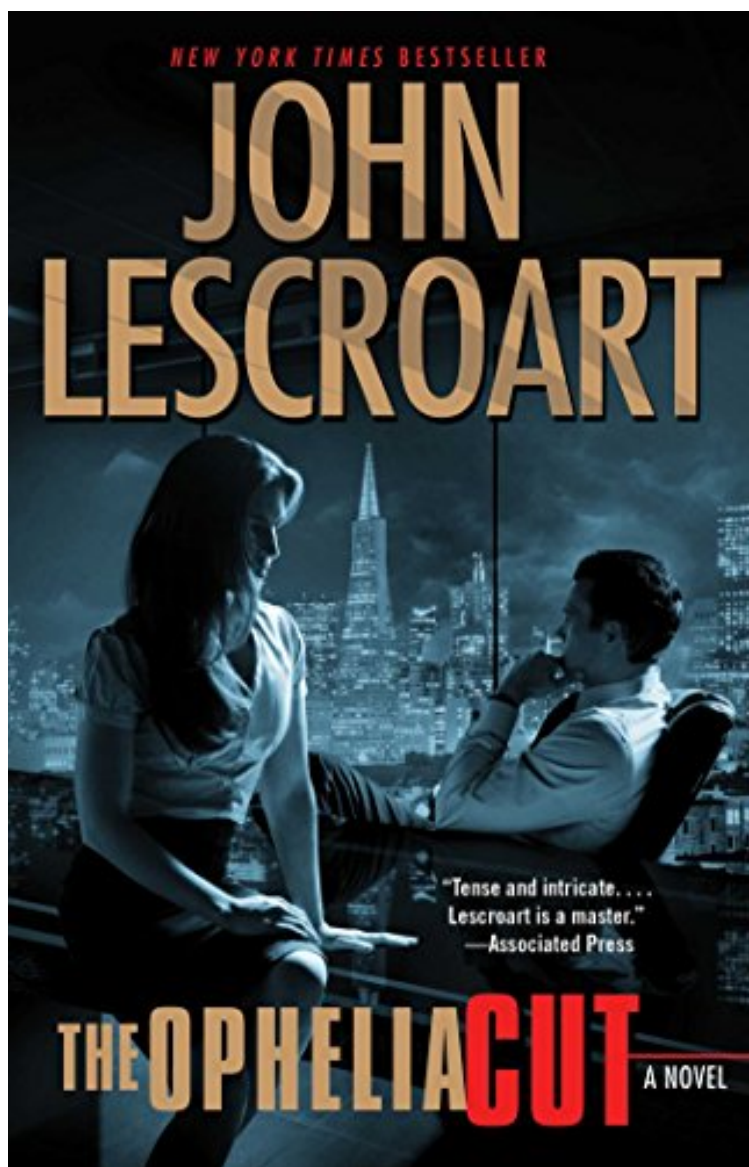


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# The Ophelia Cut: A Novel



*Par John Lescroart*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurWHEN A BRUTAL RAPIST IS MURDERED, A LOVING FATHER STANDS ACCUSED OF THE CRIME. DEFENSE ATTORNEY DISMAS HARDY MUST DEFEND HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW AND OLD FRIEND MOSES McGUIRE IN A THRILLING CASE THAT HITS FAR TOO CLOSE TO HOME. Moses McGuire has good reason to be concerned about his beautiful twenty-three-year-old daughter, Brittany. She moves quickly from one boyfriend to the next, and always seems to prefer a new and mysterious stranger to a man she knows something about. But her most recent ex, Rick Jessup, isnt willing to let her go, culminating in a terrible night when Brittany is raped. Within twenty-four hours, Rick Jessup is dead, Moses McGuire is the prime suspect in the investigation, and Dismas Hardy has

been hired to defend his brother-in-law. Making things even more complicated, McGuire has fallen off the wagon, and his stay in prison could bring to light old secrets that would destroy Hardy and his closest colleagues careers. As the overwhelming evidence against McGuire piles up, Dismas Hardy focuses on planting doubt in the minds of the jurors until, in a feat of legal ingenuity that is staggering in both its implications and its simplicity, Hardy sees a new way forward that might just save them all. But at what price? For the first time since 2009, Dismas Hardy, the authors most beloved protagonist, returns in a masterful novel that showcases Lescroarts extraordinary story-telling gifts: a cast of flesh-and-blood characters, morally complex situations, and relentless, nail-biting suspense.

