



The Aftermath

By Rhidian Brook

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Set in post-war Germany, the international bestseller *The Aftermath* by Rhidian Brook is a stunning emotional thriller about our fiercest loyalties and our deepest desires. In the bitter winter of 1946, Rachael Morgan arrives with her only remaining son Edmund in the ruins of Hamburg. Here she is reunited with her husband Lewis, a British colonel charged with rebuilding the shattered city. But as they set off for their new home, Rachael is stunned to discover that Lewis has made an extraordinary decision: they will be sharing the grand house with its previous owners, a German widower and his troubled daughter. In this charged atmosphere, enmity and grief give way to passion and betrayal.

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The Aftermath By Rhidian Brook Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Postwar Hamburg is the backdrop for British writer Brook's (*The Testimony of Taliesin Jones*) emotionally charged third novel, which is inspired by his family history. British Col. Lewis Morgan is stationed in the German city in 1946. He requisitions a house for his family, but instead of casting out its German owners (the standard procedure), he allows them to remain. Brook's chilling observations of Hamburg's defeated inhabitants and the fantastic destruction that lay all around are unnerving and riveting. Feral children, he writes, beg for cigarettes and chocolates, and Rubble Runners clean up the remains of bombed-out buildings in exchange for food vouchers. But the novel's smaller stage—the home that Morgan; his wife, Rachael; and their son, Edmund, share with Stefan Lubert and his daughter, Freda—tells the bigger story. The blended families are uncomfortable with their new relationship, and the toxic effects of unassuaged grief for lost love ones complicates the situation. Fans of WWII-era historical fiction will be drawn to this novel. First printing of 75,000. Agent: Stephanie Cabot, Gernert Company. (Sept. 17)

From Booklist

This precisely written novel is loosely based on events in which the English author's forebears were involved. In the immediate aftermath of WWII, as the victorious Allies partition and independently administer a Germany in ruins, English Army Colonel Lewis Morgan, joined by his wife, Rachael, and young child, Edmund, is assigned to take over the luxurious Hamburg home of Stefan Lubert and his teenage daughter, Freda. Rather than displacing them, Morgan generously, though inexplicably, encourages them to stay on and live upstairs, sharing the capacious residence. This is an uneasy arrangement, exacerbated by domestic stress and war-related bitterness: Rachael and Freda still harbor deep resentments, having lost in the bombings, respectively, a son and a mother. Further, the devastated North Sea city is home not only to the occupying British and the defeated, not always "clear" (of Nazi taint) Germans, but also to feral children roaming the streets, and members of a group ironically characterizing itself as the Resistance, "those who have not yet admitted defeat." In this unique historical novel, Brook plays these elements out dramatically and, for the most part, credibly. --Mark Levine

Review

"Rhidian Brook's arresting novel brings vividly to life a little-told aspect of World War II." —Claire Messud

"Superb. . . . Conjures surprise after surprise as it shows how the forces of politics and history penetrate even the most intimate moments of its characters' emotional lives." —*The Guardian* (London)

"A brilliant novel. . . . A moving, always enthralling journey into the dark and light of history." —Joseph O'Neill, author of *Netherland*

"A captivating tale of love among the ruins but also of treachery and vengeance. . . . It poses many complex questions." —*Literary Review*

"Reading *The Aftermath*, one can't help but wonder if this is the sort of literary memorialization . . . that Sebald might have wished for." —*The Washington Post*

"A fine, moving novel. . . . Brook addresses weighty themes—forgiveness, familial loss—with a light touch. . . . Bring[s] to mind no less a novel than J.G. Ballard's *Empire of the Sun*." —*Financial Times*

“Brook is wonderful at evoking the atmosphere of this forgotten time and place. . . . Brook handles the often shocking turn of events with a sparseness matched to the harshness of that winter . . . There is much to think about here. It is a moral book but not a moralising one.” —*The Times* (London)

“Engrossing. . . . Brook is a master with mixing the mundane details with characters’ trials and tribulations. . . . This story of passion, betrayal and ultimate truth and forgiveness will have you hooked.” —*Portland Book Review*

“Profoundly moving. . . . Brook’s beautifully written novel ponders issues of decency, guilt and forgiveness. . . . The meticulous integrity of [his] prose style builds a narrative of chastened humans . . . turning back from the brink.” —*The Independent* (London)

“Masterly. . . . The story develops with many a deft twist. . . . Brook wrings every drop of feeling out of a gripping human situation, and his vignettes of war-ravaged Hamburg are superb.” —*Mail on Sunday*

“A stylish, heart-searching, and convincing story. . . . Memorably refashions this period.” —*The Herald* (Scotland)

“An entertaining blend of romance, history and suspense, one to which Brook’s style is perfectly suited: it’s sturdy, stripped down with the just the right amount of gnarled beauty poking through the cracks.” —*The Toronto Star*

“Rhidian Brook takes a piece of history I thought I knew well and breaks it open; *The Aftermath* is a compelling, surprising, and moving novel.” —Sadie Jones, author of *The Uninvited Guests*

“Riveting. . . . Emotionally charged. . . . Fans of WWII-era historical fiction will be drawn to this novel.” —*Publishers Weekly*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Darren Marshall:

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Jason Villalobos:

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