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# A Day at the Fare: One Woman's Welfare Passage

*Pamela M. Covington*

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**SHOULD YOU READ THIS BOOK?**

Don't think it's important to maintain an adequate safety net for America's struggling families? Only hear about welfare's failures? How much do you know from experience about what it's like to live in poverty?

"I subscribed to all the typical negative stereotypes about welfare recipients until I found myself with no choice other than to become one," says the author. "Then I learned I couldn't have been more wrong."

**IF** your head is full of preconceived notions about everyone who receives government aid, *this book is for you.* You'll see that each welfare case is as individual as each welfare applicant.

Have you ever wondered, "Why would anyone want to be on welfare? To depend on food stamps?"

Honestly. No one says, "When I grow up I'm going to be on welfare." Many times people end up on welfare through no fault of their own. The author recalls that when faced with adversity, "Applying for assistance was my last resort to having nothing at all."

**IF** you've been lucky enough in life to avoid any form of economic struggle, *this book is for you.* You'll gain an understanding of the complexities of poverty.

Are you a policy maker or other individual in position to determine how much assistance poor people should receive and for how long, yet have no experience yourself with the struggles of poverty?

**IF** so, *this book is for you.* Reading it will provide you insight into the everyday realities of a family struggling to meet basic needs.

Are you someone, maybe even a member of the working poor class, who requires government aid just to be able to barely get by, and are finding it hard to envision ever being able to move beyond your struggle with poverty?

**THEN** *this book is especially for you.* It may leave you somewhat inspired.

**IMAGINE...**

You’re living a good life in a grand old house with your family, spending your summer looking out from your veranda onto a picturesque park and enjoying the scent of flowers in the air—until fall arrives and you’re beholding a multi-colored canopy of foliage.

But... by winter you’re stealing toilet tissue from a restaurant restroom and wondering what you’re going to do with your first welfare check that won’t even pay the rent for the ghetto apartment you and your children are now calling home.

The reality is we’re all only living one or two misfortunes away from losing the people or things we’re depending upon, and if and when that happens, you could easily find yourself enduring *A Day at the Fare.*

What would you be willing to do to survive its grim circumstances?

This memoir depicts the author's unexpected plunge into, and triumphant emergence from, deep poverty.

"A Day at the Fare" is a welfare success story. An example of what can happen when an adequate safety net is available to assist those attempting to help themselves by making the best of its resources.

It's also a demonstration of the pros and cons of the welfare system and the kinds of things about it that need to be changed.

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