

## The Replacements

### David Putnam

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*This author stands out as one unafraid to be sensitive as well as adventurous.*

An ex-convict turned detective for the LAPD, Bruno Johnson is a man who puts justice above all else, raising eight children he rescued from abusive situations. After moving to Costa Rica to escape his old life, he is approached by a former colleague, the Montclair, California, chief of police. It seems his worst nightmare has come true; that is, until his visitor states her purpose, that she needs help in a kidnapping case.

In David Putnam's sequel to *The Disposables*, Bruno Johnson (under the alias Bob Johnson), is back—just when he thought he'd quit, he cannot resist the urge to see that justice is served. Putnam manages to turn up the suspense, keeping the novel afloat with its memorable characters and notable mystery.

Johnson himself, despite being the typical gritty ex-cop on the surface, retains a surprising amount of empathy. This is evident in his tendency to save missing or abused children, often doing so out of the limelight. Even though he had been hoping for a quieter life bartending, he picks right back up again as soon as he is told two more children are missing, and he feels unable to keep himself from helping them.

The novel is fast paced and entertaining. At some points, the plot does become a bit tangled and more complex than it needs to be, but the book's saving points are always its adventure and characters. Unlike most action novels, the narrative does not shy away from being emotionally complicated, delving into the mental repercussions of kidnapping and murder. This allows the book to carve a unique identity for itself in a genre riddled with similar plots and characters.

Fans of action novels will get the most out of this book. While it is a sequel, reading the first in the series is not necessary to enjoy the second book.

SONYA LOVY (Spring 2015)

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