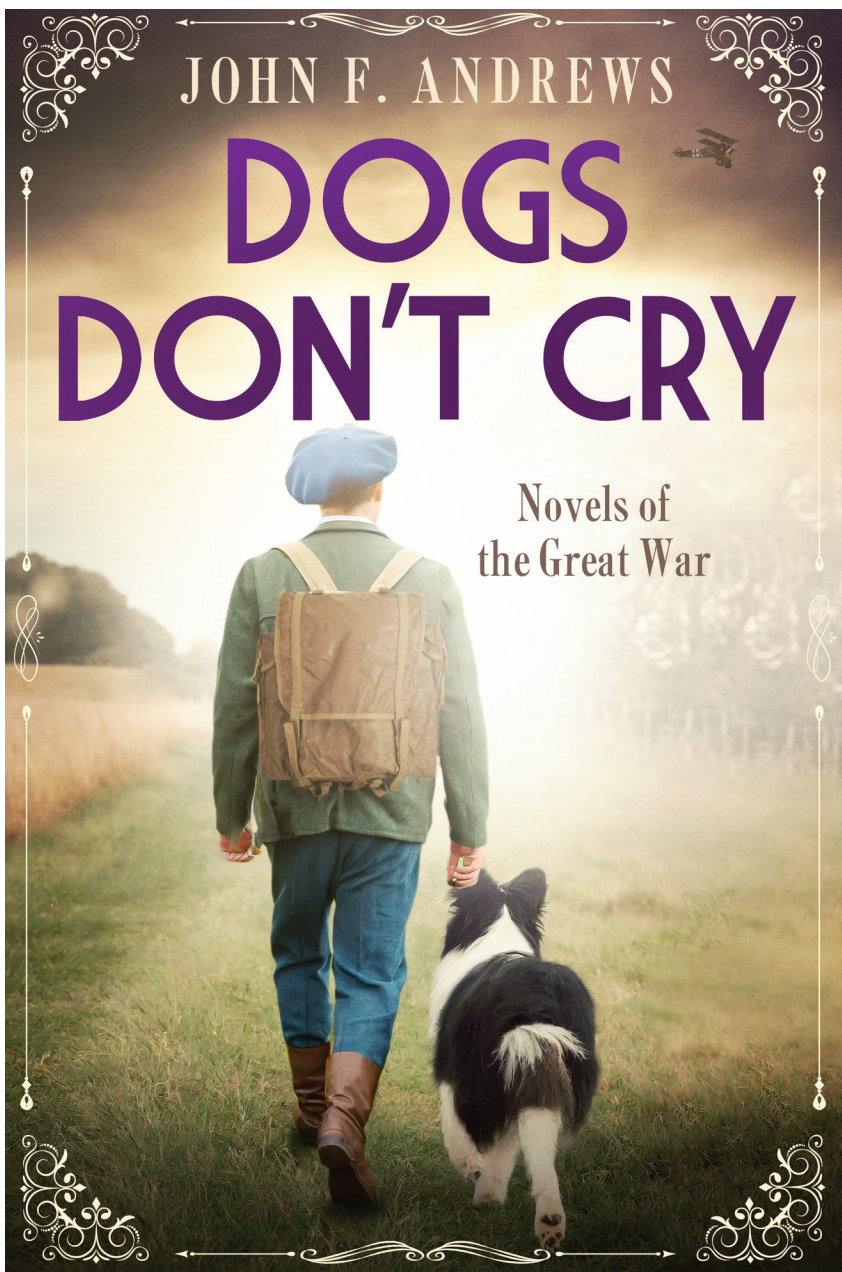


JOHN F. ANDREWS

DOGS DON'T CRY

Novels of
the Great War



June 1918.

The tidal wave of WWI is about to engulf the rural French village of Bouresches, forcing two teens and their border collie to embark on a harrowing journey to an uncertain future...

Abby is the Durand family dog. Her job is to be a companion for fifteen-year-old Marcel and his thirteen-year-old sister, Geneviève. She considers it herding. Marcel is plagued by doubts about his courage as he approaches military age. His sister has severe pneumonia. As their neighbors flee, the doctor warns their mother that the rigors of evacuation will kill Geneviève.

A disastrous escape leaves them orphaned and alone.

Marcel and Geneviève must find a distant relative, Cousin Henri, who lives near Paris. However, they have never met him, are not sure of his last name, and don't know his address. Abby is the key—Henri is her former owner, though she begs to differ on the “owner” concept. If anyone can find him, she can. The teens confront their worst fears while seeking refuge amid the chaos of war, armed only with their faith in Abby.

