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## Precious Lives

Von Margaret Forster  
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# MARGARET PRECIOUS LIVES FORSTER

BY THE AUTHOR OF *HIDDEN LIVES*

'Margaret Forster's books hold you in their grip and linger in the mind...'

*Precious Lives is unputdownable* MARY WESLEY, EXPRESS

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Produktinformation -Verkaufsrang: #614096 in eBooksVerffentlicht am: 2012-10-31Erscheinungsdatum:  
2012-10-31File Name: B009M503L0 | File size: 19.Mb

**Von Margaret Forster : Precious Lives** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Precious Lives:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.  
Unsentimental JourneyVon Ein KundeIn this excellent memoir, Margaret Forster has succeeded in writing about death and dying without the usual cliches or overwrought sentiments. She tells two stories of people she loves; her fifty-six year old sister-in-law dying of cancer and her ninety-six year-old father dying of old age. Told with honesty and

humor, we can admire her father's tenacity and determination to maintain his identity without having to believe that he has suddenly acquired great wisdom. We can also grieve for the younger person as she endures her cancer treatments without being asked to see her as a soldier losing a battle. Ms Forster is equally forthright in describing her own conflicted feelings of loving compassion mixed with the desire to see the end of her loved ones suffering as they struggle through the last days of their precious lives. The reader will find no angels or great epiphanies in this absorbing book but just might find it all the more inspiring for its unsentimental look at the human spirit.

**Kurzbeschreibung** A brilliant follow-up to *Hidden Lives*, Margaret Forster's most personal book yet takes up the story of her gritty, northern father, Arthur, intertwined with that of her sister-in-law, Marion, who died of cancer at almost half the age of the 96-year-old Arthur. Margaret Forster's father was not a man to answer questions - least of all questions about life and death, so she attempts to answer them for herself. As Forster looks back at Arthur's life and indomitable character, she evokes incidents from her childhood, his working life and stubborn old age, trying to make sense of their largely unspoken relationship, and of his tenacious hold on life, and on his family. Arthur and Marion's lives were ordinary, and apparently unremarkable, but, when faced with death, lives like these become strangely precious. In this sequel to her recent bestselling memoir, *Hidden Lives*, in which she told the story of the women in her family, the novelist and biographer Margaret Foster describes her father Arthur's life and death, structuring the narrative around the last six years of his life until his lingering death at the age of 96. As he begins to fail, Forster's beloved sister-in-law Marion is diagnosed with terminal cancer, and Forster compares the fierce struggles both Arthur and Marion put up against the inevitable, marvelling at their tenacity in the face of extreme humiliation and suffering. As she puts it, "These have been two stories not of life but of dying", so this is anything but a sentimental account of death, about which Forster ponders bleakly and with a bracing philosophical clarity. She sifts through her memories of growing up in Carlisle and builds up an often comical portrait of an irascible, routine-obsessed working-class man, who works hard for his family, hates hospitals and is scornful of self-pity. Arthur is as vivid as any of her fictional characters and Forster's calm account of his last few months in a nursing home, unable to hold on to his fiercely-guarded independence, unable to enjoy the landscapes of his beloved Lake District, is both moving and--in terms of his courage--inspiring. --Emily Ormond *Pressestimmen* "I have great admiration for Margaret Forster's ability to fashion absorbing tales of family life from the most ordinary people in *Precious Lives*... Her insistence on validating the domestic, combined with her meticulous eye and painstaking research, creates a past which reveals modest lives with all their awkwardnesses and painful secrets." (*Irish Times*) "Margaret Forster's books hold you in their grip and linger in the mind long after being put down... *Precious Lives* is unputdownable... A remarkably courageous book which we should read, inwardly digest and, above all, enjoy" (*Mary Wesley Daily Express*) "Forster is a terrific writer, witty and compassionate... [*Precious Lives*] manages to be completely honest without compromising the delicacy of its subjects: it is moving and funny too" (*Cressida Connolly Spectator*) "Dying is an art," wrote Sylvia Plath. Writing about dying is also an art, one which Margaret Forster possesses in no small measure... [She] pursues her purpose with such flair that she succeeds, once again, in riveting her reader... *Precious Lives* adds up to an exemplary tribute to two striking individuals" (*Patricia Craig Independent*)