



Solomon's Song

Bryce Courtenay

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Story of extended family from slums of London in 1880s, to Australia on convict ships and their subsequent lives there. Unnecessarily crude in places but a good read.

Solomon's Song Details

Date : Published 2000 by Harper Collins Canada (first published January 1st 1999)

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Author : Bryce Courtenay

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Marissa says

I'm 20 pages away from being done and I am so sad- I want to stop reading. I won't because I have to know how it ends. I wish I could ask why his characters all go through hell- how good things don't happen to good people. But really I know the reasons, because it doesn't happen often enough in real life. His tragedies are so devastating- but these events explain the molding of a person and her dynasty. I'm grateful for this author for enriching my life and taking me to places I could never have imagined otherwise.

Finished it- and I can't say I expected the last 2 pages... wow! I guess this was the best ending for the last book in the trilogy- but wow..... Gosh I love Bryce!

Michael says

I have never felt the need to leave a review but with this I feel I must. I am quite new to Bryce Courtenay books but have been working through them lately. I leave the review on this title because it has left a mark on me that will never leave. Simply breathtaking in its telling and horrific in its conclusion. My advice to anyone wanting to "read" Bryce Courtenay. Get the audio books. The narrator "Humphrey Bower" is a master of his craft. You do not hear a narrator, you hear the characters. He can tell a story in any accent from around the world. I have never heard narration this good. I implore everybody to try Bryce Courtenay and Humphrey Bower. They will educate and entertain you in equal measure. From The Power of One to Brother Fish with everything in between, these are beautifully told with astonishing narration (audio). If I could give ten stars for these books I would. When I have finished a title and tell myself they can not get better, I start a new one and lo and behold it is another triumph. Sorry to go on but these must be read or listened to.

Agnieszka says

three stars for most of the book was ok... ending... was awful. I mean after a trilogy??? no epilogue? terribly unsatisfying...

for those who say I have no imagination... this is true... that is why I paid good money for a fiction book.

Mandy - Lace Vintage ♥ says

Just finished this trilogy and I am beyond heart broken that it had to end. I have fallen in love with these characters so deeply, that they will stay with me for ever after. A truly unique and moving set of novels.

Jeff Yoak says

This was a wonderful wrap-up to the trilogy. We end up, through the three books, following a family through three generations. We start with lower-class, criminal elements in England getting transported to Australia. They start to flourish and their kids become wealthy and prominent in the second book, while still retaining the feel of their upbringing, and this third book finally brings us respectability with the next generation, and heading off to WWI with mixed feelings as there is limited loyalty to Britain (and not insubstantial loyalty to former ally, Germany.) What a walk through a world that I knew almost nothing about!

Kathleen Hagen says

Solomon's Song, by Bryce Courtenay. Narrated by Humphrey Bowers, produced by Bolinda Audio, downloaded from audible.com. This is the third in the Potato Factory trilogy taking place from about 1840 to 1916 in Australia.

Humphrey Bowers is worth the book. I think these books are ones that would not have been as good if not narrated by Bowers. In this third book, we go on with the two families, the Solomons, and the Tinklemans. Courtenay is particularly good at writing war narratives, and he spends most of this book dealing with WWI and the Australian regiments that fought in it. There's one thing I don't like about Courtenay's books, at least this trilogy, they all end sadly. I won't say more as it would then include spoilers, but the end of each book is very abrupt, and the reader feels as if there should be another book to tell you what happened next.

Elizabeth says

This is, I think, the final chapter of the trilogy. Please correct me if I'm wrong. I cried whilst reading the letters home from the soldiers in WW1. Even though Bryce waffles on a bit, the 3 books, I thought, are wonderful, entertaining, believable and realistic. If you haven't read Bryce C before, this trilogy is well worth the effort.

Wendy says

What a fantastic end to a three book trilogy. The Anzac experience in fighting against the Germans was incredibly detailed. The historic value of this book is excellent and detailed with a fanciful tale of the grandchildren of Ikey Sullivan who are still in a rivalry with the children of Ikey's horrid brother David. I wish there were more to this series. Bruce Courtenay makes each of his strange and wonderful characters come alive.

Kathy says

Solomon's Song is the third and last book in Bryce Courtenay's Potato Factory Trilogy. It was my favorite. Much of the story took place on the peninsula of Gallipoli in Turkey, in 1915-16. I have been to Gallipoli

and saw where the New Zealand and Australian military perished as they supported the English. I could picture the scenes of these battles. Over the past year, I have had the families of Ikey and Mary....Tommo and Hawk with me on my MP3 Player as I worked around the house and drove in the car. I am sorry to come to the end of the trilogy as I very much enjoy Courtenay's work.

Tegan says

I started this trilogy by reading the second book (Tommo and Hawk). I loved both characters, and I was excited to read Solomon's Song to understand 'where they went'. While Tommo's plot was satisfying, that of Hawk left a lot to be desired. I feel like I've been robbed of a conclusion for the Hawk character.

The character development for Tommo's family seems rushed and is also unsatisfying, as others have mentioned. Hinetitama (Tommo's daughter) is a character and personality I start to enjoy, and then Courtenay ceases to write about her. Then Hinetitama's children are never truly developed as individuals. I would also like to know more about Joshua Solomon (David Solomon's grandchild), but I never really learn about him, either.

While the war elements of this story are enjoyable enough, I felt like I knew characters like 'Wordy Smith', 'Library', and 'Crow' better than our protagonist Ben Teekleman. While I understand that considerable research went into the plots concerning Ben's adventures overseas, I just didn't care about them. In fact, I was distracted. I kept wanting to know: What about Hawk? What about Victoria? What about the Potato Factory? Unlike the other books in this trilogy, which allow you to skip from country to country to follow characters, once the story moves to Ben - Ben is all we hear about.

