

Disaster! The Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906

Dan Kurzman



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On the morning of April 18, 1906, an earthquake measuring 8.3 on the Richter scale ripped through sleeping San Francisco. At the Palace Hotel, opera star Enrico Caruso fled, half dressed, into the street; John Barrymore searched through the chaos for a bar where he could get a whiskey; orphans screamed for parents crushed to death in their beds. Drawing on contemporary reports and eye-witness accounts, Dan Kurzman captures the fear and madness that raged through a city reduced to rubble. But in this breathtaking pastiche of real-life tragedies, the author also records acts of extraordinary courage. As many as 10,000 people died in the quake and fires that followed, yet the rugged populace refused to quit the city, vowing instead to resurrect it from the ashes. Now, the past comes alive again in this unforgettable history, a masterful account of nature at its worst...and indomitable American spirit at its best.

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