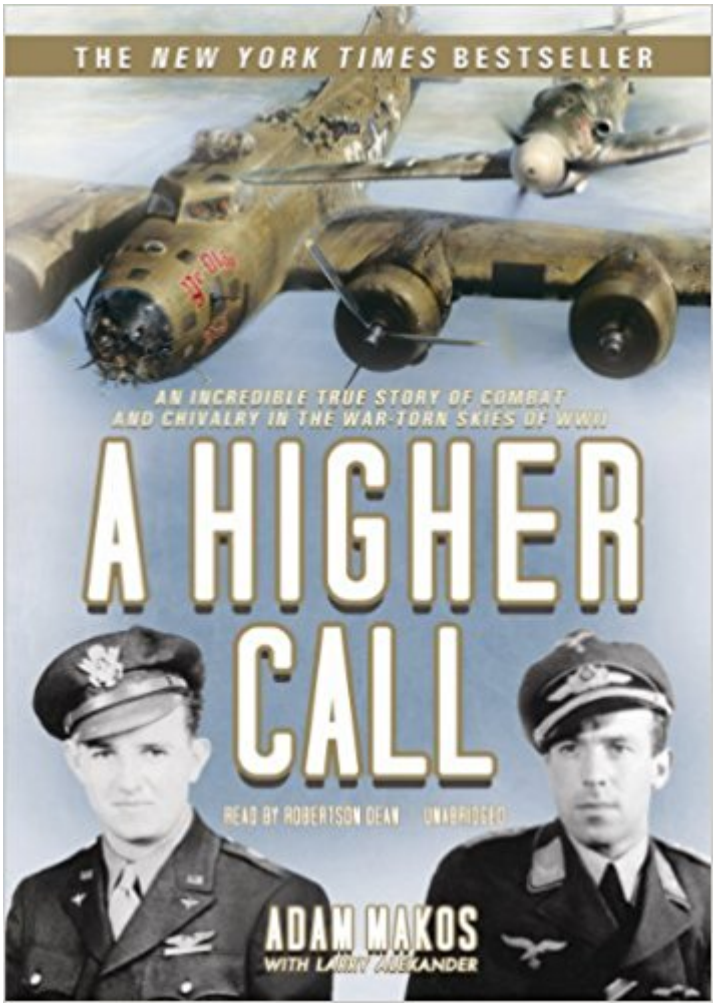
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A Higher Calling: An Incredible True Story Of Combat And Chivalry In The War-Torn Skies Of World War II



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Synopsis

[Read by Robertson Dean] The story of two enemy fighter pilots who met in the skies in the midst of a bloody war. Four days before Christmas in 1943, a badly damaged American bomber struggled to fly over wartime Germany. At its controls was a twenty-one-year-old pilot. Half his crew lay wounded or dead. It was their first mission. Suddenly a sleek, dark shape pulled up on the bomber's tail - a German Messerschmitt fighter. Worse, the German pilot was an ace, a man able to destroy the American bomber with the squeeze of a trigger. What happened next would defy imagination and later be called the most incredible encounter between enemies in World War II. This is the true story of the two pilots whose lives collided in the skies that day - the American - Second Lieutenant Charlie Brown, a former farm boy from West Virginia who came to captain a B-17 -- and the German - Second Lieutenant Franz Stigler, a former airline pilot from Bavaria who sought to avoid fighting in World War II. A Higher Call follows both Charlie and Franz's harrowing missions. Charlie would face takeoffs in English fog over the flaming wreckage of his buddies' planes, flak bursts so close they would light his cockpit, and packs of enemy fighters that would circle his plane like sharks. Franz would face sandstorms in the desert, a crash alone at sea, and the spectacle of one thousand bombers, each with eleven guns, waiting for his attack. Ultimately, Charlie and Franz would stare across the frozen skies at one another. What happened between them, the American Eighth Air Force would later classify as top secret. It was an act that Franz could never mention without facing a firing squad. It was the encounter that would haunt both Charlie and Franz for forty years until, as old men, they would search for one another, a last mission that could change their lives forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

''This book grips you like a movie. It's part 'Top Gun', part 'Valkyrie', and more!'' --Marcus Brotherton, New York Times bestselling author ''It is often said that 'war is hell' - and it is - however, this story reveals how the human spirit can shine in the darkest hours. A Higher Call is an eye-opener.'' --Col. Charles McGee, Tuskegee Airman, WWII'' 'Can good men be found on both sides of a bad war?' The author asks the question and delivers the answer. A powerful, haunting read.'' --Chuck Tatum, author of Red Blood, Black Sand''A Higher Call exemplifies beautifully the brotherhood of warriors and will forever change how you look at World War II.'' --Eric Blehm, New York Times bestselling author''From the horrors of the most savage war in history emerges this beautiful story of a brotherhood between enemies. Simply told, splendid, and well worth the read.'' --Joe Galloway, coauthor of the #1 New York Times bestseller We Were Soldiers, OnceÃ¢â ¬Â¦and Young'' 'Can good men be found on both sides of a bad war?' The author asks the question and delivers the answer. A powerful, haunting read.'' --Chuck Tatum, author of Red Blood, Black Sand''A Higher Call exemplifies beautifully the brotherhood of warriors and will forever change how you look at World War II.'' --Eric Blehm, New York Times bestselling author''From the horrors of the most savage war in history emerges this beautiful story of a brotherhood between enemies. Simply told, splendid, and well worth the read.'' --Joe Galloway, coauthor of the #1 New York Times bestseller We Were Soldiers, OnceÃ¢â ¬Â¦and Young

ADAM MAKOS is a journalist, historian, and editor of the military magazine Valor. In his fifteen years of work in the military field, he has interviewed countless veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and present-day wars. He has flown a B-17 bomber and a T-38 fighter with the Air Force and was one of the few journalists privileged to examine Air Force One with its pilots. In pursuit of a story, Makos met presidents, had tea with Prince Charles, and toured the DMZ border in Korea with American troops. The high point of his work occurred in 2008, when he traveled to Iraq to accompany the 101st Airborne and Army Special Forces on their hunt for al-Qaeda terrorists.

