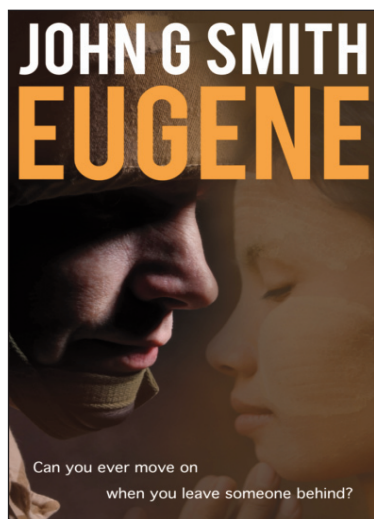




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EUGENE

John G Smith's riveting account
of triumph, turmoil and tragedy
in post-war Britain

During a meeting with an WWII veteran, Newark author John G Smith found himself hearing a remarkable true story of a young man torn from his first love in Bangkok in 1946. 'The man showed me a small snapshot of himself with a Burmese girl, which he had kept a secret since the 1940s,' explains John. It was upon hearing this story that John was inspired to write his debut novel, *Eugene*.

After a harrowing tour of duty as an RAF conscript, Eugene returns to Britain from war-ravaged Burma. He is unexpectedly excluded from the family butchery business and so he sets out on his return to climb the business ladder, embracing and exploiting the innovations and opportunities that present themselves out of the privations of post-war Britain. For all his rapid advancement in both work and play Eugene is forever mourning the loss of his first love, a beautiful, lithe, young Burmese nurse named Chit. Having nurtured him back to life with her tenderness, their relationship was brutally shattered when he was dragged away from her, under arrest for fraternising with a local. Eugene is forced to make a life-changing decision – marry Chit, face court martial and a possible death sentence, or return to the UK. Not knowing whether he'll ever see his first love again Eugene is driven to succeed but family tragedies ensue when his older brother commits suicide and his brother-in-law is killed in a coal-mining accident. Eugene finds himself thriving at a time when the rest are going to wrack and ruin. But greed and self-interest take their toll and disintegration looms.

'While this is a novel, the incident with the elderly gentlemen started my research. I wove a story that goes backwards and forwards in time with the experiences of 1946 as the anchor,' adds John.

JOHN G SMITH was born in rural Derbyshire, but now resides in Nottinghamshire with his wife Julia. Having written books on finance and economics, *Eugene* is his debut novel.



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PRESS PACK

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