When I realised I only had 50 pages to go and I still had not heard anything about the characters still residing in Australia, I realised that I was never going to get a conclusion on my beloved Hawk.

Basically, this book was okay enough to read, but disappointing in its conclusion.

Adri says

I feel traumatised, again, having read about WW1. Recently I finished reading "Birds without Wings" and experienced this war from the Turkish perspective. This time, from the Australian. And it is the same from both views - the horror, the horror. And both authors expressed so well the futility of war, the senseless killing. And I am left with a sense of despair, because it all just continues. We are incapable of learning from history. I feel, like one of the soldiers in this story, that I need to cleanse my soul.

Jo says

3rd in the series following from the potato factory. Probably not as good as the first 2 in the series, but i would still give it 5 stars - probably from sentimental feeling towards the other 2 books. Like the first 2, i couldnt put this one down and tried to read it at every opportunity. Definitely worth a read.

Jan says

The Saga of the divided Solomon family continues. From Sydney in 1861 to the battle fields in France in 1916, fueled by hatred, the family moves forward through history. Tommo, Mary, David, Hinetitama leave us and we move forward with Grandfather Hawk, Ben and Victoria on the side of goodness and Abraham and Joshua on the side of evil.. For me this book is the story of Tommo's grandson, Ben Teekleman, "The Click" platoon, and the development of the fighting Anzacs (Australian, Tasmanians and New Zealanders), and their part in WW1. From their training in Egypt, to the horrific battle on the shores of Gallipoli, to the hospitals in London to the battle fields in France, Ben and his mates, (through letters home to Hawk and Victoria) describe, in ugly detail, life as an Aussie soldier. I met the love of Ben's life, Sister (nurse) Sarah Atkins. Heroes with names like Wordy Smith, Crow Rigby, Hornbill, Muddy Parthe, Brokenose Brodie, Library Spencer, Numbers Cooligan, and "Just Ben" touched my heart and exemplified the strengths of a young nation coming of age. An excellent read!

Sue says

The third of the Potato Factory trilogy. We've come a long way from the beginning. The first two books were better, in my opinion. This one takes us away from the family and into the first world war. Not a pretty picture, but the author shines a light on the ineptness of many of the leaders of the British military machine. Many sad incidents as we see what life might have been like for an Australian service member under British command during those days. I have read before of the unsuitability of the upper echelon of the military - soft lives before the war, totally unprepared to lead real men into battle.

This installment of the Potato Factory is an entirely different story from the first two. The second half of the story (and it is a LONG one) could almost be set aside as a novel itself. The love the common soldiers had for each other was inspirational and truly heart-rending. The ineptness of the leadership was infuriating. The tragic results, heartbreaking.

Nadine May says

As always Bryce keeps your attention all the way.

Alice says

I enjoyed the final instalment of Courtenay's Australian Trilogy, however, found the first quarter or so spent too much time catching the reader up on characters and events that happened in the past two books. I liked Ben's storyline and thought the strongest part of the whole book was the section set in Gallipoli in WWI. The powerful language made me feel like I was on the battlefields and in the trenches with the Anzacs and made me really understand how pointless the whole thing was. I can't decide if I'm entirely satisfied with

the ending or not, but I understand why it finished when and how it did.

There were a few parts that angered me and, as with The Potato Factory and Tommo and Hawk, there were a few events that happened far too conveniently for my liking, but overall, I enjoyed the story.

Ann says

Amazing, enlightening and moving, do not miss this book on Audible. Gallipoli is no longer just a spot on the map.

Elaine Stovet says

The last book in the Trilogy of the Solomon family. Was just as good as the first two. I could not read the first two without reading the last.

Linda says

Solomon's Song is the third in the Australia series by Courtenay. I started with this one because it concerns Gallipoli, a subject I'm slowly becoming an expert on. Even though it is the finale of the series, it hasn't destroyed my desire to read the rest, as soon as possible.

The series concerns two families, connected and competing, from the colonization of Australia (actually Van Dieman's Land - Tasmania) to the year 1916.

I had to read half the book before the Gallipoli section started, but it was that first part that made me want to read the rest of the series. Abacus Mary, a transported convict, has built an incredibly successful brewery in her time on the island. Her two sons are expected to take over, but, through many machinations, only one becomes involved. Mary's two great-grandchildren are the focus of this section of the trilogy.

It's nearly impossible to begin to explain the relationship between and among the families. But the ownership and managing of the factory are the important aspect. Ben, the great-grandson, however, volunteers with Australia's best to fight in WWI for the Mother Country and show her and the world what top-notch soldiers the Australians are.

It's not completely unknown, but extremely rare, for me to cry while reading a book. I can't remember the last one. But Courtenay approaches much of the actual fighting at Gallipoli through letters from Ben to his sister Victoria. It's a marvelous way of reporting the stupidity, the ridiculousness and the totally unnecessary deaths incurred during the operation. (I guess you can tell my opinion on the invasion.....) When Ben, convalescing on a hospital ship writes to Victoria about the fates of his company, mates who would die for each other (which happens to pretty much all soldiers who fight together), the tears ran down my cheeks and I could hardly read. This is how affecting the idea of writing through letters was.

This may not be a good review since I haven't said much about the story and what actually happens and why you should read it, but it's an attempt to explain how much this entire book touched my heart.

S.P. Aruna says

I didn't realize this was the third (last) book of a trilogy, an epic historical saga about Australia, ...well, partly. A good portion of this book was devoted to the battles at Gallipoli which were excellently presented through correspondence, where the horrors of war are quite clear.

There are a lot of characters and a lot of dynamics between them, which kept my interest
Very good writing, but I think I would have enjoyed the book more if I had read the first two of the trilogy.
