Woodsburner: A Novel



Woodsburner springs from a little-known event in the life of one of Americas most iconic figures, Henry David Thoreau. On April 30, 1844, a year before he built his cabin on Walden Pond, Thoreau accidentally started a forest fire that destroyed three hundred acres of the Concord woodsan event that altered the landscape of American thought in a single day. Against the background of Thoreaus fire, Pipkins ambitious debut penetrates the mind of the young philosopher while also painting a panorama of the young nation at a formative moment. Pipkins Thoreau is a lost soul, plagued by indecision, resigned to a career designing pencils for his fathers factory while dreaming of better things. On the day of the fire, his path will intersect with three very different local citizens, each of whom also harbors a secret dream. Oddmund Hus, a lovable Norwegian farmhand, pines for the wife of his brutal employer. Elliott Calvert, a prosperous bookseller, is also a hilariously inept aspiring playwright. And Caleb Dowdy preaches fire and brimstone to his congregation through an opium haze. Each of their lives, like Thoreaus, is changed forever by the fire. Like Geraldine Brookss March and Colm Toibins The Master, Woodsburner illuminates Americas literary and cultural past with insight, wit, and deep affection for its unforgettable characters, as it brings to vivid life the complex man whose writings have inspired generations

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