



The Forgotten Girl

David Bell

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The past has arrived uninvited at Jason Danvers's door...

...and it's his younger sister, Hayden, a former addict who severed all contact with her family as her life spiraled out of control. Now she's clean and sober but in need of a desperate favor—she asks Jason and his wife to take care of her teenage daughter for forty-eight hours while she handles some business in town.

But Hayden never returns.

And her disappearance brings up more unresolved problems from Jason's past, including the abrupt departure of his best friend on their high school graduation night twenty-seven years earlier. When a body is discovered in the woods, the mysteries of his sister's life—and possible death—deepen. And one by one these events will shatter every expectation Jason has ever had about families, about the awful truths that bind them and the secrets that should be taken to the grave.

The Forgotten Girl Details

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From Reader Review The Forgotten Girl for online ebook

Diane S ? says

3.5 During high school they were inseparable friends, but all that would change on the night of their graduation. What happened that night would come back to haunt them in the future.

A good mystery/thriller of buried secrets, where each person has part of the puzzle and only a few know all. How well does one really know the friend one grew up with? Can a person ever really change?

Good characters, strong story line and many twists and turns made this one a very good read.

ARC from publisher.

Chelsea Humphrey says

I gave this one 3 stars because I really like David Bell as an author, but this was not his finest work.

The book opens with Jason as a teenager being interviewed by police regarding the disappearance of his best friend, Logan. They were fighting over mutual love interest Reagan and Logan threw a punch that we are supposed to wonder throughout the book if it killed him.

Fast forward 25 years or so-Jason and his wife Nora have moved back to his hometown in Ohio after suffering financial difficulties in NYC. They are just starting to get their marriage back on track when his unpredictable, alcoholic sister (Hayden) and her teenage daughter (Sierra) show up on his doorstep. Hayden is going through a 12 step program and is trying to make right with those she wronged in the past. She needs to leave Sierra with her brother while she takes care of one item (which of course is mysterious and vague). When Hayden doesn't return as promised, Jason and Sierra begin looking for her.

I really wanted to like this book. Typically, mysteries hold my attention by the action, not the character development, but David Bell has a way of getting me attached to his characters that most authors in this genre do not. I think it's one of his strongest qualities as a writer. However, the "mystery" of Hayden and who killed Logan fell short for me. It was a little too easy to figure out. Also, I felt Jason and Reagan's adult relationship was unrealistic. I would be extremely uncomfortable with my husband meeting with a high school love interest a minimum of once a month alone. The characters weren't really likeable in this book, not even Jason, but somehow I still felt the pull to finish this one. If you are wanting to read a novel of Mr Bell's for the first time, please don't choose this one! Start with Cemetery Girl or The Hiding Place. If you are a die hard fan, go ahead and read it.

◇ **Kimberly** ◇ says

Right away *"The Forgotten Girl"* captured my interest and had me reading way into the evening hours. The dynamic plot of suspense draws you straight in to the characters and the mystery that encircles them.

Hayden's life is finally on track. Or so it seems. She is in the middle of mending her life when she shows up on her brother's door asking him and his wife to watch her daughter, Sierra, while she takes care of a few things in town. She soon becomes a missing person with many unanswered questions. Is she in trouble? Did she leave on her own accord with no intentions of returning?

While searching for Jason's missing sister, police identify a body belonging to his best friend that he hasn't seen since high school. Their last words were painful ones during a fight between the two of them, but no one suspected foul play in the disappearance of his friend, Logan. He always spoke of leaving town for good and everyone thought he did exactly that. Now there is reason to believe that there was more between Jason's old friend and his sister. Can the past explain why Hayden is missing and give Jason the answers he seeks today?

This book was steady, strong and very well written. I felt the ending was somewhat predictable, but also surprising at the same time. Suspense readers will not be disappointed; this book will keep you on the edge of your seat all the way to the end.

This is the first book I have ever read by David Bell, and it certainly will NOT be the last. Keep your eyes open for the release of *"The Forgotten Girl"*, scheduled for October 2014.

Disclaimer

**I received an uncorrected Advanced Readers Copy of this book in a First Reads giveaway in exchange for an honest review. This in no way affected my opinion of the book or the content disclosed in my review. **

Megan says

I received a copy of this book through a GoodReads giveaway

The Forgotten Girl's Jason Danvers might be the most bland protagonist ever. Also, the "revelations" he experiences at the end of the book just make him seem like an imperceptive blockhead.

I'd estimate that 350 of this book's 400-ish pages are dialogue. I don't mind dialogue-heavy books, but this author seems to insist we listen in on EVERY word these characters utter - every single, "Are you OK?" "Yeah." Every, "What happened?" "I don't know." Every, "I am sorry." "It's OK."

It feels like the characters explain their same worries/concerns/feelings over and over and over. They're always musing aloud about things that seem so obvious, they really needn't be said... but then again, since so much of the book is just dialogue, almost every fact has to be relayed to the reader through the character's conversations.

