

Amerikaland

Danny Goodman

LEFTOVER Books (Jun 4, 2024)

Softcover \$18.00 (275pp)

979-898510706-7

Nazis threaten to take over America in Danny Goodman's poignant alternate-reality novel *Amerikaland*.

The world's eyes are on New York City, where World Day, the global celebration of peace, is set to take place, featuring baseball games and tennis tournaments. Sabine, the world's best woman tennis player, is expected to win the City Open; shortstop Sandy is projected to bring his Brooklyn Atlantics to victory. Instead, disaster strikes in the middle of the celebrations: light bombs go off, causing mass destruction and leaving hundreds of thousands of people dead. The event is played live on television.

By some miracle, Sabine and Sandy survive. Struggling to make sense of the disaster while grappling with survivor's guilt, they reach out to each other, reigniting the connection they had as young athletes on the cusp of greatness. But soon after they find each other again, the bomb's aftermath propels them in different directions: Sabine is pulled into a web of family secrets when her mother, long believed to be dead, is revealed to be the neo-Nazi mastermind behind the bombing; as one of the most famous Jewish athletes in the world, Sandy becomes a high-profile target in a pogrom. In a serendipitous turn of events, Sabine and Sandy face each other, and Sabine holds Sandy's life in her hands.

Amerikaland's sports angle adds dimension to its alternate-reality picture of fascist America. With its straight-to-the-point details, the prose is cutting and emotional, using an alternating narration to mimic its sense of humanity coming together and being torn apart. And in the book's unexpected ending, the story is projected into an uncertain future.

Personal integrity stands between life and death in *Amerikaland*, a riveting novel about fascism in America.

ERIKA HARLITZ KERN (May / June 2024)

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