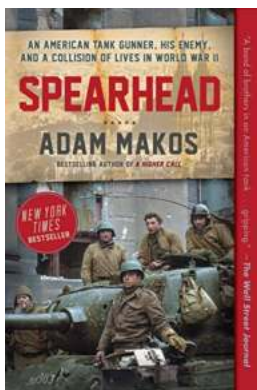


# An American Tank Gunner, His Enemy, and Collision of Lives in World War II

World War II was a tumultuous time marked by countless acts of bravery, sacrifice, and unexpected encounters between soldiers on opposing sides. One such remarkable story is that of an American tank gunner and his unexpected connection with an enemy soldier. This collision of lives would change both men forever.

The year was 1944, and the European theater was engulfed in heavy fighting. The American tank division, led by Sergeant John Matthews, was advancing through a war-torn village in France. The tank unit had encountered numerous obstacles along the way, but little did they know that their lives were about to take an extraordinary turn.

As their tank rumbled through the village, it came under heavy fire from German soldiers concealed within the ruins. The battle was fierce, and amidst the chaos, Sergeant Matthews noticed a young German soldier trying to crawl away from the crossfire. With a split-second decision, Matthews urged his comrades to hold their fire and approached the wounded enemy soldier.



## Spearhead: An American Tank Gunner, His Enemy, and a Collision of Lives in World War II

by Adam Makos (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 87820 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
X-Ray : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 393 pages



The young German soldier, named Karl Schmidt, looked up in disbelief as an American tank gunner offered him a helping hand. Despite the language barrier, an unspoken understanding passed between the two men – the understanding that they were both simply human beings caught up in a brutal war. Matthews, seeing that Schmidt was badly wounded and unable to walk, decided to take him as a prisoner instead of finishing him off. It was a decision that would alter the course of both their lives.

In the following days, Matthews and Schmidt were confined together in a temporary holding facility for prisoners of war. Despite the initial mistrust and animosity between them, they soon realized the commonalities that bound them. Both were in their early twenties, far away from home, and fighting in a war they hadn't chosen.

As they conversed during their captivity, the barriers of nationality and ideologies seemed to melt away. They shared stories of their families, dreams, and aspirations, revealing the underlying universality of the human experience. In a world torn apart by conflict, they discovered a bond that transcended borders.

Months passed, and the war raged on. Matthews and Schmidt were eventually separated when Schmidt was transferred to a different prison camp. They said their goodbyes, uncertain if they would ever meet again, but carrying the profound impact of their encounter within their hearts.

Years later, after the war had ended, Matthews returned to his hometown in the United States. It was a surreal experience to be back home, surrounded by familiar faces and places, after witnessing such devastation overseas. But he couldn't shake off the memories of Karl Schmidt and wondered what had become of him.

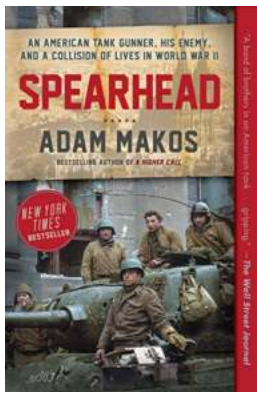
Driven by a desire to reconnect, Matthews embarked on a quest to find Schmidt. After months of searching, he finally received a letter from a German address. It was from Karl Schmidt himself. He had survived the war and was living in a small village in Germany.

Overjoyed by the unexpected reunion, Matthews traveled to Germany to meet his former enemy once more. The emotions were overwhelming as they embraced each other, now older and bearing the scars of their respective journeys. The collision of their lives during the war had forever changed their perspectives, and they had formed an unbreakable bond.

The rest of their lives were intertwined, as Matthews and Schmidt became lifelong friends. They spent their remaining years promoting peace and understanding, using their unique story as a powerful testament to the futility of war and the importance of humanity.

The tale of an American tank gunner, his enemy, and the collision of their lives in World War II is a remarkable example of how human connections can transcend even the most divisive circumstances. It serves as a reminder that, despite being caught up in the chaos of war, individuals have the capacity to see beyond the humanity in one another.

So, let this extraordinary story be a testament to the power of compassion, empathy, and the potential for positive change, even in the darkest of times.



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THE NEW YORK TIMES, WALL STREET JOURNAL, LOS ANGELES TIMES, AND USA TODAY BESTSELLER

“A band of brothers in an American tank . . . Makos drops the reader back into the Pershing’s turret and dials up a battle scene to rival the peak moments of Fury.”  
—The Wall Street Journal

From the author of the international bestseller *A Higher Call* comes the riveting World War II story of an American tank gunner’s journey into the heart of the Third Reich, where he will meet destiny in an iconic armor duel—and forge an enduring bond with his enemy.

