

The Beijing Blunder: A Historical Political Saga: Book 4 of the One Hundred Years of War Series

Jay Perin

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An oil empire continues to grow in The Beijing Blunder, a tense political thriller in which flawed people chase power with determination.

In Jay Perin's political thriller *The Beijing Blunder*, the cold war between three families continues as they fight for control of a global oil empire.

This is the latest entry in the One Hundred Years of War series, a political saga centered on the Kingsleys, the Sheppards, and the Barronses. For generations, the families have vied for control of the global oil market. In the 1970s, the families united to confront a threat; in the closing years of the 1980s, former president Temple has lost control of the empire and his tenuous grip over the three families. He sets into motion a plan to groom one of the youngest Sheppards into becoming his heir and the future ruler of the empire. But after discovering a sinister plot to wrest control away from Temple, Lilah goes on the run; she is powerless to stop the current CEO and leader of the oil empire, Steven Kingsley.

Unlike Lilah, Steven has few qualms about dirtying his hands. He will do anything to keep power. He even takes credit for an assassination attempt on Temple in the hope of proving that he's dangerous. Temple, Lilah, Steven, and other prominent members of the three families race to control the empire, the political landscape, and the generations-long accumulation of power.

Featuring excellent characterizations in which people's backstories are rendered deep and engaging, the book makes much of the fact that no one among its cast is a paragon of morality. Still, Lilah is captivating: she's endured devastating traumas but still refuses to stop until the oil empire is either in the proper hands or neutralized.

There's an obvious endpoint to the saga, but watching the three families vie for control is still fascinating—as is the historical backdrop against which their strategies unfold. The strong prose includes poetic moments around the book's romantic interludes, a rapid-fire tone during action sequences, and steady details in scenes of exposition, but is otherwise concise. The chapter headings reveal the cast's locations and the time, which proves helpful when the narrative skips between moments. The book also alternates between Washington, DC, and the tumultuous countries where Lilah and her allies hide out.

With occasional flashbacks to elaborate on key people and events, the story is complex and twisting. It's vital that the previous books be read before this one: there's an incredible amount of information that's carried through, and understanding the many political maneuvers, conspiracies, and intricate interpersonal dynamics in this volume requires previous familiarity. Still, the complex story arc present throughout the series is expanded upon in this volume in a coherent, rewarding manner.

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with determination.

JOHN M. MURRAY (October 4, 2022)

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