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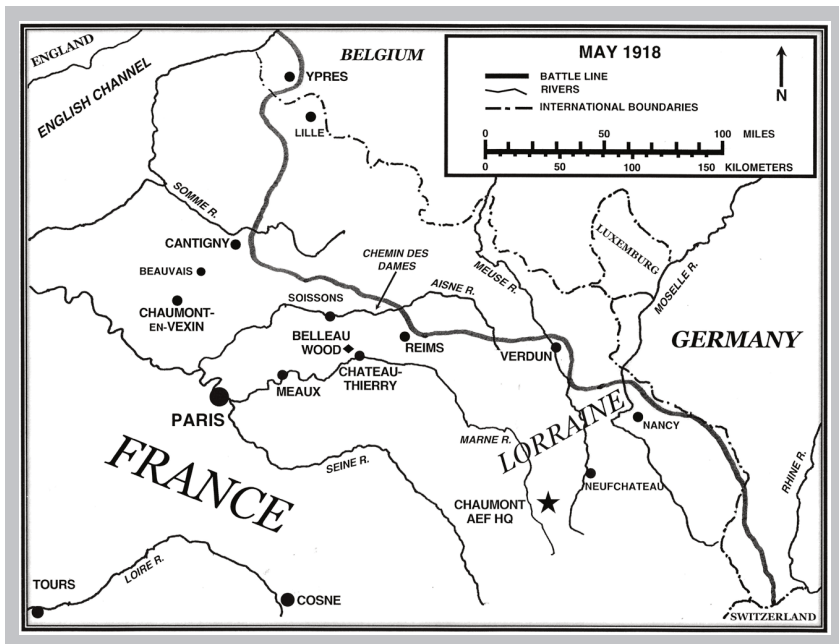
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*This novel is dedicated to the children of France and their dogs, and to
Abby Andrews, who taught me about border collies in return for my love,
and bacon.*

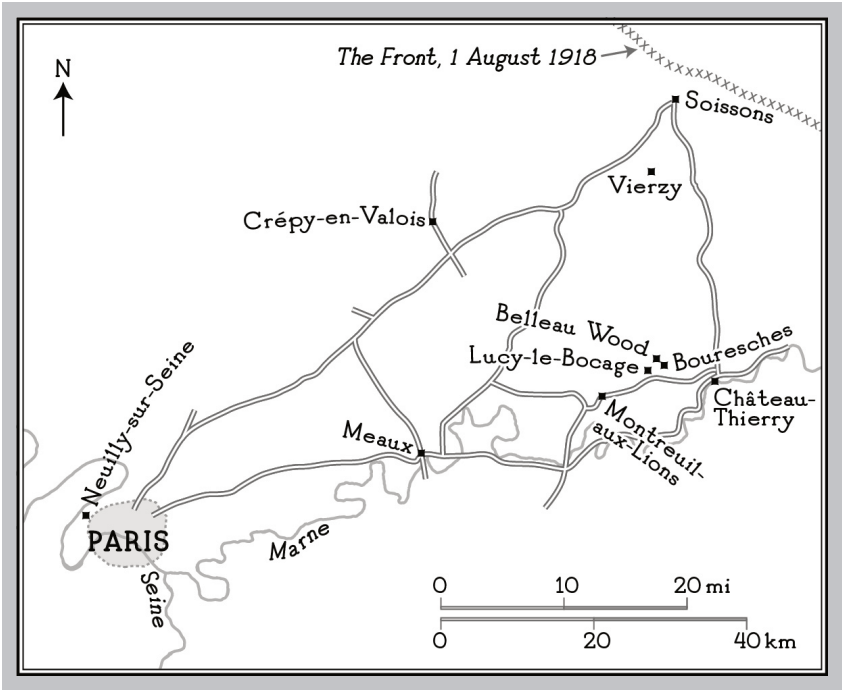
France is lucky that dogs don't cry,
for if we did,
she would drown in our tears:
tears of sorrow
tears of pain
tears of joy

Abby Durand

Map of France, May, 1918



Map of the region in France
where the novel takes place



Dogs Don't Cry

Novels of the Great War

Chapter One

Abby

Bouresches, France
May 31, 1918

My Girl rubs one of the spots I can't get to with my paws. Her hand rests on my head—stroking between my eyes. I like it when she does that. Her breathing is noisy—a wheezy rattle. She smells different today, like the sick children at the orphanage where Sophie worked. The ones they didn't let me play with. Before they brought me here.

