



A Forgotten Man

J. Pepper Bryars

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A Forgotten Man, the first novel in The Life of Julia series, is an emotional tale of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless. It's a story of one father's heroic struggle to provide for his family, of one mother's heartbreaking sacrifices, and the tragic unraveling of a young girl's once-promising future. The novel captures the unseen impact of the Great Recession on American families and explores the changing relationships between citizens and their government.

The novel follows the Bosarge family — Jack, Donita, and their three-year-old daughter Julia — after environmental regulations force a small town seafood company to close, costing Jack his job and sending his family deeply into debt. As Jack fails to find employment, Donita loses hope and their way of life begins to crumble beneath a society that has forgotten about working class men and women.

Out of their trials and repeated attempts to recover unfolds a sad tale of injustice, hardship, and desperation. Packed with meaning yet plainspoken, A Forgotten Man shows what it's like to be broken, alone, and forgotten in modern America.

The debut novel from J. Pepper Bryars was inspired by the controversial political advertisement “The Life of Julia,” by President Barack Obama’s reelection campaign. The ad showed snapshots of how government programs helped a fictionalized woman named Julia during 12 pivotal years in her life, beginning at age 3 and ending at age 67. The series from Bryars, however, will tell the rest of her story, showing the complete impact of an increasingly large and powerful central government, and what really happens to Julia and those around her.

A Forgotten Man is a cautionary tale that speaks for a “new lost generation” of American families who are beset by debt, burdened by government, and without the hopes and dreams that inspired, fueled, and built the great nation they inherited, but may not be able to sustain.

A Forgotten Man Details

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From Reader Review A Forgotten Man for online ebook

Babus Ahmed says

Life for Julia's parents changes devastatingly when her father, Jack, loses his job as an oysterman, due to environmentalists campaigning against the local adverse effects of oyster farming. This results in her mother taking jobs waiting tables and her father signing on for unemployment and the family needing welfare. Despite training as a machinist, things get harder for the family. Julia is enrolled in the government's Head Start programme to help her parents with childcare whilst they work and search for jobs but she is eventually taken away by social services when the family are forced to sleep in their car.

This story is instantly relatable and well-written and very sad indeed. The human desperation of Julia's parents as they fight to keep their family together is palpable and what's haunting is that the story could so easily be true. I loved reading this book as the author so eloquently describes a dire situation making you live it alongside his characters, whom you grow to like and care about, but a lot of this book is politically charged which means less to those of us not living in America dealing with the changes brought about by the current government.

Marion Marchetto says

If you read only one book this year, this should be the one. I don't care which side of the aisle you vote from but I'm sure that you'll come away from reading A Forgotten Man wanting to take a second look at what government involvement does to the common man's life.

This story introduces Jack Bosarge and his wife Donita and their three year-old daughter Julia. Jack is an oyster-man and is employed by a well-established Oyster Company in Bienville, Louisiana. It is a few short years after Hurricane Katrina and recovery is slow in that region. Jack's wife Donita is a stay-at-home mom who care for their daughter in their rented mobile home. With overtime pay and a steady income, life is pretty good for the Bosarge family. When an environmentalist group raises their complaints about overfishing and culling the area waters, the government comes down hard on the Oyster Company even though the company has gone beyond the government guidelines to care for the local environment. In short order, the company is closed down and the employees find themselves out of work. What follows is the step-by-step destruction of life for the young Bosarge family. Using every means at their disposal, personal as well as governmental assistance, the family is soon reduced to poverty and homelessness.

A Forgotten Man is not your fast beach read although the story is so well told that you'll find yourself turning the pages in the hopes that Jack and his family have a reversal of fortune. This is the first book of a series entitled The Life of Julia Series that will follow young Julia throughout her life. I eagerly anticipate the next installment of this series. Highly recommended.

Joseph Alexander Nagy, Jr. says

As per FTC guidelines, I received a copy of this book in return for my unbiased review, no other compensation has been offered, asked for, or accepted. What follows is my opinion on the aforementioned book.

There are few books which I consider ‘page turners’ and this one – despite it being a well-deserved criticism of progressivist/liberal/socialist ideology – is definitely a page turner. I managed to read the entire book, in e-book format (I do not normally enjoy doing much reading on a computer screen in one sitting), in one day. Mr. Bryars has managed to take a campaign ad – admittedly one which I’m still ignorant of at the time of writing this review – from President Obama’s re-election campaign, and use it to paint an accurate picture of not just what life would be like under such policies but how they actually are because of those policies. It is really poignant in my own life as well due to my own circumstances.