Extrait The Ophelia Cut 1

MOSES HAD WANTED to see Dismas Hardy alone. He'd unexpectedly dropped by Hardys house on Thirty-fourth Avenue, and now the two men kept up a brisk pace as they walked along Geary toward the beach on this overcast November Sunday afternoon. Moses McGuire didn't like to worry his only sibling, Frannie, Hardys wife. And he was, himself, worried to distraction. That morning San Franciscos second newspaper, the Courier, had run an article by a columnist named Sheila Marrenas. It was part of a series on unsolved crimes in the city. This one revisited an event dubbed the Dockside Massacre, in which six years ago, five people, including the citys head of Homicide, Barry Gerson, had been killed in a gunfight on Pier 70. For McGuire and, he would have thought, for a lawyer like Hardy it struck a little too close to home. They don't call her Heinous Marrenas for nothing, Hardy said. Nobody reads her, Mose. I wouldn't worry about it. I read her. Lots of other people read her. She mentioned you by name. Although that sent a little shiver of apprehension down Hardys spine, he suppressed it. She mention you? No. Abe, Gina, anybody else? Freeman. David remains dead, if I'm not mistaken. He's not about to talk. Is that it? McGuire went on for a few steps, then stopped. Tell me it doesn't get inside your head, he said. Hardy pulled up, took in a breath. It's never not inside my head, Mose. It never goes away. Not what we did. We had no choice about that. But the idea that it might come out. I live in fear of it every day. You ever think it might be better if we just... I mean, as it is, I read an article like that, I'm just waiting for the other shoe to drop. Should we maybe bring it out into the open? Here's the easy answer to that: never in a million years. You shouldn't even begin to think anything like that. It would ruin a lot of lives, including yours. All right. But this living under the constant threat of exposure is far better than living with the alternative, and don't you kid yourself. Hardy started walking again, and Moses fell in beside him. You feel guilty? he asked after a few steps. McGuire shook his head. No. That's why I think it wouldn't be so bad. If people knew what really happened, they'd see we had no choice. It was pure self-defense. True, but probably better not to let other people make that decision. We know it. We live with it. That's enough. It's wearing on me. That's all I'm saying. It wears on us all, Mose. I wish it hadn't happened, but talking about it isn't going to make things better. Now it was Hardys turn to stop. You don't think I haven't had nightmares? I'm watching a damn ball game and suddenly I'm zoned out, back there on that pier, taking the hit to my Kevlar. I'm not wearing that vest, I'm dead right now, you realize that? You don't think that makes an impression? That's what I'm saying. We keep it a secret, we're basically saying it wasn't the right thing to do, and we know it was. No. Completely wrong. What we're basically saying is that, right or wrong, we can't tell anybody not ever because nobody would understand, and our worlds, as we know them now, would end. Hardy hesitated, then went on. This is your damned twelve-step program talking. I don't care what they've been telling you all this time, having every issue out in the open, in the bright light of day, so you can talk about it and analyze how you feel about it is not the solution to every problem. Sometimes the solution trust me here is you just shut up and suck it up. As always, with any even minor criticism of his A.A. program, McGuire became defensive. Talking about issues has saved my life, he snapped. Maybe you ought to try it. You might surprise yourself. I hate surprises. Yeah, well, there's a time and place for everything. Not necessarily, Hardy said. And even if there is, here and now isn't it.