My Girl's mother, Madame Durand, often tells her, *Rub Abby's head for good luck.*

I don't know if other dogs like that, but Border Collies do. Well, this one does. I can't speak for all on this point.

Oh, from now on I'll call Madame Claire Durand by the name my Children use, and the way I think of her, Maman.

The doctor shoos me off the bed. I hop down and settle in a corner. I don't like this doctor much. I went to his office with my Girl and Maman before she got so sick. They wouldn't let me in, which was fine with me. The smell when they opened the door stung my nose. They tied me up to a post next to the office—right in front of one of my

John F Andrews

favorite places, the shop of good smells. Here they call it *la boucherie*, but in England, where I was born, it was called the butcher shop. I figure that puts his patients in a good mood—smelling smoking sausages and bacon. I could go on . . .

Back to the doctor. Bushes of hair grow in his nose. Enough to pet—does he? He smells like his office—sharp odors and sickness. No dog smells—he must not share his home with one.

Poor man.

But the smell of bacon on him makes me think he is not all sad. Who could be downhearted working next to the butcher shop?

He is so serious. Half-glasses pinch his nose. There is a string from them to the lapel of his black coat. He has a funny way of squinting that pops the glasses off his nose. When he does that they dangle from the string. I'll grab it one of these days, but not now. I need to be a Good Girl.

The doctor says, "Geneviève sit up. Now, take deep breaths." He puts a metal thing on her back connected to tubes hanging from his hairy ears.

Oh, I forgot to tell you—he has hairy ears, too. Not like mine, mind you. His are bare on the outside. Odd. Mine are bigger and furry all over. Human ears are so pitiful.

The doctor's face is somber as he pulls the things out of his ears. "You'll be just fine in a few days, my little princess." He turns to Maman. "Claire, do you have some tea?" And with that he walks out the door.

Princess? That's a matter we'll talk about later. I have a job here and cannot take the time right now to explain.

Maman casts a worried look at Geneviève and then follows the doctor. I walk to Geneviève and let her rub my head for good luck, then follow the adults downstairs.

Stairs.

I'm good at them now, especially after all the practice I had in Paris, when I lived with Henri and Sophie in their apartment. They are tricky when four legs are involved. Dry paw pads on polished stairs can be a disaster, let me tell you. In this house, though, the wood is worn and easy for me.

Dogs Don't Cry

I settle on the rug in the room of good smells where Maman makes tea for the doctor. She puts a teapot on the stove and then stares out a window, wringing her hands, restless. The doctor sits at our dining table and writes in his notebook.

Settling.

Something dogs do well.

I'd rather have a job, but when there isn't one, I settle.

And watch. And listen. I'm smarter than most people realize.

The doctor mumbles as he writes in his notebook, his glasses on his nose. He closes the book with a nod when Maman sets the teacup in front of him.

English tea.

I know the smell from where I was born. The Beaumont family drank this when I was a pup, back in England. My first Boy, Spencer, filled my bowl with it. Once. I couldn't settle after that, and they shooed me out of the house that afternoon. I went to the fields outside town and found a flock of sheep. Border Collies herd sheep. That's the job we're born to do. I didn't know how to do it right, though, and just ran them in circles until they were so tired they laid down and glared at me. They never gave me more than a taste of tea on a finger after that.

The doctor sniffs the tea and blows over the top. Steam rises between his puffs. Maman paces the floor. I stand and offer her the opportunity to rub my head, but she continues to pace and I settle back down.

"What do you think, Doctor?"

"Hmm." He sips his tea. "Pneumonia. Very serious."

Alarm narrows Maman's eyes. "Should I take her to the hospital?"

The doctor shakes his head. "That will just expose her more. As long as you can, care for her here. If her care exhausts you, then yes, consider it. They will do no more than you can here, though."

"One of the neighbors suggested mustard plasters."

"Madame Portet?"

"Yes. She says they always work."

The doctor sighs. "She speaks with great authority born of nothing but her own high opinion of herself. They will do no harm, but they will have no effect on the pneumonia itself." He reaches into his satchel

John F Andrews

and pulls out a bottle. "Use these sparingly. Half or quarter tablet every four hours if the fever is high. I have very few." He sighs. "The war. German aspirin is in short supply. It will keep the fever at bay, at least a bit."

"But my neighbors swear by them—the mustard."

