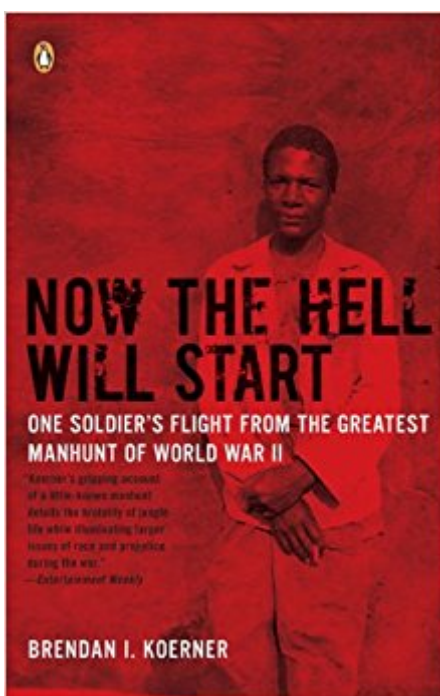


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Now The Hell Will Start: One Soldier's Flight From The Greatest Manhunt Of World War II



Synopsis

An epic saga of hubris, cruelty, and redemption, *Now the Hell Will Start* tells the remarkable tale of the greatest manhunt of World War II. Herman Perry, besieged by the hardships of the Indo-Burmese jungle and the racism meted out by his white commanding officers, found solace in opium and marijuana. But on one fateful day, Perry shot his unarmed white lieutenant in the throes of an emotional collapse and fled into the jungle. Brendan I. Koerner spent nearly five years chasing Perry's ghost to the most remote corners of India and Burma. Along the way, he uncovered the forgotten story of the Ledo Road's GIs, for whom Jim Crow was as powerful an enemy as the Japanese—and for whom Herman Perry, dubbed the jungle king, became an unlikely folk hero.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Segregation is the context for Koerner's biography of Herman Perry, and the Burma theater of World War II is the stage. Shipped to Asia with thousands of black American draftees to build the Ledo Road, Perry generated considerable documentation in his short life, and Koerner fully capitalizes on it. Producing a riveting personal drama, Koerner glimpses Perry's essentially ebullient personality forming in the Jim Crow world but rebelling against its army version on the other side of the world. Not glossing over Perry's transgressions of military discipline, one of which was a capital offense at the tragic heart of the narrative, Koerner solidly anchors them in their emotionally stressful context of miserable road construction in a pestilent jungle amid contemptuous treatment from some white officers. There were two extraordinary consequences of

Perry's central misdeed: his court-martial, whose procedures Koerner critiques, and beforehand, Perry's escape and year-long survival in the Burmese wilds as an adoptive member of the Naga people. With arresting pacing and empathy for its participants, Koerner's skillful rendering of the Perry saga exerts certain appeal for the WWII audience. --Gilbert Taylor --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

" Koerner's gripping account of a little-known manhunt details the brutality of jungle life while also illuminating larger issues of race and prejudice during the war." - Entertainment Weekly "

Remarkable . . . Koerner has done a great deal of digging into obscure corners of dusty records and has managed to reconstruct a tale well worth telling." -Jonathan Yardley, The Washington Post Book Review " A fascinating, untold story of the Second World War, an incendiary social document, and a thrilling, campfire tale adventure." -George Pelacanos

I was not sure I needed to know more about the horrors of moving supplies and men northward on transportation routes commonly called 'The Burma Road' even though it is more involved as this book clearly shows. A close friend of my family fought and slogged his way up those dangerous narrow paths and I grew up hearing many experiences from him. The cost in lives of our troops and those of allies was incredible. It was a race to set up defenses against the Japanese who were on their way to the conquest of critical areas where they could assure success against a wide area including India, Australia, and many points between. To make it more horrible for the Allies was a hodge-podge of tribal rivalry, poor communications, tropical diseases, and a complex mix of racial attitudes. Sometimes you can seem to 'feel' the hopeless fatigue and danger, and want to lay the book aside. Again and again I would see that the veteran who had told me what it was like and what it had done to his health never exaggerated. I felt I had to complete the book in his memory. There was no easy campaign but from years of research I know of no where the deck was stacked against our forces in so many diverse ways. The author honored the saga by writing this book.

I thought this book was the perfect combination of suspenseful and informative. It provided me with a clear understanding of the role of African Americans in World War II, Army policy relating to African American conscripts, the Allied actions in China, Burma, and India, and then of course Herman Perry, the soldier the book is about. The book is an excellent and well-written thriller (despite being non-fiction), but more than anything, it is an eye-opening look at the treatment of blacks in the American Army at the time. A lot of the well-known literature on this subject relates to

the Harlem Hellfighters (infantry) or the Tuskegee Airmen (pilots), but "Now the Hell Will Start" discusses the Jim Crow mentality of the Army and the fact that the overwhelming majority of black men in the military were relegated to manual labor, since they were deemed unfit for combat due to the racist science of the time that suggested blacks were mentally incapable of handling anything else. The book is also an excellent introduction to the Burmese jungle, which I previously knew nothing about. The author explains the role of Burma, China, and India in World War II, and Herman Perry was deployed to Burma to work on building a road that ultimately ended up being mostly pointless. I found the detail about the perils of the Burmese jungles and the monsoon season to be both fascinating and horrifying. Some people have claimed that this book paints Herman Perry in a sympathetic light despite the fact that he killed an officer. While I agree that he was painted in a sympathetic light, I do think it is warranted. The disparities between the treatment of white soldiers and black soldiers were glaring, particularly with regard to soldiers who exhibited any degree of mental instability, as Herman Perry did. This combined with the fact that everyone (white or black) working in China, Burma, and India was essentially ignored by the Army brass made me wonder why more people did not end up in the same situation. I definitely recommend this book, though the descriptions of life in the Burmese jungle are not for the faint of heart. Also, I bought this book on the Kindle. I found that the footnote links worked well and that the pictures (there were only a few) were easy to see on my black-and-white Kindle. There were a lot of missing spaces, though - so every few pages some words were combined. Otherwise a good book to read in the Kindle format.

Interesting book. I live in Washington, DC. I remember his brother Aaron Perry who was a reknown fighter from Washington, DC, back in the day. Aaron`s most memorable fight was vs Henry Armstrong which Aaron lost.

Herman Perry's story is well worth reading. The events that led to his death have been repeated throughout the history of Black soldiers from the Revolution through Vietnam.

Very timely read that complicates the WWII narrative. Intimately connected to Jim Crow era America, the bulk of this book takes place in the jungles of Burma but places in stark relief the limiting effects of racial segregation.

I have friends that were in the China-Burma-Theatre in WWII, so when I realized that this book dealt with that time and place, I simply had to have it to read. It is a very interesting book, and almost

impossible to put down. I highly recommend it to any readers interested in WWII.

A forgotten part of World War 2. For those interested in the experiences of African American Soldiers this is a worthwhile historical event to study.

Great. Gives a perspective often not talked about when discussing WWII. Has a movie not been made about this story? Get on it if not.

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