

Forever is the Worst Long Time

Camille Pagán

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From acclaimed author Camille Pagán comes a wry, heartfelt exploration of love and loss.

When struggling novelist James Hernandez meets poet Louisa “Lou” Bell, he’s sure he’s just found the love of his life. There’s just one problem: she’s engaged to his oldest friend, Rob. So James toasts their union and swallows his desire.

As the years pass, James’s dreams always seem just out of reach—he can’t finish that novel, can’t mend his relationship with his father, can’t fully commit to a romantic relationship. He just can’t move on. But after betrayal fractures Lou’s once-solid marriage, she turns to James for comfort.

When Lou and James act on their long-standing mutual attraction, the consequences are more heartbreaking—and miraculous—than either of them could have ever anticipated. Then life throws James one more curveball, and he, Rob, and Lou are forced to come to terms with the unexpected ways in which love and loss are intertwined.

Forever is the Worst Long Time Details


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From Reader Review Forever is the Worst Long Time for online ebook

Suzanne says

What a lovely book to come across! With thanks to my friend Kelli for recommending this book, as I don't always love receiving requests having almost 2000 on my list of books to be read. I suggested this for purchase, my public library being awesome added it straight away. Happy to help my fellow library patrons.

Love is enticing, love is intoxicating and love sometimes occurs at the wrong time. Most of all I found love to be cyclical here. That may sound clinical, but the cycle of love, marriage, pregnancy, child rearing and the love between friends did go round and round here.

James loves Louisa, a beautiful poet, but Louisa is engaged to his best friend. It's angsty, it's messy, it's sad watching James agonise over everything. This is a lovely cycle of love, angst, dreaming, loss and a continuance of life.

I let go of the doorknob and ran to her. Then I kissed her once, twice, and again for good measure and left before I could change my mind. Bad enough that I had ruined everything. Worse that I was tempted to do it again immediately.

There is simply nothing to be done but accept and endure. Not necessarily in that order.

I cried at the end, it is quite a short book so I do recommend it – a rewarding little dose of love and loss, but also a love that lives on.

Lisa Montanaro says

Great book! It is told from the perspective of a male protagonist named James who falls in love with his best friend's girlfriend/wife. At turns heartbreaking, funny, poignant, and heartwarming, it follows the lives of the characters as they make mistakes, fall apart, come together, fall apart, realize dreams, give up on goals, etc. But through it all, they are real, flawed, and lovable. I would probably characterize this as a romantic drama, but because it is told from a male perspective, it doesn't feel sappy. This is my first book by Camille and I'm thrilled that I got an early copy to read. I just purchased her other book Life and Other Near Death Experiences (she has the best book titles!). I'm now looking forward to reading other books by this author!

Meredith says

Forever is the Worst Long Time is a love story that spans 18 years. It focuses on the love between friends, romantic love, and most significantly, a father's love for his daughter.

In 1998, James Hernandez meets his best friend Rob's girlfriend, Lou, and instantly falls in love. He believes Lou is the perfect woman and pines for her from afar. James's belief that Lou is his ideal taints his future romantic relationships and eventually leads to the destruction of his friendship with Rob. As the years pass,

their relationships change, but all three unite when one of their lives dramatically changes.

I wasn't prepared for how emotional this book made me--I cried my face when I finished the last page. I thought that it was a simple love story about two friends, but it's so much more.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Kelli says

Loved this book! Beautifully written and deeply moving. I just love when a book allows you to feel as though you are listening to an old friend.

"It was one of those moments when you feel unbelievably lucky to have been placed on the planet at the same time as the people in your life." THIS. This quote is everything. Page 8. It is the exact moment that I knew my romantic heart was lost on this wonderful story.

I immediately added other books by this author to my book queue at the library.

Karlita | Tale Out Loud says

"This story ends with loss."

When you read a bunch of romance novels getting the same hype, characters, plot, ending and so forth, and read a book that was entirely different from what you were used to, you started to appreciate (which is an understatement by the way) the minds behind these great novelas. As clever and brilliant as it is, **Forever is the Worst Long Time** was one of those where the story was carefully thought, created in such a way the result was nothing but absolute perfection! An art, a *masterpiece*!

Was it really love? This is a story between three people, Rob, Lou and James, who's lives intertwined by one life choice that changed everything. Complicated by love, the reality of its course, the implications and foundation or lack thereof. Could they learn to live by their choices? Could anybody really move forward?