In fact, there's a lot of telling, not showing, going on here. We're supposed to accept that certain characters are bad parents because other characters keep repeating, "Well, he/she wasn't always there for her!" or that other characters are TOTAL BAD ASSES because they make a few remarks that seem a little attitude-y.

The plot isn't horrible, but some of the characters' actions are downright ridiculous. They put themselves in danger, trouble occurs, and you're left going, "Yeah, there was like, a 99 percent chance that was going to go badly for you. And yet, here you are. Doing it anyway."

Amy Adams says

*Recieved through Goodreads First Reads

Let me start off my saying that I really enjoyed this book. In fact I'm writing this review at 1:30am because I stayed up to finish reading it. I always love a good mystery, especially with murder involved. With that said I gave it 4 stars instead of 5 because aside from Jason and Nora, I found most of the characters slightly annoying. I tried to like Hayden and Sierra, I really did, but it just wasn't happening. I actually got more annoyed at the end when I realised his sister and friend (Reagan) had been lying to him for all these years. They knew what had happened to his best friend the night he disappeared and never said anything, his sister even going as far as to help cover it up. I can't say I don't understand why they did what they did but it still made me feel bad for Jason. He spent all this time wondering and feeling guilty and the people closest to him had the answers he needed all along.

Kristie says

In David Bell's new novel, *The Forgotten Girl*, Jason Danvers has moved from New York City to Ednaville, Ohio, the small town where he grew up with his younger sister Hayden, and the last place he thought he would live as an adult. Hayden has long since left Ednaville, and she has broken all ties with Jason in exchange for a life of addiction. Jason and his wife, Nora, have settled into their jobs and the slower pace of Ednaville, and they've reconnected in a way that their lives in New York didn't allow.

One night, Hayden arrives on Jason and Nora's doorstep and asks that they let her teenage daughter, Sierra, stay with them while Hayden completes some unfinished business. Hayden looks healthy and sober, and despite an initial hesitance and a long history of being disappointed in his sister, Jason agrees to her terms.

What follows is a fast paced mystery that examines family dynamics, old friendships, addiction, parenting, marriage, and small town life.

David Bell does a great job capturing the surreal aspects of returning to old stomping grounds after a long absence. His characters are compelling, and readers will be rooting for some and hoping for a comeuppance for others. There were moments when I wondered why the hell a character would make a certain choice, and Bell almost always came through with a plausible explanation. As for those times when he didn't offer an explanation, I'm reminded that life isn't always that tidy outside of books either.

If you enjoy mysteries and suspense, I definitely recommend you read *The Forgotten Girl*. I also suggest you set aside a chunk of time to do so, because once you get started, it's very hard to put it down. The book

would also be a good one for book clubs. I imagine lively debates about parenting, addiction, family relationships, and the beauty and trials of returning home and reconnecting with the past.

My thanks for the publisher for an ARC of the book in exchange for my honest review.

Elyse says

3.6 rating from me -- This was a fun-page-turning mystery --(not without a few flaws in my opinion --but enjoyable just the same).

It was my first book by David Bell: (A First-reads-give-a-way). THANK YOU! --I'll read another book by 'Bell'. (quick escape enjoyment). Even in the couple of spots when I'm shaking my head -- "no way would Sierra say that", I 'still' wanted to know what was coming next. It was nice to know a few things were 'not' as I expected. A couple of things I 'did' predict. (All is fair with mystery reading)!

I think many people will enjoy this story.

For those who have read this book: We could have a discussion about "The Title" alone!

Bandit says

David Bell at his best is on par with Coben as one of my favorite mystery thriller writers. Both specialize in domestic mysteries, smaller stories, close to home. Both can keep the pages turning. Thing is Coben surprises, even wows occasionally, with his plot twists and turns. Bell seems to take a more straight forward approach. Although that isn't really the problem with this book so much as just the smallness of the mystery. It's very well written, Bell's books are primarily dialogue driven and as such are lightning quick reads too, and it certainly keeps the readers' interest, it's just quite thin plot wise. One keeps expecting more and there really isn't much there and previous books have shown Bell can do much better. Having that been said, it's plenty entertaining, works for a quick fun read, but it isn't the author's best work and he shouldn't be judged on this one. His other books are pretty great and really must reads for any genre fan.

Thelma Fountain says

This is a real page turner! I could not stop reading. David Bell can spin a good story this was my first book by this author but I will read more of his work.

Amy says

All of my reviews can be found on www.novelgossip.com

The premise of this book hooked me instantly, I'm always drawn to books that have a past mystery merging with one in the present day and with the addition of a missing person, I'm all in! Maybe it's because the possibilities are endless in terms of where the misper is and what actually happened to them, but these types of mysteries are always one of my go to choices. Then, you have the bonus of it being a Bell novel and his books are guaranteed fantastic reads, true page turners.

