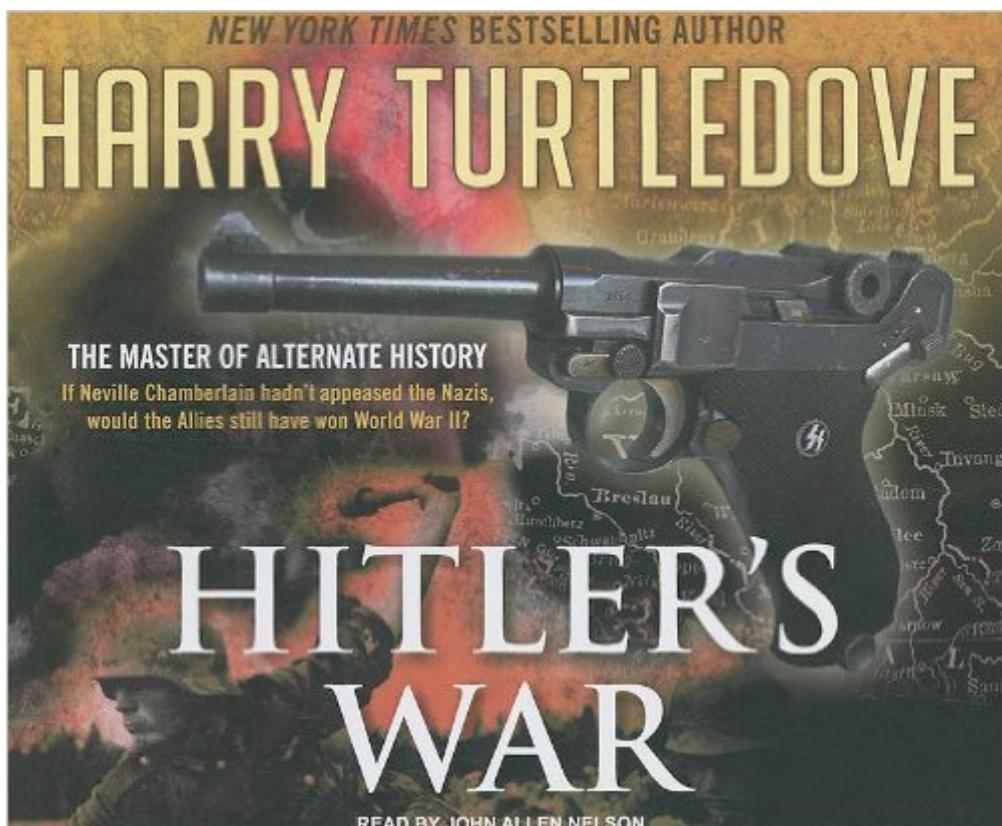


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Hitler's War (War That Came Early)



Synopsis

A stroke of the pen and history is changed. In 1938, British prime minister Neville Chamberlain, determined to avoid war at any cost, signed the Munich Accord, ceding part of Czechoslovakia to Hitler. But the following spring, Hitler snatched the rest of that country and pushed beyond its borders. World War II had begun, and England, after a fatal act of appeasement, was fighting a war for which it was not prepared. Now, in this thrilling, provocative, and fascinating alternate history by Harry Turtledove, another scenario is played out: What if Chamberlain had not signed the accord? What if Hitler had acted rashly, before his army was ready-would such impatience have helped him or doomed him faster? Here is an action-packed, blow-by-blow chronicle of the war that might have been-and the repercussions that might have echoed through history-had Hitler reached too far, too soon, and too fast. Turtledove uses dozens of points of view to tell this story: from American marines serving in Japanese-occupied China to members of a Jewish German family with a proud history of war service to their nation, from ragtag volunteers fighting in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in Spain to an American woman desperately trying to escape Nazi-occupied territory-and witnessing the war from within the belly of the beast. A novel that reveals the human face of war while simultaneously riding the twists and turns that make up the great acts of history, Hitler's War is the beginning of an exciting new alternate history saga. Here is a tale of powerful leaders and ordinary people, of spies, soldiers, and traitors, of the shifting alliances that draw some together while tearing others apart. At once authoritative, brilliantly imaginative, and hugely entertaining, Hitler's War captures the beginning of a very different World War II-with a very different fate for our world today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Harry Turtledove, dubbed by some as "the master of alternate history" is at it again. This time it's in the book "Hitler's War", a book that's clearly the start of (yet another), alternate history based around World War II. The point of departure this time concerns a Spaniard, Sanjurjo, who died in our world but survived in this one. That somehow leads to a Czech assassination of a leading Nazi, which means that, rather than Hitler getting Czechoslovakia as a form of appeasement, he instead has to go to a war that neither he nor the allies are really prepared for. What follows are the usual multiple POV characters, the standard blood and gore and, for Turtledove at least, a remarkable lack of semi-graphic sex-scenes. We see the war through the eyes of Americans fighting the Spanish Civil War, an American Marine legation in Peking, soldiers on all sides and an American woman stranded in Berlin. Of course there's also the requisite Jewish POV character and a German U-Boat commander who, in this universe as well as ours, sinks a ship called the SS *Athenia*... One problem I, and many fans have, is Turtledove's repetitiveness. Did you know, for example, that in the "Worldwar" series, Sam Yeager has false teeth from having the Spanish Flu back in 1918? It's true! You might not notice it since it gets mentioned in every single book. Also, Clarence Potter in the "Timeline 191" series speaks like a Yankee. Again, something you might not notice, since it gets mentioned in every book. I actually don't have a huge problem with this when it's from book to book. After all, most of these are published a year apart from each other, so little reminders of various things are ok, and it's only an issue when reading them as a group.

For the past sixty years, the name "Munich" has been synonymous in the historical imagination with the craven surrender of Czechoslovakian territory in return for a peace settlement that proved illusory. But what if it had turned out differently? What if, instead of postponing the Second World War for a year, the conference in Munich between the European leaders had failed? What if war broke out over Czechoslovakia instead of Poland? This is the premise of Harry Turtledove's latest alternate history series. In it, Turtledove tries something new; instead of positing a single point of divergence, he imagines two: the avoidance of the plane crash in 1936 that killed the Spanish general Jose Sanjurjo and allowed Francisco Franco to take over Nationalist forces during the Spanish Civil War, and the assassination of Sudeten German leader Konrad Heinlein in the midst of the Munich Conference. Turtledove uses these to create a different Second World War, one in which Germany begins the conflict without some of the advantages they would enjoy a year later.

and with the Soviets fighting against the Nazis from the outset. In narrating this conflict the author uses his usual technique of using the experiences of a series of fictional soldiers and civilians to depict events. While some fans will find this familiarity comforting, it gives the distinct sense of the novel as nothing more than another by-the-numbers alternate history work in the Turtledove mold, with little outside of the premise that is original. This would matter less if the book were up to his earlier standards, yet it is not. Character development is particularly lacking.

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