



by Mirko Bonné
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🏆 Shortlisted for the
German Book Prize 2013

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Night No More *Nie mehr Nacht*

review

Mirko Bonné's latest novel takes the reader on a journey through European history which is by turns moving, disturbing and delightfully amusing.

Narrator Markus Lee is an artist who is commissioned by an art magazine to sketch the bridges that played a crucial role during the D-Day landings. Markus drives to France with his fifteen-year-old nephew Jesse, who plans to stay with his best friend's family while they are looking after an abandoned hotel on the coast. But it soon becomes apparent that this is no simple road trip. The journey is overshadowed by the loss of Jesse's mother Ira – both her son and her brother are still reeling from her recent suicide. The drive to Normandy is full of tension as Markus and Jesse make awkward efforts to connect with one another while avoiding the one topic they really need to confront. Bonné's expert handling of the relationship between the adult narrator and his teenage nephew produces many wryly humorous moments. In the dream-like atmosphere of the Hotel L'Angleterre, what was supposed to be a week-long stay ends up lasting for a month. The experience marks a turning point in Markus' life and comes to have lasting significance for the other characters.

Night No More offers an unsparing and engrossing account of the liberation of France during which countless young men who were scarcely older than Jesse lost their lives. As the narrator tries to complete his sketches of the D-Day bridges, he struggles to absorb the enormity of the events of World War II and to render that history

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as an artist. Meanwhile, Markus finds himself strongly attracted to Jesse's best friend's mother, leading him to reflect on his early sexual experiences and on his adolescence more widely in what has become the fraught context of his family history. The memory of his beloved but troubled sister Ira looms large, generating unobtrusive reflection about the ways in which individual lives and national histories intersect with one another.

Bonné's novel approaches an extraordinary chapter of European history from a fresh and productive angle. In a perfectly pitched narrative laced with skilfully observed dialogue, Bonné brings to life an appealing cast of characters whose personal stories suggest new ways of looking at the D-Day landings.

about the author

Mirko Bonné was born in 1965 in Tegernsee and lives in Hamburg. He has translated poetry by Keats, e.e.cummings and W. B. Yeats, and has published several novels and volumes of poetry. His novel *Wie wir verschwinden* was longlisted for the German Book Prize.

Previous works include:

Traklpark (2012); *Ausflug mit dem Zerberus* (2010); *Wie wir verschwinden* (2009); *Die Republik der Silberfische* (2008); *Der eiskalte Himmel* (2006)

rights information

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