When Clarence Smoyer is assigned to the gunner’s seat of his Sherman tank, his crewmates discover that the gentle giant from Pennsylvania has a hidden talent: He’s a natural-born shooter.

At first, Clarence and his fellow crews in the legendary 3rd Armored Division —“Spearhead”—thought their tanks were invincible. Then they met the German Panther, with a gun so murderous it could shoot through one Sherman and into the next. Soon a pattern emerged: The lead tank always gets hit.

After Clarence sees his friends cut down breaching the West Wall and holding the line in the Battle of the Bulge, he and his crew are given a weapon with the power to avenge their fallen brothers: the Pershing, a state-of-the-art “super tank,” one of twenty in the European theater.

But with it comes a harrowing new responsibility: Now they will spearhead every attack. That’s how Clarence, the corporal from coal country, finds himself leading the U.S. Army into its largest urban battle of the European war, the fight for Cologne, the “Fortress City” of Germany.

Battling through the ruins, Clarence will engage the fearsome Panther in a duel immortalized by an army cameraman. And he will square off with Gustav Schaefer, a teenager behind the trigger in a Panzer IV tank, whose crew has been sent on a suicide mission to stop the Americans.

As Clarence and Gustav trade fire down a long boulevard, they are taken by surprise by a tragic mistake of war. What happens next will haunt Clarence to the modern day, drawing him back to Cologne to do the unthinkable: to face his enemy, one last time.

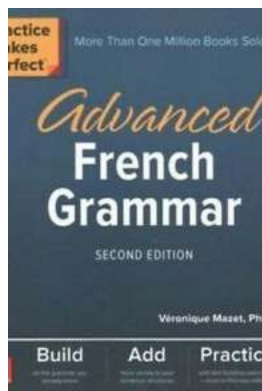
Praise for Spearhead

“A detailed, gripping account . . . the remarkable story of two tank crewmen, from opposite sides of the conflict, who endure the grisly nature of tank warfare.”

—USA Today (four out of four stars)

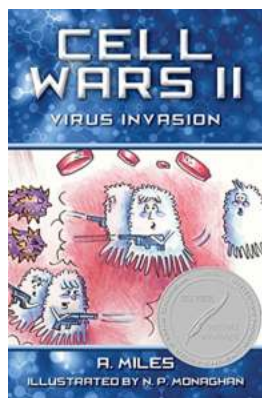
“Strong and dramatic . . . Makos established himself as a meticulous researcher who’s equally adept at spinning a good old-fashioned yarn. . . . For a World War II aficionado, it will read like a dream.”

—Associated Press



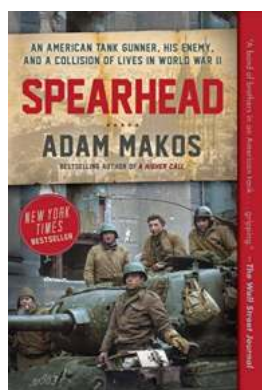
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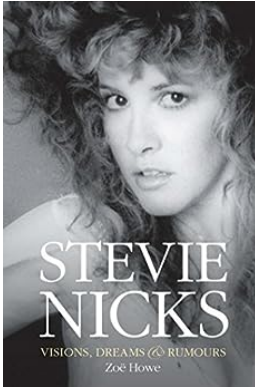
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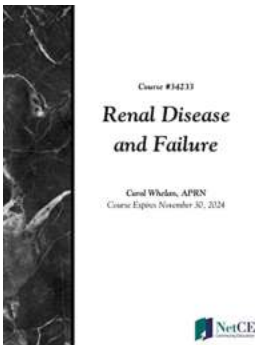
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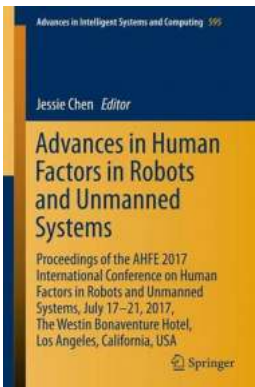
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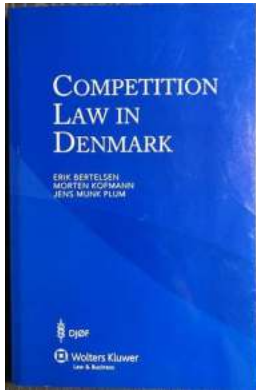
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