Bell shines the brightest in how well drawn his characters are, he writes people that are ordinary citizens that are placed in extraordinary circumstances. There is nothing far fetched about these scenarios, they're wholly believable, something that could truly happen to anyone and I think that is exactly why I love his work so much. Jason and Nora are an average couple in their forties living back in his hometown of Ednaville after spending some time in NYC. They don't have any children and live a peaceful, sedate lifestyle for the most part. As the hits kept coming for the couple, I found myself wondering what I or my husband would do in the same situation and most of what Jason did was easy to understand and identify with.

This was a compelling read, I kept wondering where the heck Hayden was and if she was alright and I also wondered how what happened on Jason's graduation night would all tie in. It was a constant guessing game, exactly what I crave when I'm reading a mystery. It's a multilayered story with good old small town secrets and a tightly wound plot. Bell is such a great writer, the pages just fly by as you get caught up in his characters lives.

Rebecca says

It's been a while since I've read a mystery, but "The Forgotten Girl" didn't fall into a pattern I recognized. It wasn't like there were a bunch of clues doled out so the reader could fit them into the puzzle. Stuff just happened and mere snippets of evidence were handed out with most of the stuff coming to light at the end of the book.

You could make the argument that it's a character driven piece, but that would require the characters, at least the main one, to be interesting and that clearly wasn't the case here. Jason is a middle-aged man living a middle-class life in Ohio with his perfectly nice wife when his wayward and wild sister shows up and asks him to look after his niece for a few days while she does something.

There was too much dull dialogue, pointless scenes, and plodding plotting in this book. It got slightly exciting at the end, but for the most part it was a snooze.

Not recommended.

Philip says

Jason and Nora, his wife, have moved from New York back to his hometown, Ednaville. Jason is asked about his best friend, Logan, if he knew for sure that he disappeared on graduation night after they had a fight over a girl, whose name is Regan. Only to have his wild addict younger sister, Hayden, to show up at his house to leave her daughter, Sirrea, to stay with them for 48 hours. Until she takes care of business in Ednaville. Hayden disappears and things start to unravel in Jason's life, about his past, his sister, his best friend.

For me this was a page turner book; it keeps you interested in what is going to happen next. You can't lay it down, because you have just got to find out about what is happening in Jason's life, what happened to his sister and what really happened to his best friend, Logan.

Jaksen says

Just couldn't finish it, but did read about three-fourths in. The problem is my attention just completely wandered as I read this book and suddenly I was reading without comprehending. I should have stopped reading much earlier.

My issue with the book is the overall 'talkiness' of it. I read a lot, maybe too much, and one of my fav. genres is mysteries. And, yes, mysteries by their nature are often dialogue-rich and people are often talking about doing something or they did something or they're going to do something...

And yet it's just talk. I'd rather see them do some of the things they talk about. Also, the talk is repetitious. Often I'd be reading and think, wait, I just read this. I must have put the bookmark in the wrong place. No, didn't do that. This IS the right page.

So move on! Get this story on the road! Stop having characters say things like 'Really?' over and over and over ...

If there was a good story in here, I couldn't find it.

I received a copy of this book through the goodreads giveaway program.

Sarah Vigen says

I won this ARC from Goodreads! The first book I've won and I was so excited to get it!!!! However, the book itself was lacking in excitement.

The prologue was great and I thought it would be a book hard to put down. But the story was drawn out and the characters were flat. I never felt the tension or intrigue that should have been a part of this mystery. The writing style was one I don't enjoy, characters asking themselves question after question after question. Almost like the author is trying to review the story for the reader. The conversations between people lacked spark and became monotonous. But I was so HAPPY to win this book and have a chance to read it! Thank you Goodreads!

Lenissa Davis says

This is the first book I ever read from Mr. Bell and I can't believe that I was missing out on such an amazing author. I love his writing style, his portrayal of these amazingly flawed characters. The plot was something I never read before, the setting, which was in a small town in Ohio, was unique for me as well, because I never read book that took place in Ohio. The story pacing was great, though there were times it was slow, but picked right back up.

I can't really say who my favorite character is, because I loved them all, besides Jesse Dean and Logan. In the beginning I felt bad for Logan, but as the story progressed, I'm like, 'No, I don't know how I feel about you now Logan.' Bell makes you believe a character is a certain way, but then it starts unravels as the story progresses and your view on them changes. The one person who fits that bill is Logan's mother.

I couldn't put the book down, I had to know what was happening. The Forgotten Girl is one that stands out to me for my year so far, I definitely won't forget about, seeing how I am now suffering from a book hangover. The Forgotten Girl is very suspenseful, you think you know something, but the author changes it up. I literally couldn't put this down, I needed to know what happened to Hayden and Logan.

This is highly recommended if you love a good page turner that will keep you on the edge of your seat.
