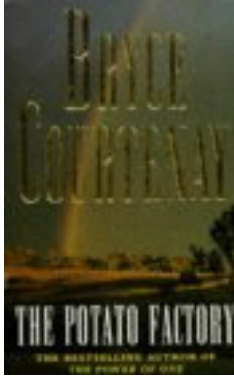


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## Bryce Courtenay

### The Potato Factory (The Potato Factory #1)



Title: The Potato Factory (The Potato Factory #1)

Author: Bryce Courtenay

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## Description

Ikey Solomon is very successful indeed, in the art of thieving. Ikey's partner in crime is his mistress, the forthright Mary Abacus, until misfortune befalls them. They are parted and each must make the harsh journey from 19th century London to Van Diemens Land. In the backstreets and dives of Hobart Town, Mary learns the art of brewing and builds The Potato Factory, where she plans a new future. But her ambitions are threatened by Ikey's wife, Hannah, her old enemy. The two women raise their separate families. As each woman sets out to destroy the other, the families are brought to the edge of disaster.

## Insightful reviews

Alena: It took me a few months to get through this audiobook and every now and again I had to stop listening because it was just too much: the violence, the poverty, the lack of compassion. Yet I would always pick it up again, keen to find out what happens next, because throughout the story there is a glimmer of hope in its characters' grit, their will to survive and find peace, however short lived. Bryce Courtenay is an impressive storyteller who is sometimes ruthless to his readers while describing the realities of life in the poverty-stricken London and Van Diemen's land (Tasmania). He is far from subtle but he also makes it impossible to stay cold and disinterested in the fate of his characters.

Betty410: My Christmas book is finally finished--all 666 pages of very small print. My 5 star books all hit my heart and emotions but this one earned 4 for many reasons. Taking place in early 1800's starting in England with a actual character from history, the author weaves a story involving people in the lower levels of humanity; Ikey Solomon (he was the real man), the fence, his street urchins, the whore houses--the scenes that had I lived then I hopefully would not have known. Ikey schemes got him shipped off to Australia to the penal colonies--along with his wife and his accountant, Mary Abacus.

All of this is history of which I was unfamiliar so the details were fascinating as were the characters whose solutions to their problems were clever and daring.

Man's cruelty to Man, the lowly place of women, the sad treatment of the Australian Aborigines were all an integral part of the story but all of this was elevated by the courage of the characters to rise above the challenges.

M.j. Croan: 'The Potato Factory' by Bryce Courtnay.

This excellent novel sat on my bookshelf for some months before I finally got around to reading it. I am not sure why, perhaps it was the title that did not strike the right cords. I even picked it up a couple of times, but dismissed it. What an oversight that was.

'The Potato Factory' is a journey back in time to Dickensian London and all the filth and squalor that inspired Charles Dickens to pen his many novels, and in particular 'Oliver Twist'.

Although written as a work of fiction, the author chose this route to publication only as a method of filling out the bare facts as recorded in historical periodicals of the time, both here and in Van Demons Land. As a work of fiction he was also afforded the luxury of adding some excellent dialogue.

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The central character in this true tale is Ikey Solomon whom most readers will recognise as 'Fagan' from 'Oliver Twist.' This was no coincidence, as he was the inspiration behind this well-known classic, as were many other colourful characters, such as Sparrow Fart (The Artful Dodger,) and Bob Marley (Bill Sykes.) Other Characters include 'Sperm Whale Sally' and 'Billygonequeer'. Charles Dickens himself is reputed to have interviewed Sparrow Fart in his capacity as a young reporter after the well-documented escape from Newgate prison and trial of Ikey Solomon at the old bailey.

With such a cast this is a hard book to put down. In a society where petty criminals could be hanged or transported for merely picking a pocket, or prostitution, the reader will cringe at the cruelty and hypocrisy of the so called law and aristocracy.

The second half of this book is set in Van Demons Land (Now Tasmania,) but to find out how our immigrants fare you are just going to have to read it for yourself.

Fascinating in its detail of real characters and actual events, and consuming in its prose. 'The Potato Factory.'

Judy: I enjoyed this as a result of the stories. it isn't a plot-driven book. learn it for the joy of the times, yet recognize that these instances we are not politically or humanly right and there are prejudices and slurs expressed through a number of characters. the one person who seems up to date is really our major character, Mary Abacus, who encounters gender prejudice yet overcomes it. I listened to this on Audible and loved the voice of Humphrey Bower. nice expertise and variety! My in simple terms destructive is how it used to be strung jointly on Audible. It used to be demanding to navigate. The "chapters" are all not less than an hour long, and feature no correlation to genuine chapters.

Kris: i like ancient fiction. sooner than I learn The Potato manufacturing unit I had by no means heard of Bryce Courtney. He has a fashion of writing that makes you're feeling transported again in time. the tale of Ikey Solomon and Mary Abacus is brutal, and heartbreaking, notwithstanding you'll want to appreciate the choice and luck opposed to all odds. The occasions in their lives, aside and together, lay a starting place for an exceptional tale you won't have the capacity to position down. i've got simply all started the second one of the trilogy (which i didn't comprehend till I picked this book) Tomo and Hawk. i've got excessive count on ions for this book!

Sylvester: in fact it was once the point out of Dicken's "Fagan" that hooked me into interpreting this monster. I went from side to side for my part whereas analyzing it - feeling greater than a bit weary of the entire underworld aspect(there is simply lots pick-pocketing, fencing, bawdy-house, filthy rathole-type content material i will take sooner than I commence feeling jaded). However! The characters relatively held me, and that i stayed with them, hoping they'd one way or the other (however unlikely) get to a greater place. Ikey and Mary are either brilliant and colourful, and the massive forged of characters was once by no means confusing. i must provide credits to Courtenay for retaining the tale gripping correct to the tip - in fact, in spite of everything my hemming and hawing, i believe i'd need to lookup the following within the sequence simply to discover what occurs to Tommo and Hawk. when you've got a robust stomach, payment it out.

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