



Hiroshima: La Crónica Sobre Seis Supervivientes De Hiroshima Que Se Convirtió En Un Gran Clásico Del Periodismo

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John Hersey

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HIROSHIMA By JOHN HERSEY PUBLISHERS NOTE ON Monday, August 6th, 1945, a new era in human history opened. After years of intensive research and experiment, conducted In their later stages mainly in America., by scientists of many nationalities, Japanese among them, the forces which hold together the constituent particles of the atom had at last been harnessed to mans use: and on that day man used them. By a decision of the American military authorities, made, It Is said, in defiance of the protests of many of the scientists who had worked on the project, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. As a direct result, some 600,000 Japanese men, women and children were killed, and 100,000 injured and almost the whole of a great seaport, a city of 250,000 people, was destroyed by blast or by fire. As an indirect result, a few days later, Japan acknowledged defeat, and the Second World War came to an end. For many months little exact and reliable news about the details of the destruction wrought by the first atomic bomb reached Western readers. Millions of words were written, in Europe and American explaining the marvellous new powers that science had placed in mens hands describing the researches and experiments that had led up to this greatest of all disclosures of Natures secrets: discussing the problems for mans future which the new weapon raised. Argument waxed furious a to the ethics of the bomb: should the Japanese have received advance warning of Americas intention to use It ? Should a demonstration bomb have been exploded In the presence of enemy observers in some remote spot where it would do a minimum of damage, as a warning to the Japanese people, before its first serious use? But of the feelings and reactions of the people of Hiroshima to the bomb, nothing, or at least nothing that was not pure imagina tion, could be written for nothing was known. In May, 1946, The New Yorker sent John Hersey, journalist and author of A Bell for Adano, to the Far East to find out what had really happened at Hiroshima : to interview survivors of the catastrophe, to endeavour to describe what they had seen and felt and thought, what the destruction of their city, their lives and homes and hopes and friends, had meant to them in short, the cost of the bomb in terms of human suffering and reaction to suffering. He stayed in Japan for a month, gathering his own material with little, if any, help from the occupying authorities he obtained the stories from actual witnesses. The characters in his account are living individuals, not composite types. The story is their own story, told as far as possible in their own words. On August 31st, 1946, Herseys story was made public. For the first time in The New Yorkers career an issue appeared which, within the familiar covers, bearing for such covers are prepared long in advance picnic scene, carried no satire, no cartoonss no fiction, no verse or smart quips or shopping notes: nothing but its advertisement matter and Herseys 30,000 word story.

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192 pages

Review

'To this day nothing tells better the horror of Hiroshima ... One of the most powerful writers of modern times' Washington Post 'A vision of hell ... its terrible images are reminiscent of Dante's Inferno' The Times From the Inside Flap

On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was destroyed by the first atom bomb ever dropped on a city. This book, John Hersey's journalistic masterpiece, tells what happened on that day. Told through the memories of survivors, this timeless, powerful and compassionate document has become a classic "that stirs the conscience of humanity" ("The New York Times).

Almost four decades after the original publication of this celebrated book, John Hersey went back to Hiroshima in search of the people whose stories he had told. His account of what he discovered about them is now the eloquent and moving final chapter of Hiroshima. From the Back Cover

'The room was filled with a blinding light. She was paralysed by fear, fixed still in her chair for a long moment. Everything fell. The ceiling dropped suddenly and the wooden floor above collapsed in splinters and the people up there came down and the roof above them gave way; but, principally and first of all, the bookcases right behind her swooped forward and the contents threw her down, with her left leg horribly twisted and breaking beneath her. There, in the tin factory, in the first moment of the atomic age, a human being was crushed by books.'

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