The glasses pop off the doctor's nose and swing from the string. A sudden change in his smell—anger. His voice rises. "That is hogwash. I will not take the responsibility of caring for your child if you do as that . . . woman . . . suggests."

Panic rises in Maman's voice. "I didn't mean to offend, Doctor. I . . . Will she live?"

My ears perk up at the words. The same ones Spencer Beaumont used when a wagon hit one of my littermates. He died. I lay my head on the floor, my heart beating faster. My Girl. *Will she live?* That question means she may not. I want to run upstairs. I want to comfort her. Let her rub my head. But I better listen; there could be more. I rise and walk over to Maman. She needs to settle—if only I could tell her that. The best I can do is to offer myself for her to pet.

The doctor sips his tea. "That is in God's hands. She is young and was healthy before this, so perhaps. I cannot guarantee it."

"Some of my neighbors say we may need to evacuate, like in 1914. Will she survive that?" Maman crouches and her hand finds my ears.

"Another reason to not take her to the hospital in Château-Thierry. Once there, they will keep her even if the Boche break through." He pronounced the word Boche—the word the French use to refer to the Germans—as though spitting at the devil. "They are likely to attack there before they come here. Keep her here, and you will have more time."

"My friends tell me to leave right away."

"Do you own an automobile?"

"No. None of us here can afford one."

"Your daughter will die if you make her walk."

"But Doctor, you know what the Boche do to children. They will march her and my son to camps. She'll die. And what they'll do to me . . ."

Dogs Don't Cry

“You can’t think of yourself, Claire. You must stay. God gives you no choice.”

“But . . .”

The doctor rises and leaves without another word. Maman paces, tears streaking her cheeks. I wish my Boy, Marcel, was here to comfort her, but he is out playing war with his friends in the woods.

I rise, shake myself, and head upstairs to my Girl.

I jump on her bed and let her rub my head for good luck.

We’ll need it.

Chapter Two

Geneviève

I'm dying. I know it. Maman calls me *princess* a lot. That's one reason I know I'm dying. Before I was dying only Papa would call me that. Maman would either use my real name or call me Gen. She hugs me more, too—which I like but not because I'm dying. She puts my nurse doll, Suzette, on my bed next to me every night. She knows I plan to become a nurse when I grow up, but now she acts like that will never be, that I won't live long enough to become one. My brat brother, Marcel, hasn't called me *cootie* to my face since the last time the doctor was here. The doctor must have told them I'm dying. It would take something like me dying to get him to stop calling me cootie.

So that's how I know I'm dying. The question is when.

At least I have Abby here. She lies next to me on my bed, curled against my side. I stroke the little area between her eyes—she seems to like that. She spends a lot of time lying with me—even she seems to know that I'm dying.

I wish Papa could come home. Maman said he asked for leave, but his commander said no, he could not be spared. Maman frets so. I hear her pacing in the living room at times. She sings to herself when she works, and there is this one song—I don't know the name, just the tune and the words—she sings to comfort herself while she cooks. I can't

Dogs Don't Cry

even moan and she is in my room checking on me, taking my temperature, tucking me in, just so.

She pounds on my ribs three times a day to help me cough out the stuff that's making me sick. The doctor told her to do that, calling it chest percussion. *Three times a day for ten minutes using cupped hands. Gentle so as not to break the ribs but enough to vibrate the lungs*, he said. She has me lie on one side and pounds the other, then I roll over to the other side after five minutes.

Marcel won't come into my room, like he'll get sick from the sight of me. He sneaks and slinks around the house. Mostly he stays outdoors. The only thing I don't like about that is that he takes Abby with him on his walks. But she needs the walks, the chance to run. Will I ever run with her again?

When you're sick, you have nothing but time to think about how people treat the sick differently. When you're a kid, adults treat you as if you are half your age or less. Or like you're so stupid you don't know how to speak or listen. They raise their voices like you're a baby. The doctor sometimes speaks in front of me as though I'm not there or I only speak German. I remember seeing everyone around Grand-mère's bed back before the war and everyone talked loud and slow as if she were deaf. She whispered to me once that she was not hard of hearing but didn't want to upset the adults by asking them to speak normally. I liked her. But she died. Tuberculosis. Not a nice sickness. I hope that's not what I have. But she coughed up blood. Not me. Not so far.

My friends play outside on the street. I stand at my window and wave down to them. They're jumping rope. I know I can't do it now, but . . . I wish.