IN THE MIDDLE of the afternoon on the second Tuesday in November, the head of San Franciscos Homicide detail, Lieutenant Abe Glitsky, got back from a staff meeting. The light on his desk phone was blinking, and he punched into a voice message from his best friend, Dismas Hardy, inviting him to a dinner that evening at Sams Grill, where Hardy had reserved a four-top booth. Glitsky, he said, was needed. Cryptic, but that was Hardy. Glitsky should show up with bells on at six-thirty. Glitsky usually made it a point to eat with his family, but upon hearing this message, he realized that he couldn't remember the last time he'd been out for fun. Come to think of it, he hadn't laid eyes on Hardy in almost a month. The face time they got had taken a bit of a hit over the past couple of years, a victim of the difference between their home lives, Glitsky and Treya with their second round of young children, ages five and seven; Hardy and Frannie empty nesters, pretty much over all that. Glitsky picked up the phone, about to call Hardy to say he couldn't make it, not

enough notice, but instead paused, sighed, and hung up. Ten seconds later, now thinking he'd call his wife and ask whether she'd mind if he went, he picked up the phone again, then looked at it as though it were a foreign object and replaced the receiver. Treya worked as the private secretary to the district attorney, Wes Farrell, whose office was down two flights of stairs in the Hall of Justice. If Glitsky took the longest possible route down his hallway to the elevator, then back down her hallway she was about two hundred paces from where he stood. The inside stairway was quicker and got him there in under a minute. HEY! TREYA BRIGHTENED and stood up behind her terminal as Glitsky came through her door. When she looked at him, her smile faded as quickly as it had bloomed. What's wrong? Is something wrong? I don't know. Well, something made you ask. It's just you show up out of nowhere with that frown on... That was my everything's fine frown. Here's an idea. Maybe you could work on an everything's fine smile, the way other people do. Smiling's not really my thing. Sometimes I feel bad about that, but it's useful in my work. He came forward and stood across her desk from her. Okay, heads up. Ready? He flashed his teeth, returned to deadpan. How was that? Maybe worth practicing, slow it down a little. It could fly. I'll work on it. Treya's expression softened. Like her husband Jewish on his father's side and black on his mother's Treya came from a mixed heritage that showed in her face: black, white, perhaps some Pacific Islander somewhere back in the gene pool. Five feet ten, big-boned, and strongly built, she could project a formidable presence. Now she reached across her desk and touched her husband's cheek. Meanwhile, she said, to what do I owe the pleasure of this personal audience? I got a call from Diz. He wants me to meet him at Sam's for dinner. I thought I'd run it by you. She didn't hesitate. Sounds like a good idea to me. You don't have to ask. I know. I just thought you and the kids... Please. One night? Go have some fun. You stop seeing your friends, they stop being your friends. And you don't want that with Diz. Is it a special occasion? No. Just hanging out, I gather. Go. You're the best. Coming around the desk, he kissed her. I owe you one. IN THE BOOTH at Sam's, Glitsky's three prospective dinner partners sat over their drinks. Dismas Hardy had started early on his first martini at the bar with his law partner, Gina Roake. She sat next to him now, nursing her Oban Scotch, into which the one ice cube had long since melted. Across the table from them both, Moses McGuire turned his club soda around in his glass. Is that really when you stopped drinking? That day? Gina asked him. McGuire nodded. Not exactly, a little later, but six years ago. That's worth celebrating on its own, Hardy said. Speak for thyself, Moses said. Has it been that hard? Gina asked. Moses grunted, possibly under the impression that he was laughing. Only every day. Then, to Hardy, And while we're at it, I'm not sure celebrating is the right word, Diz. Commemorating, maybe. I like commemorating. Gina's mouth was set as she took another sip. I guess I'm here more to commemorate David. I'll drink to David, Hardy said, anytime. But let's not forget that there's the quick and the dead, and we're all still here among the quick, so call it what you want commemorating or celebrating I'd say that's worth raising a glass. Figuratively, in your case, Mose, since you probably don't really want to raise a glass of real stuff to your sobriety, either. Thanks for reminding me. Hardy nodded. I live to serve. At that moment, Glitsky pushed aside the booth's curtain, filling the entire opening. Is this the place? He arrives, Hardy said. McGuire pushed his chair back to give Glitsky room to sit next to him, but the lieutenant didn't move. He stood where he was, in the doorway, obviously surprised by something. His face morphed through a catalog of expressions, none of them his everything's fine smile. He chewed the inside of his cheek. McGuire moved his chair back another couple of inches. Grab a chair, Abe, he said. Take a load off. The scar through his lips beginning to stand out in relief, the lieutenant took another beat before his shoulders gave slightly and he blew out through his mouth. This is not a good idea. I can't do this. Abe! Hardy said. But with a shake of his head, Glitsky had already stepped back and pulled the booth's curtain closed behind him. IN TRUTH, THEY were there neither to celebrate nor to commemorate. After his talk with Moses on their walk to the beach two days ago, Hardy had thought it would be a good idea to gather all the surviving principals of the massacre so that he, Gina, and Glitsky could gang up on Moses and help him reaffirm his commitment to their lifelong vow of silence. Even Abe, with his abrupt and unplanned departure, had unwittingly underscored the urgency of the commitment. He wasn't even going to talk about it with the only people who knew. Gina, her hand protectively on McGuire's arm, leaned toward him across the table. If you really need to talk about it find a place to put it you can always come to me. Gina, Hardy began with a warning tone, I don't think She stopped him midobjection. No. Moses has a point here. We don't have to keep it bottled up forever. I've wanted to talk about it a hundred times. All of us, it's got to be the same. Then something like Marrenass's column comes around, and the pressure builds up. I don't see anything wrong with being each other's safety valves. Hardy shook his head, far from agreeing. And then we get kind of used to it being something we talk about. I don't even want that here, in our private little booth.