"In truth, it was a series of choices that snowballed into a much bigger decision, which then became an outcome that none of us saw coming."

I was drawn to it, opening myself in a much bigger perspective. A sense of understanding that life was always never been about rainbows and unicorns. It was mainly an outcome of the *series of choices* we made not just how you want to live by it but how you stand for it and never gives up. It is not my typical go-to read, using my imagination to fully create a picture of what was going on in the story. Because this book was so real you never have to think. **Camille Pagán** made me felt like it's my own, putting my mind, heart and soul to these great characters. What I'm trying to say is that it doesn't even felt like a fiction! This book gave me the chills and broke my heart all at the same time. A great portrayal that in every loss, there is hope and in hope there is love to keep you from going even in the midst of life's adversities.

“Because there's no such thing as life without heartbreak.”

I honestly couldn't sum up my feelings in to this. As invested as I am, sometimes the best books were the once that I find hard to come up with a much better review. Not because they were not good but for the same reason that they were too good! I can envision a film adapted from this and just thinking about it made me really excited!

*****Thank you NetGalley, Lake Union Publishing, and Camille Pagán for providing me an ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review!**

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Brandie says

This book made me cry and hug my husband tight last night. I wasn't expecting such an emotional read - this story surprised me in all the best ways.

Amy says

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

4.5/5

This book made me cry. That's a pretty big deal for me you guys, I'm not really a crier, sure I have my moments but for the most part I'm pretty stoic. To say that this was an emotional read is an understatement and if you want a read with characters that are flawed, yet able to pull on your emotions, get this book!

James is the narrator here and I found hearing from a male perspective to be a really refreshing experience. He's writing to his daughter, Emerson which was really sweet and if you're worried that he may sugarcoat things because of this, don't be. He's brutally honest about his life and the mistakes he's made and though he has many regrets, he's unapologetic in a raw way. It starts in 1998 when his lifelong best friend introduces him to his new girlfriend, Lou. James immediately feels a strong connection to Lou but knows there is no way he can act on it. Right? As the time goes by and Lou and Rob face their own struggles, Lou and James continue to bond. After giving into temptation for just one night, Lou and James discover that a series of seemingly small choices have the impact to change their lives forever.

I don't want to say much more about the plot as this is another book that I feel is best experienced on your own. I was totally enraptured by Pagan's writing style and finished this one rather quickly. The characters were all extremely well developed and proved that even if you don't always like or agree with choices they make, you will still feel a deep connection and understanding about why they behaved the way they did. This would be a perfect choice for a book club as there is SO much to discuss; love, loss, how the decisions we make, however small, can have life changing consequences, family, forgiveness, the beauty of unconventional relationships, I could go on and on. It really was a beautifully told story of one man's journey that spoke to me on many levels.

Suzanne Leopold says

While visiting Rob and his fiancée Lou in New York City, James is asked to be the best man at their wedding. Rob and James have been best friends since childhood and went to college together in Michigan. James stayed near home working as a professor when Rob left to develop his career. An attraction is evident between James and Lou but neither pursue anything.

For many years Rob's and Lou's relationship flourish as does Rob's career in finance. Meanwhile, James career path stalls when he isn't successful at teaching or at finishing his novel. Any attempt at settling into a serious relationship is weakened by his thoughts of Lou.

I don't want to spoil this terrific book for future readers so I am limiting the details. It is perfectly narrated in a male voice and I had to remind myself that it is written by a female author. The many different emotions shown by the characters are expressed flawlessly. It is a realistic depiction of friendship and how it changes as we move through time.