Anna shouts up at me and I smile. The others join in, shouting that they love me and to get better this minute. It makes me happy and sad at the same time. That is so confusing. I want to be with them. Marie, Odette, Anna, and Simone, my best friends. We all have one thing in common—stupid brothers who are fifteen, and they're all in Belleau Wood, playing war right now.

The thing that worries me: I see all the carts and wagons along the road. Everyone is packing to leave except us. Is that because I'm sick? Am I keeping Maman here? The doctor said I was too sick to move, but

John F Andrews

are we going to be the last to leave, if we leave at all? I've heard what the Boche do to captives. If they hurt Maman or Marcel, it will be all my fault.

This stupid sickness.

It started a week ago. My head hurt, my nose ran, and my throat was sore the first day. Then I ached all over and the fevers started. First, I'd shake like tree leaves in a storm, then pull the blankets up. As soon as I felt comfortable, then I'd burn up and all the covers would come off. Maman used a cool sponge to comfort me. It felt good but didn't bring the fever down very fast.

The days blur together, and I don't have a calendar.

The cough started three days ago. Nothing came up at first, but stuff started coming up yesterday. Maman left a cup for me to spit it into. She explained that the doctor told her I should not swallow it, that it is poison my body must get rid of. But I cannot spit it on the floor or in the street—it could spread the disease, he said. I remember the tuberculosis posters in Château-Thierry that said, *Don't spit*. And the doctor said, *Stay in bed. Don't move. Don't strain your heart. Always cough into a handkerchief or napkin or cup*.

The doctor came to our home to see me today. He took my temperature and said I had a high fever but didn't tell me the number. He probably thought I was too stupid to understand. What he does not know is that I'm going to be a nurse. I have studied things like fevers from the books Maman gets for me from the Château-Thierry library. He first called this *the grippe*. But that word means a lot of things, like a cold, influenza, pneumonia, even the start of tuberculosis.

I've read all about sicknesses like these, except tuberculosis—that book was too hard to read.

Lot of good it does me.

The doctor told Maman that I had influenza that turned into pneumonia. That's the reason the stuff I cough out is yellow and sticky and icky.

I'm stuck in my room. I hate chamber pots. Even with the cover, they make the room smell bad. And I smell bad, even though Maman bathes me every day. My breath is bad. It is like the poison oozes from

Dogs Don't Cry

me when the fever strikes. I don't like what I have become with this illness. I'm not a complainer, but it seems as if that is all I can do.

Maman brings meals up to me. She wears a scarf over her face when she is with me. I miss her smile. Her eyes are worried and her face tired. She stays up with me at night, cooks meals, washes my clothes and bedsheets each day.

It used to be fun to be sick and stay home from school. But now, they called school off for some reason. They won't tell us, but Maman says it is because the Germans are marching this way and they want everyone ready to evacuate. A lot of kids will play, like Marcel, and think being off school is fun. Not me. I like school. I get to see my friends. And I need to study hard to become a nurse. Maman told me that. And I'll have to get used the nasty smells like the ones coming from me.

I hear Maman coming up the stairs. Standing at my door, she pulls the scarf over her mouth. She is so pretty. Like me, she has straight light brown hair that goes below her shoulders and skin that is not as pale as some but not dark, either. Her nose has a slight curve and always seems a little crooked. She told me she was a mischievous girl, like me, and broke it when she fell out of a tree. I haven't broken anything yet. She and Papa are the same height, but she is so slim, while he is strong.

"How is my princess?" She doesn't wait for an answer as she shakes out the thermometer and slips it into my mouth. She feels my pulse like a nurse would. She tsks when she looks at the thermometer. "Fever still. When will it go away, little one?"

"I wish I knew." A coughing spell racks me. It feels like one of Papa's wire brushes is rubbing inside my ribs. Abby hops down to the floor. Maman has me lie on my left side and begins gently thumping on my right side. I hold the handkerchief to my face in case I cough—I don't want to give this to Maman. Five minutes later, she has me roll to the other side and she starts again.

After a minute that seems like a half hour, up comes some stuff—sputum, the doctor calls it. I spit it into the cup next to my bed. Maman gazes into the cup. "About the same. No blood, so that's a good thing." She sits in my small chair by the bed. She looks funny with her knees poking up under her skirt.

Abby climbs back onto my bed and settles against my side. I rub her

John F Andrews

ears, one then the other. Her furry ears. "Is Marcel out playing war with his friends?"

"Yes. They've been gone a while now."

