

A Street in Arnhem: The Agony of Occupation and Liberation

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✓ Verified Book of A Street in Arnhem: The Agony of Occupation and Liberation

Summary:

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In this long-awaited book, Robert Kershaw follows up his best-selling account of Operation Market Garden It Never Snows in September to focus on the experiences of Dutch civilians and British and German soldiers in one street while fighting to survive at the heart of one of the most intense battles of World War II. He tells the story from the perspective of what could be seen or heard from the Utrechtseweg, a road that runs seven kilometers from the Arnhem railway station west to Oosterbeek. This stretch of road saw virtually every major event during the fighting for Arnhem the legendary Bridge Too Far during September 1944. The story is about the disintegration of a wealthy Dutch suburb caught unexpectedly in the war it had escaped for so long. The book charts the steady destruction of an exclusive rural community, where wealthy Dutch holiday-makers had relaxed before the war. The destruction of this pretty village is charted through the eyes of British, Polish and German soldiers fighting amid its confused and horrified inhabitants. It portrays a collage of human experiences, sights, sounds, visceral fears and emotion as ordinary people seek to cope when their street is so suddenly and unexpectedly overwhelmed in a savage battle using the most deadly weapons of the day. Kershaw's new research reveals the extent to which most people in this battle, whether soldiers or civilians, saw only what was immediately happening to them, with no idea of the larger picture. Many original Dutch, German and English accounts have been unearthed through interviews, diary accounts and letters, as well as post-combat reports charting the same incidents from both sides. The story is told as a docudrama following the fortunes of participants within a gripping narrative format. Holland had not witnessed conflict since the Napoleonic wars. What happens when your street, where you have lived for generations, is suddenly overwhelmed by conflict? A Street in Arnhem with its alternating revelations of horror and courage tells that story and provides some of the answers.

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