



## Divided We Fall

**Carl Berryman**

Author Reputation Press (Jul 18, 2019)

Softcover \$18.99 (506pp)

978-1-951020-27-9

*The US splinters apart in Divided We Fall, a dystopian political thriller about political divisions run amok.*

In Carl Berryman's future-set dystopian political thriller *Divided We Fall*, the United States is in the midst of another civil war.

Ethan, an experienced military man, returns home from overseas to find that his wife has left him, citing their political differences. The country he's returned to has also changed in dramatic ways. Democrats are in control of the White House and Congress; political correctness has canceled out the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. All firearms have been seized, and sections of the US begin to split off as a result. One such area, covering much of the Rocky Mountains, wants to secede and regain the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They call themselves the Patriots, and their military force is growing. They want to hire Ethan to help.

Much of the story is told through lengthy exposition and people's conversations; both are inhibited by punctuation errors. Characters discuss all that has happened in a historical context and talk about what will be done in the future. Elsewhere, news channels report on a variety of events around the world. But the book's paragraphs of pure, awkward dialogue slow its pacing, and its transitions between speakers and scenes are rough.

In the end, this is a perspective-driven novel that, while asserting that severe divisions lead nations to fall, evades examples of calling for unity that aren't based on its heroes' perspectives, which all rest in conservative Christianity. Its audience will be limited to those of a like mind as a result. Indeed, its own rhetoric and delivery are divisive and bombastic, and its one-sidedness means that it is short on surprises.

The story unfolds with revelations about biological weapons and vaccines, through discussions of media coverage of events, and via the thorough workings of geopolitical military operations. The downfall of the United States is identified as a failing of multiculturalism and is attributed to the war on Christianity; the book's leading Democrats have altered the Pledge of Allegiance, barred "the Ten Commandments from public places, bann[ed] Christmas displays, and on and on, destroy[ing] a lot of our national cohesion."

The novel further limits its appeal in its treatment of women and of communities of color, the latter of which which comes via conversations about welfare and socialism; Ethan calls people “welfare-sucking scum.” Throughout, there’s a heavy-handed suggestion that the parts of the US with more racial diversity are those most marked by rioting, looting, and sexual assaults. Another frequent talking point is the lack of birth control within Latino communities, which characters suggest will leave white Americans in the minority. There are few attempts to talk favorably about such communities, which are said to have “family values” and a “strong work ethic,” though the same qualities are said not to matter within the bigger picture. Further, the book’s descriptions of women are often limited to their looks and their sexual appeal. If they are successful or intelligent, it is due to their fathers’ money or their abilities to sleep their way to the top of their fields. The efforts of women in positions of power are dismissed; they are merely there to “achieve the necessary politically correct ... balance.”

The US splinters apart in *Divided We Fall*, a dystopian political thriller about political divisions run amok.

LEAH WEBSTER (November 2, 2022)

*Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.*