1 copy giveaway on my blog until 2/7 <https://www.facebook.com/suzyapproved...>

Barbara says

This was such an interesting story. As I started, I wasn't sure what was going to happen, but the story kept building until I was emotionally wrapped up in it. I really LOVED James Hernandez. I would date James Hernandez! He seemed like such a wonderful friend, colleague, boyfriend, and lover. I think that's why I felt so upset about the things that happened to him. Much of story is about unconventional relationships. James is an English major/aspiring novelist from Ann Arbor Michigan where he still lives and works, his best friend Rob is in finance, and is living in NYC on the path to making it big. While on a visit to NYC to see Rob, James meets Lou, Rob's girlfriend. James sees Lou as the epitome of everything he's looking for in a woman. She's perfect, but she's Rob's girlfriend and soon James finds out she'll become Rob's wife. James struggles in his relationship back in Michigan with a fellow professor. They are happy, but there's no spark, there's no racing heart. Rob's job begins to erode his marriage and soon he and Lou separate. Lou turns to James for understanding and sympathy, but soon they find they have made matters worse. I have to say that Lou frustrated me, but I know sometimes having a character you dislike can make the story even better. At this point it seems that nothing is working out for James, his novel is stalled, his job is unsatisfying, and he's alone. Something unconventional happens to shake up James world and I was completely surprised how it helped James become whole. I cried, no I did not just shed a few tears, I was sobbing after chapter 26 and I continued to cry off and on until the end. Often the tears blurred the words on the page, but the unconventional life was James' savior in a sense. He found all the things I wanted for him and felt he deserved and the funny thing was, they were there all along. Thank you to the author and publisher for the ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Hristina says

This was a decent read. The story is intriguing, told unusually, and I really like Mrs. Pagán's way with words.

But I didn't like the characters as much. I couldn't connect to anyone, especially not to the two characters I share a career-goal with. I found them both infuriating.
I thought I would like it more, I wish I did.

Pre-review note:

This was my last read for 2016 (go out with a bang). Review soon.

abby says

James is in love with Lou from the moment they meet, but she's engaged to his childhood best friend, Rob. For years, James loves Lou from afar, only wanting what's best for her, even if he believes that's a marriage to another man. From a distance, he watches Rob and Lou's love blossom, and then is witness as their relationship crashes and burns. In a moment of vulnerability, Lou and James act on their unspoken attraction to one another, and no one is spared the consequences, good or bad.

This book is emotionally manipulative. It wasn't terrible to read, and it is decently written, but there's no question that the author uses life and death as a plot device. It's a cheap trick to get readers to feel things for otherwise flat, uninspiring characters. Lou, the object of both James and Rob's affections, is kind of a brat. She's a mostly unpaid poet who complains that her husband at work all the time, but refuses to see that as the consequence of wanting to live a NYC lifestyle on one income. James is a little richer of a character, but still pretentious. Overall, this book was a little too close to a "Lifetime Movie of the Week" for me to truly enjoy. 2.5 stars.

I received a copy of this book courtesy of the publisher and NetGalley.

Sherri Thacker says

This is my 2nd book written by Camille Pagan and I really wasn't sure what to expect of this book. But I'm so glad I read it. I really enjoyed it! The ending gave me goose bumps and that rarely happens! Highly recommend this one!!

Sue says

This was a fantastic book and I definitely recommend it to anyone who wants to read about characters so well written that you feel like you know them working through situations that you feel like you've been through; if you want to read a book that will make you laugh and cry and if you want to read a book that will stay with you long after the last page has been read - then this is the book for you to read.

When Jim meets his best friend's girlfriend Lou, he falls in love with her. She is everything that he has ever wanted in a woman and she affects every relationship that he gets into because in his mind, no woman can live up to her perfection. The rest of his life is a struggle too - he has problems with his teaching career and he just can't get started on the novel that he had planned to write. When Lou and Rob have marital problems, she turns to Jim for counsel. What happens next totally changes the future for Lou and Rob and especially

Jim.

This wonderful book is about love and friendship and family. It's about struggle and rewards that come when you don't expect them and how the sum total of one's life is made up of the family and friends that love you.

Thanks to the author for an arc of this book in exchange for a fair and honest review.

Catherine McKenzie says

From the beginning of this novel, you know that the narrator, James, is narrating the book for someone, a child. Who that child is, what his relationship is to her and why he's writing this novel are the central mysteries of the book. This is a book about many things: friendships, love, parenthood, growing up, and loss. The final reveal - what prompted James to write in the first place - is heartbreaking but also fitting. A fast-paced novel that is well worth the read.

Letty says

Fabulous book! I really, really loved this book and it's going on my "Favorites" list for 2017! First of all, the title itself is amazing. The book was humorous in parts and heartbreaking in others with characters very likable and well developed. A story about the power of love, friendship, heartbreak, and forgiveness! This book had me captivated from the very beginning and was so hard to put down. If life hadn't gotten in the way, I probably would have read it in one sitting!! The writing was so very well done. I'm actually a bit sad that I'm done reading it as I wanted it to continue!! I highly recommend Forever is the Worst Long Time!!

Thank you to Lake Union Publishing and NetGalley for the opportunity to read an advanced copy.
