

## Last Place Called Home

by Betsy Hartmann



---

Fiction - Thriller - Political

296 Pages

Reviewed on 03/25/2024

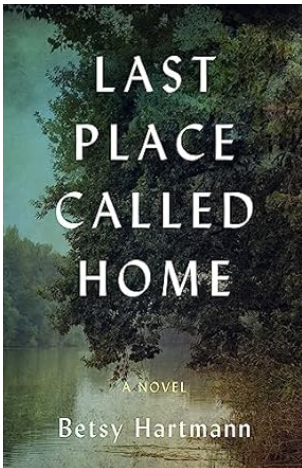
---

## Book Review

### Reviewed by Romuald Dzemo for Readers' Favorite

*Last Place Called Home* by Betsy Hartmann is a dazzling portrait of life in the small mill town of Stanton, Massachusetts, where the war on drugs collides with the lives of ordinary citizens. Set against the backdrop of the secret federal operation known as Snakehead, an operation that targets the fentanyl trade, the novel follows three mothers—Laura Everett, Mimi Sullivan, and Angie Gillen—as they face the chaos to protect their troubled teenagers from the ravages of addiction and violence. Laura is a newspaper reporter torn between her budding relationship with Nate and her concern for Donnie's safety amidst gang violence. Mimi is a businesswoman whose daughter's heroin addiction is cause for concern, and while she must deal with the addiction, her husband has a gambling problem. Angie is a machinist who has the challenge of reconciling with her estranged son while facing the escalating drug crisis in her community. As the tension and violence escalate with the deepening opioid crisis, these characters must work together to protect their loved ones.

Betsy Hartmann's novel is a beautiful literary creation with a setting that feels like a character in its own right. The setting is so finely drawn that readers can feel the town, visualize its alleys, and quickly follow its rhythm. The characters are multidimensional, each of them with a haunting background. Operation Snakehead creates an element of intrigue as readers want to know its real purpose. Cops breaking ranks after discovering the real purpose of the operation makes the story even more enjoyable. The suspense grows as readers turn from one page to the next. The author offers everything readers want in a political thriller, examining a town threatened by gang violence, drugs, and now a shady operation. The relationships are deftly written. I particularly enjoyed how the author depicts the anxiety that mothers have about their children and how far they will go to protect them. The prose itself is pure delight. Intimacy, love, addiction, and redemption are cleverly developed themes in this thrilling novel. Overall, *Last Place Called Home* is excellent.



## Last Place Called Home

by Betsy Hartmann



Fiction - Thriller - Political

296 Pages

Reviewed on 03/25/2024

---

### Author Biography



Author, scholar, and activist Betsy Hartmann addresses critical national and global challenges in her books, articles, and public appearances. She is the author of the feminist classic *Reproductive Rights and Wrong: The Global Politics of Population Control* and most recently of *The America Syndrome: Apocalypse, War and Our Call to Greatness*. Eerily prescient, her two political thrillers, *The Truth about Fire* and *Deadly Election*, explore the threat the Far Right poses to American democracy. Betsy did her undergraduate degree at Yale University and her PhD at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is professor emerita of Development Studies at Hampshire College, where she taught for twenty-eight years. She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts. For more on Betsy, visit <https://betsyhartmann.com>.