All right, Diz, then dont. Youve got my permission. You do it your way, which youre going to do anyhow. What Im telling Moses is, if he wants, I can be there for him. For this. With a somber look, McGuire put his hand over Ginas, gave her a nod. Thats all Im saying. Hardy looked from one to the other. Im wishing Abe would have stayed. Hes got the right attitude. Hed vote with me. Gina gave him a tolerant smile. That would still only make it a tie, she said. GLITSKY LIVED IN an upper duplex just off Lake Street on a block that ended at the wooded southern border of the Presidio. At a little past midnight, the only light in his living room came from the streetlamps outside through the bay window in the front of his building. In a bathrobe, he sat in his reading chair, hands gripped in his lap. Subliminally, he registered his home giving up the occasional tick or moanthe heat going on and off, one of his children turning over somewhere behind him in the back of the unit, wood creaking as the ground shifted a millimeter along one of the citys fault lines. A muted rustling of cloth preceded evenly spaced footfalls, and his eyes went to the hall leading to his bedroom until a silhouette appeared. Treya. Are you coming back to bed? I didnt want to keep you up. Thats not working out so well. Was I making noise out here? Just sitting there? I dont know. Sighing or something.

No. That wasnt why I couldnt sleep. I felt you not there. She lowered herself onto the couch across from him. Do you want to talk about it? He lifted one arm off the chair, let it drop back down. Theres a reason the four of us havent been in the same place for six years. Im not making this up, you know. No. Of course. I never thought you were. I remember it all pretty well myself. I mean, Im a cop, Treya. I dont get in shoot-outs with other cops. Even rent-a-cops like those Patrol Specials. And Gerson winds up dead. The head of Homicide. We killed him. We killed all of them. They killed people, too. Dont forget David Freeman. I dont. Not for a minute. I never said they didnt deserve it. All of them. And if Diz and Gina and Moses had come even two minutes later, they would have gotten me, too. I get it. I really do. We had no choice, okay, but that doesnt change the fact. Now he did sigh. I dont know what they were thinking, throwing a party at Sams.