"Don't we have enough war without them playing it?"

"I think all the boys look at it as a sort of preparation. I pray this will end before he and his friends have to fight in it. And I want your Papa home."

"The Germans are heading toward us, aren't they?"

"People are getting ready to leave. Some have already."

"How will we—"

"Don't worry, little one. I'll take care of everything." She pulls a small box out of her apron pocket and opens it. "I wanted to wait until your birthday next month. But if we have to evacuate, things might get mixed up. This is from Papa and me."

She hands me a silver heart-shaped locket on a sturdy necklace. On the back is my name, engraved with fancy script. Inside is a tiny picture of all of us, including Abby, taken the last time Papa came home on leave. We all went to Château-Thierry for the day. Maman loops it around my neck and clasps it in the back.

Maman gives me a long hug, then stands. "I'm going to lie down for a bit. In advance, happy thirteenth, birthday girl."

But will it be my last?

ABOUT JOHN F. ANDREWS

John F. Andrews is the award-winning author of the *Novels of the Great War Series*, including *Our Desperate Hour*, *An American Nurse in Paris*, and *Dogs Don't Cry*. He writes from the perspective of a service family member and critical care physician to craft unique stories based on real events. His characters struggle shoulder-to-shoulder with some of the real heroes of WWI as well as showing the plight of civilians caught in one of the most horrible conflicts in human history. His novels are stories of struggle, survival, hope, resilience, and love.



ALSO BY JOHN F. ANDREWS

A DOG'S GIFT - NOVELS OF THE GREAT WAR

What would happen if a corrupt judge sent two teenage WWI French orphans and their dog to the wrong home?

Thirteen-year-old Geneviève Durand and her fifteen-year-old brother, Marcel, fled a war zone with their dog, Abby, in June 1918. They find refuge with distant cousins in Paris who apply for temporary guardianship of the teens for the upcoming school year. A judge with a grudge against the cousins shatters their plan when he awards custody to an estranged aunt and her husband.

Geneviève, Marcel, and Abby struggle to survive in a war-damaged house with dysfunctional guardians in a village the French army declared unfit for human habitation. Will Abby's ability to help people through grief and loss be enough to restore hope as the Christmas season of 1918 approaches?

AN AMERICAN NURSE IN PARIS - NOVELS OF THE GREAT WAR

AVAILABLE AS AN AUDIOBOOK

Medical journalist Alice Simmons has one last chance to stay alive in this story of courage, humility, determination, compassion, and hope during the last year of World War One.

Medical journalist Alice Simmons's quest to become a war correspondent careens headlong into a wall of sexism and deceit after her arrival in Paris in 1918. The suave officer in charge of the American Army press office refuses to let Alice leave Paris while her male counterparts scramble to the Front during the German spring offensive. One evening, his misogyny escalates to a drunken assault. Alice manages to fight back, but then her attacker begins a campaign of false accusations to cover his crime.

A nursing position in an American Red Cross military hospital is Alice's only hope to remain in France. It turns into the best scoop of her career. Wounded marines and soldiers from the Battle of Belleau Wood flood her ward. A tragic death amid the human wreckage of war unlocks Alice's compassion and her capacity to love, both long-buried after a childhood tragedy. Her patients'

courage inspires Alice's fight to restore her honor. Their plight and compassion open her heart.

OUR DESPERATE HOUR - NOVELS OF THE GREAT WAR

A father's search for his estranged son plunges US Army Major Ab Johnson into the pivotal First World War Battle of Belleau Wood. The fate of Paris and the outcome of the war balance on a knife's edge. This is a story of honor, courage, commitment, a father's love for his son, and the bonds of combat.

Ab Johnson has one last chance to reconcile with his son, Jack, a marine second lieutenant who is heading into the worst conflict in human history. Second lieutenants don't last long in the killing fields of France. Ab volunteered to rejoin the army and come to France for a liaison job far from the fighting, only to be transferred to the Paris Medical Group. His quest leads him from the backrooms of Paris, through command posts, and to the front lines during the Battle of Belleau Wood. He confronts French petulance and American inexperience as he struggles to help organize an army medical system swamped with casualties during his desperate search.

Ab's story intertwines with three others: an arrogant surgeon who sees war as opportunity; a navy corpsman searching for his place in the world; and a marine private full of fighting spirit and patriotism. They confront their destinies in a grueling fight filled with chaos and heart-stopping fear. Each joined the war effort for his own reasons—now all they hope for is to survive.