I loved this book.I thought I knew the premise of the story before downloading it, but by the end of the first few chapters I realized this was so much more then the brief first encounter of the main characters. It's a story of two young men, on opposites sides of the war, sharing the same experiences- fighting to keep sane and survive the horrors of WWII.You are introduced to Franz (the German pilot) first and then Charlie's story (the American pilot) is intertwined later on. There is no way to read Franz's portion without being in awe of what he survived-multiple bail outs, crashes,

and over 480 missions. Being introduced to Franz first makes his run-in with Charlie's plane all the more remarkable - here was this battle-hardened pilot who showed unbelievable compassion, knowing if he were caught it would mean his own life.The authors do a fantastic job of seamlessly moving between the characters and you get so attached to them that I found myself hesitating when turning the pages because I wanted the ones I liked to live a bit longer. I finished it hours ago, but I know I'm going to reread my favorite chapters before bed tonight!

First, I need to let all readers know that I worked on this book, supplying Adam with some of my research and interview materials. When I reviewed the manuscript, he had already created a solid work. The book is completely factual, all parties and events mentioned are depicted as they were, and I knew and interviewed all the persons mentioned with exception to Charlie Brown.Franz was an excellent pilot, a great man, a humanist, who hated the war and despised the Nazi Party, but loved flying. His Catholic background and his having been exposed to the honorable men he flew with, such as Ludwig Franzisket, Gustav Rodel, Werner Schroer, Johannes Steinhoff, Eduard Neumann, Emil Clade, Friedrich Korner, Adolf Galland, and especially Hans-Joachim Marseille reinforced that sense of chivalry, and code of honor among these airmen that is often overlooked in the post war propaganda and the maelstrom of uneducated bias.I suggest that this book, which is ironically in competetion with The Star of Africa, written by my wife and I, be read in public schools and by the average American. Even if you are not an aviation or history enthusiast, the human element and drama should be enough to justify your time. What the readers will also learn is that Franz, despite his humanist streak, was not that unusual among the men of the Luftwaffe. His experiences with JG-27 in North Africa, and the exposure he had to the previously mentioned men, especially Marseille, and the impressions left upon him, helped mold his attitude.I highly recommend this book, and I hope that this work receives all of the positive recognition that it deserves. Franz and Charlie were not unique men, but they were both very fortunate to have crossed paths. Their post war friendship, much like that of Col. Joe Peterburs who shot down Oberleutnant Walter Schuck in his Me-262, is something special. This book points this fact out. Once the guns fall silent, the professional warriors set aside their differences. That is what Edu Neuman called the ingredient "that separates us from the animals." Highly recommended as a History and Military Book Club selection.

A Higher Call by Adam Makos: Review by Tom GauthierHow often do you have trouble reading the last page of an action packed war story because of the blur of tears? First time for me, as I finished

Adam Makos new book A Higher Call.After eight years of painstaking research, Makos has produced a singular piece of work: the true and incredible story of two pilots who locked eyes--and I feel locked souls--across a span of deadly sky over Nazi Germany in 1943, changing the fortunes and the futures of all who were there.Adam Makos provides us a close-up of the American experience, before during and after this incident. But he also, and in marvelously rich detail, gives us a rare look into the machinations of the Luftwaffe, again, before the war and through to the very end..... Engines failed, damage was extensive to flight surfaces, yet under the strong hands of their young pilot, Charlie Brown, the ship remained precariously in the air. Back in the plane's fuselage the crew was bravely caring for each other--some with grievous wounds. As they approached the European coastline, Charlie knew that any moment the coastal flak guns would open up and finish them off.Suddenly, from behind and below them a FW-109 climbed up from the treetops and began its attack run on the helpless Pub. With all guns frozen the crew could only watch with the resignation of pending death. At the controls of the 109, Franz Stigler, an experienced ace saw the target that would raise his "kill" count. But he didn't kill. I will not herein tell you what transpired in the minds of the American airman or the German pilot. It is something you must read for yourself and let it sink in to your soul, as I did.Charlie Brown and Franz Stigler survived the war. There was no official mention of Stigler's saving Ye Olde Pub in American records. In Germany, he could say nothing and hope no one recognized his plane from the ground--or it would be a firing squad for him.The story of their meeting decades later and the ability to share the personal feelings of all who were touched by the incident near Christmas 1943 over Germany. Here's where I began to tear up.Adam Makos has brought us an action packed adventure story. But he has done it through the eyes, souls, fears, and personal travails of both the Germans and the Americans. Yes it's a war story, but more than that it's a warriors' story--humanized but not trivialized like we've never seen before. Vicious and deadly battle could not snuff chivalry and a higher call. It's is so good to be reminded of this through a real life story.A Higher Call is a must read.Dr. Tom Gauthier, MBA, Psy.D.International Award Winning NovelistCo-host of Military Author RadioMilitary Writers' Society of AmericaU.S. Air Force Veteran

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