McGuire, okay, I can see. Hes always a wild card. But Diz and Gina? Theyre lawyers. They should know better. Maybe they want just to put it behind them. They think its not an issue anymore. Glitsky blew out a frustrated breath. They cant think that. They know otherwise. Theres no statute on murder, and those were murders. They were homicides, Abe, not murders. That doesnt really matter. We didnt stick around so we could have a nice fair trial about it. They were His voice went harsh. We cant acknowledge it, Treya. Any part of it. It never happened. How can they not see that? He raised both hands and gripped his head as though it were a soccer ball. Lord. My brain is going to explode. She crossed over to him, sat on the chairs arm, put her hands over his. Take a breath, she said. Its all right. He settled back against her. How do they know they dont have booths bugged at Sams? Or maybe microphones in the sand dabs, she said. You laugh, but its not impossible. Pretty unlikely, you must admit. I really think they just wanted to put it all behind them. You know Diz. He likes to have events, mark passages. This shouldnt be one of them. This should be something he takes with him to his grave. And McGuire... What about him? God forbid he ever goes off the wagon. She pulled his head closer against her. This is exhaustion speaking. Why dont you just call tomorrow and talk to Diz? Not on the phone. No. Perish the thought. Think of the bugging possibilities. Go meet him in the middle of Crissy Field. Youre making fun of me. Only a little. Come back to bed. MOSES MCGUIRE

SAT at the Formica table in the kitchen of his apartment, nursing a Guinness pint glass filled with water. With his dinner at Sams, hed had cranberry juice and then club soda; after dinner, coffee. While Hardy and Gina had their Frangelico nightcaps, he went to straight water. He and Susan didnt keep any alcohol except some wine in the apartment, but Moses wasnt much of a wine drinker, so that wasnt usually a problem. Not that the thought didnt cross his mind. But he knew the danger he faced if he ever gave in to the constant urge and poured himself a real drink. He knew how he got social, friendly, garrulous. Words came out of his mouth that should have stayed in. Hed almost mentioned the shoot-out six years ago, at least twice, before barely stopping himself. Twice was too much. Too many other lives were at stake, both of friends and of family. He couldnt risk it anymore, and so, cold turkey, he had hooked up with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Goddamn secrets, he thought. If he didnt have secrets, particularly that secret, he could be drinking right now. And most of the time, truth be told, he could bear the craving. But after the Courier article, in spite of the best efforts of Diz and Gina, he hadnt been able to shake his nerves. He wanted a drinkfuck, he needed a drinkto calm them. Susan was asleep. There was no one here at home to spill his secrets to. It was safe. He checked his watch. If he could survive dry for four more hours, he could make the six A.M. meeting. On the other hand, one little half glass of wine wasnt going to hurt him. Was it? As he pushed his chair back from the table, he heard a key turn in the front door, then a whispered Hey? Is somebody up? His twenty-three-year-old daughter, Brittany. Moses came around the corner into the living room. Hey yourself. Just your old

man. What are you doing here? I missed my room. Is that okay? Of course. My apartment is nice, but it doesn't always feel like home. No. I know the feeling. You could move back in here, you know. She sighed. I don't think so. It's just some nights. Okay. But the offers good anytime. So where have you been? Out. Anyplace specific? She half shrugged. Just out, Dad, with some guy. Does he have a name? Not really, she said. It doesn't matter. And you don't have to feel like you need to protect me. Moses felt his jaw tighten. God forbid he should worry about his daughter. No protection implied, just a mild fatherly interest. You show up here, needing the comfort of your old room, I think something might have made you unhappy. No. I'm happy. I'm fine. I'm glad to hear it. Even gladder to see you. How about a little hug, no questions asked? Her shoulders rose and fell. I don't see how that could hurt.

Revue de presse" Smart, riveting, and utterly compelling, *The Ophelia Cut* has and an incredible cast of characters from whom you will not want to depart...hands-down the best legal thriller I have read in years and a perfect case study for why readers love the brilliant John Lescroart. (Brad Thor, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Black List*)"Nothing short of magic, dark and delicious. *The Ophelia Cut* is the work of a master at the top of his game." (William Kent Krueger, New York Times bestselling author of *Trickster's Point*)Bristling with red-hot suspense, *The Ophelia Cut* is the roller-coaster ride of a lifetime... You'll love this book." (Gayle Lynds, New York Times bestselling author of *The Book of Spies*)An amazing page-turner, emotional, significant and suspenseful. Lescroart has written his most gripping novel to date, one which sets a new standard. (M.J. Rose, internationally bestselling author)