



Poor Man's Galapagos

Christopher Canniff

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Poor Man's Galapagos

Christopher Canniff

Poor Man's Galapagos Christopher Canniff

Tomas Harvey is an engineering student living on a small, impoverished island in Ecuador. He is conscripted into military service in the border war with Peru where he is convinced he will die a senseless death. His father, a renowned British travel writer, is accused of embezzling government funds and suddenly leaves the island. While searching for answers, Tomas embarks on a journey of discovery that may lead him closer to his father and to his biological mother who abandoned him at birth, and away from his home country for the first time in his life... The novel chronicles how duty shapes a family over generations, the struggle for self discovery, and how the abandonment of selfish obligations in favour of altruism can lead to a renewed faith in humanity, and ultimately, in ourselves."

Poor Man's Galapagos Details

Date : Published October 1st 2015 by Blue Denim Press Inc

ISBN : 9781927882115

Author : Christopher Canniff

Format : Paperback 256 pages

Genre :

 [Download Poor Man's Galapagos ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Poor Man's Galapagos ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Poor Man's Galapagos Christopher Canniff

From Reader Review Poor Man's Galapagos for online ebook

Jacob Hogeterp says

In spite of the explosive opening of Poor Man's Galapagos, an idyllic if-you-build-it-they-will-come screed stubbornly tries to take hold in the opening chapter. Cannif, however packs far more complexity into the narrative than a mere wish-fulfilment fantasy.

The seamier aspects of loyalty, friendship and duty all get their airing, but above all, the sense of belonging, complicated here by lager-than-life, though mostly absent parents with shallow or even non-existent roots in the only place — a small impoverished tropical island — the main character has ever known. He has great difficulty convincing himself that his contribution to the building of a luxury hotel will provide the answers he so desperately seeks, knowing all along that only by pursuing the trails of his errant parents and the secrets they carry, will he find peace.

Luxury hotels on small islands; sand castles in Spain; shutting out the larger world — these are the dead-ends of an unfulfilled life. Opening the heart to possibilities — that's another way altogether.

Michael says

Poor Man's Galapagos opens with Tómas Harvey crouched by the roadside, on the small impoverished Ecuadorian island on which he lives, with a Molotov cocktail waiting for an armoured military vehicle to pass. But moral conflicts prevent him from throwing it.

Thus, the tone for the story that follows is set as Tómas struggles, with conflicting notions of duty and opposing family obligations, to find his identity and his place in the world. He embarks on a journey of self-discovery struggling to come to terms with his relationship with: his father, an expat British travel writer, who is away more than he is at home; his birth mother in Canada who he has never met; and his adopted Ecuadorian mother who is devoted to him but at odds with his evolving vision for his future.

Do obligations to this country, including conscripted military service, take precedence over family ties? Who truly has his best interests at heart – the family friend and lawyer who pleads his case for conscientious objection to military service or his father's lifelong friend who wields power to achieve his vision for a new future for the island?

Poor Man's Galapagos is an engaging character study played out against the political turmoil of the time and infused with rich descriptions of the isolated corner of the world in which it takes place.

NormaCenva says

This was good read, spanning time, countries, cultures and showcasing many different personalities. Great descriptive's and dialogue as well. Unexpectedly enjoyable.

Sharon Crawford says

Christopher Canniff's latest novel *Poor Man's Galapagos* is the coming-of-age story of an 18-year old university student, Tómas Montgomery Harvey. But that's where similarity to the usual coming-of age novel ends because of the complicated plot Canniff has woven. First there is the setting – a small Ecuador island, Isla de la Plata. The novel is set from August 1987 into 1988. A war between Ecuador and Peru has been ongoing for many decades. Military conscription is mandatory and the bottom line for Tómas is he is afraid to go to war, afraid of being killed. This is first hinted at in the novel's beginning when Tómas, working with student revolutionaries, does not have the nerve to light and throw a Molotov cocktail at a passing government vehicle.

Friends and so-called friends of Tómas and his father have differing approaches to keep Tómas out of the military. His friend, Juan Carlos, the newspaper editor of the island newspaper and a former lawyer, tries to go the court route with conscientious objection. Eduardo Delgado, a long-time friend of his father, at his father's wishes, hires Tómas to work as the engineer in charge of the large hotel resort Eduardo is building, which provides a means for Tomas to get a military card and an exemption from military service.

Tómas goes along with both, with disastrous results. As Juan Carlos tells Tómas "What people perhaps should do, and what they actually do, is often very different." That includes Tómas' father, the legendary freelance photojournalist, Montgomery Harvey. All his life Tómas has lived in the shadow of his father, always feeling no love from his father, who spent more time travelling for his stories, than with his son and wife, Veronica. As the novel opens, Montgomery has been linked in the press with embezzling funds and after a meeting with Tómas on the beach, he says he is leaving for good. After his father departs, Tómas decides he has to reconnect with him and find his birth mother. Only by choosing his own options, and following through, despite many hurdles, is Tómas able to transition through the murky road of becoming an adult.

The novel is told with the alternating viewpoints of Tómas and Montgomery Harvey, which works well to provide details to the reader, but never revealing too much at a time. To avoid any spoilers, let's just say that Canniff builds up the plot, piece by piece, keeping the reader's interest. Although the novel, starts a bit slow (despite that Molotov cocktail), hang in there, it picks up very soon. Your best bet is to keep on reading to the end in one sitting, if possible, like I did while a wind storm occurred outside.
