



Melville Goodwin, USA: A Novel

John P. Marquand

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Finalist for the National Book Award: This sweeping novel set in the aftermath of World War II reveals the story behind the creation of an American icon

Major General Melville A. Goodwin, the son of a druggist, served in two world wars, rising through the ranks to take command of an armored division. He was a hero long before he braved a hail of bullets to save a fellow American in postwar Berlin, but until that mad act of courage, no one outside of the military had ever heard of him.

That is all about to change: A weekly news magazine has convinced the major general to sit down for an extended interview at the home of Sid Skelton, a popular radio commentator and former army buddy of Goodwin's. Over the course of many hours, Goodwin tells the story of his life—from his small-town childhood to his years at West Point, his battlefield traumas, his marriage to an ambitious woman who helped shape his military career, and his impressions of the world as seen through the barbed wire of far-flung army posts.

Of primary interest to Skelton, however, is Dottie Peale, the vivacious journalist Goodwin romanced in war-torn France. Skelton is a little bit in love with her himself, and now that the major general is in the news, Dottie plans to make a dramatic return to his life. At the moment of his greatest triumph, Goodwin will discover that his marriage and career are under threat.

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