The characters of Jack, Donita, and Julia Bosarge are believable. I could almost mistake them for my next door neighbors or even my best friend and his family. From having a good steady job to losing it all, this scene is really played out in America and – as in the book – most of the players do not care about who they hurt in the process.

Ultimately *A Forgotten Man* is a story not of a man and his family, but of the effects that the liberal agenda has on the very people they claim to be helping. From radical environmentalists who care more about animal welfare than human welfare to the government who just tries to shut up the squeaky wheels so they can remain in power. A government big enough to set aside wildlife refuges where there were none before is big enough to send whole communities of Bosarge’s into the poor house, unrecoverably so, by the very policies put in place that claim to try and help. This is a story of government excess, and why socialism/progressivism/liberalism cannot exist without a strong central government, something our Founding Fathers sought to avoid. They understood the problems associated with it, and such problems have played themselves out throughout history. The U.S.S.R., China, Cuba, North Korea. Anywhere socialism exists in its purist forms, there exists equally impoverished people and equally brutal governments. China succeeds not because of socialism, but in spite of it. With the loosening of governmental reigns over business, China’s economy is able to blossom. With the tightening of governmental reigns in the U.S. the economy is stagnating and slowly dying.

A Forgotten Man reminds us of the kind of men who managed to succeed. Not the ones who took the hand-outs, but the ones who took chances, worked hard, and never complained about how tough it was because they understood they were entitled to nothing they didn’t earn themselves. Jack Bosarge continues to want to work not out of stubborn pride, but because he knows that hard work is needed to succeed and pull oneself up out poverty, not government programs which tell you that you can’t work and actually incentivize not working.

In the end, the children whom progressives claim to want to help, are the ones ultimately harmed by the very policies they have implemented. *A Forgotten Man* should be read not just because it’s a good story, but also because it’s an excellent illustration of the realities of socialism, a reality which the current generation of ideologues on the left want to forget and have forgotten. It’s a harsh criticism wrapped up in a poignant example wrapped up in a beautifully written tale of one family’s struggle to make it when even the government has turned against them.

David Brown says

Economic Egalitarianism at its Worst! This book captures the chilling affects of big government and the results of Statist Keynesian attempts to ensure equality of outcome, not just equality of opportunity. When the government tries to control too much, it negatively impacts everything; for each problem it seems to solve, it causes a dozen more! Julia's mother, Donita, of "A Forgotten Man" sums up her frustration: "First [the government] runs Bienville out of business; then they cause my boss to shrink his staff. And what for? So I can sign up for healthcare that we still can't pay for, and now I don't even have a job. How am I better off for that, I'd like to know?" Mr. Bryars' idea to fill in the blanks of Obama's propaganda tool, Julia, is top-notch, and he has written his book in a way that makes you cry out for justice. Julia certainly doesn't deserve this; nobody does! Government should not be an obstacle to recovery, and it should definitely not be the cause of poverty; unfortunately as shown in this narrative (and mirrored in real life) it is. Anyone reading this book who doesn't feel for this fictitious (but all too real) family is a heartless ideologue. Even though this book is heart-wrenching, I think Mr. Bryars has found a buyer for the rest of his upcoming books about the Life of Julia. I must see how she ends up in a Canadian refugee resettlement camp! Thank you the excellent read, sir.

Rena says

My heart is aching!!

I loved the style of writing and felt like I knew this family.

I wanted to cry, scream and get angry along with them as they fought, what was, a never ending battle.

I'm glad I read it but my heart will hurt for days.

That is why I gave it 5 stars, because it made me feel emotions I typically don't feel when reading a book.

Jimmy says

A Forgotten Man shows how quickly life can change, especially with the loss of a job and no real prospects for another, it is a sad and depressing tale that was a bit too realistic for me having been in a similar situation in the past.

J. Pepper Bryars shows the flip side of some of our "Government Programs" that are supposed to help people in need which actually do way more harm than good, Jack and Donita Bosarge hit rock bottom, taking their young daughter Julia through the struggles of simply trying to make it with the proverbial wolf scratching at the door, this book will indeed make you think and the story told is one that happens every day to a lot of people.

I had a hard time putting this book down, I found myself pulling for this family and hoping for any good luck at all to fall their way, but sometimes no matter how hard you work there is always another obstacle thrown in your path.

Jessica Spydurpoet says

I was initially struck by the poetic writing, the incredible, descriptive language the author used. You get involved with the characters, feel for them, at times cry with them. You get angry for them. Amazing read. I will definitely be reading the subsequent books in the series.

Jan says

This book is not at all what I expected. It's about the spiral our government has put many people's lives into. All those government programs meant to help actually hinder someone from climbing out of life's hole and just buries them deeper.

Lori says

Plainly written with a message that needs to be heard. A must read!!!!

"Now who is the Forgotten Man? He is the simple, honest laborer, ready to earn his living by productive work" Sumner wrote in 1883. "We pass him by because he is independent, self-supporting, and asks no favors. We do not remember him because he makes no clamor; but I appeal to you whether he is not the man who ought to be remembered first of all." A Forgotten Man pg 199

Kelly says

True eye opener

The truth in this book is scary. It is well written and shows what the government and "tree huggers" are doing to Americans that work hard. This could have been us.

Cyndi says

I don't often leave 5 star reviews. The only time I do is when I keep thinking about the book after I'm done. This was one of those books. Although the story was sad, it brought home the fact that many people in this country are experiencing the same thing as these people did. It's too bad the news doesn't have more stories like this instead of the massive crime and meant-to-inspire-fear stories they air.

Even though I knew what was going to happen, I couldn't help hoping that somehow something great would

happen and everything would be ok. Although I don't like books that end in a cliffhanger and are part of a series, I'm looking forward to reading the next installment.

The only thing I didn't like was that the author chose to blame Obamacare for the reason the characters were in the predicament they were in. Let's be honest -- our government stopped taking care of it's own long before Obamacare.

Kia says

In "A Forgotten Man," J. Pepper Bryars constructs a modern day tragedy about a salt-of-the earth family who live in Bienville Bay, in the Gulf of Mexico. Jack Bosarge is an oysterman like generations of his ancestors. After a day's work on the bay, he comes home to his wife, Donita, and their sweet young daughter, Julia.

The Bosarges live simply but (unfortunately for them) at the very edge of their means. There is no room for error in their finances, as is the case with so many people in real life. Tragedy does not strike them so much as it insidiously picks their world apart, oftentimes in the guise of help. The trouble starts when Bienville Oyster Company is closed down by environmentalists. Though it had been in business since 1903 and hadn't changed in that time, the political landscape had changed around it and the oyster company was suddenly deemed too environmentally destructive to continue operations.

The Bosarges begin a sickening descent into dissolution. Jack seeks and follows advice, applies for new jobs, and does everything he is supposed to, to overcome what should be a temporary problem. To make ends meet, Donita takes on shifts at the local diner while Jack applies for unemployment. But once he begins receiving checks, he is not allowed to earn a single penny otherwise. The checks and Donita's contributions aren't enough, however, and the Bosarges slide deeper into debt. Jack and Donita learn that Julia is eligible for the Head Start daycare program and enroll her so that they can work and job search.

The handouts always seem like a godsend—money for bills and a place for Julia to stay during the day and even get a free meal, once money becomes such a serious issue that food is no longer a guarantee. But government support comes with many strings attached. I confess there came a point about two-thirds of the way through the book when I couldn't take it anymore and skimmed through to the end. It's a nightmare scenario, more so because throughout the book, everyone does the "right thing."

Bryars did an exceptional job painting this world and slowly tightening the devastating noose of bankruptcy around a beautiful young family. His writing is simple and powerful and though there is nothing to fault in the technical aspects of the book, I am taking away a star; A Forgotten Man is just too sad for me.

Mr. Bryars provided a complimentary copy of A Forgotten Man to me for review. He tells me he is planning on extending the series through the course of Julia's life, illustrating how help from the government destroys lives and societies at every point of dependency. It's bone-chilling stuff. Read it for a poignant and beautifully depicted modern day horror story.

Jack says

There are certain books you want to share with everyone that reveal certain truths. Truths about the current condition of our country and how politics, government and the bullying of our populace by federal regulators have damaged those among us least able to defend themselves. This is a tough read. But it gets your attention no matter your politics. It tells no lies and that's the saddest thing of all.

Steve M. says

Completely believable. That's what makes it so sad.

William Todd says

Only if you lean toward the right

This book got one star, for writing style and precision. The obvious purpose of the author was to slam the Obama administration, Obamacare, and environmental organizations and the EPA. The book follows a family in crisis because of the father's job loss, courtesy of the EPA and a liberal judge. Worst case scenario is followed by even worse, even managing to touch the abortion issue. I made myself finish this, because it is my belief that one must consider opposing views. It was painful.
