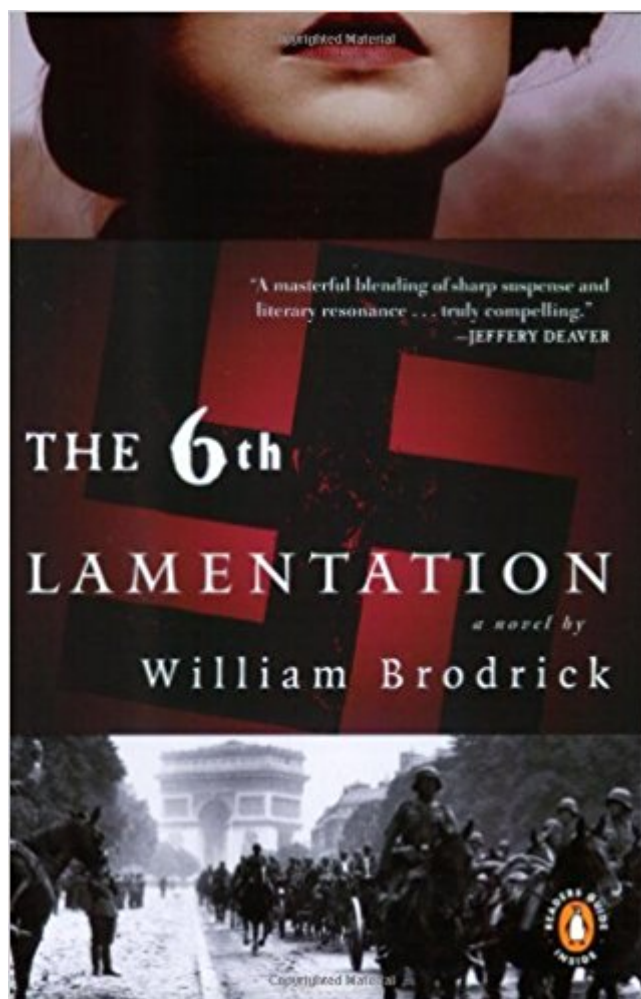


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The Sixth Lamentation



Synopsis

Larkwood Priory, Suffolk, 1995: Following his afternoon confessions, Father Anselm is stopped by an old man. What, he is asked, should a man do when the world has turned against him? Anselm's response "claim sanctuary" is to have greater resonance than he could ever have imagined, for the man returns demanding the protection of the Church. He is Eduard Schwermann, a suspected Nazi war criminal. Meanwhile, with her life running out, Agnes Aubret unburdens a secret to her granddaughter Lucy. Fifty years earlier Agnes lived in occupied Paris and risked her life to smuggle Jewish children to safety until her group was exposed by an SS officer: Eduard Schwermann. As Father Anselm struggles to discover the truth about Schwermann's history and Lucy delves ever deeper into her grandmother's past, their investigations dovetail to reveal a remarkable story, in which two seemingly unconnected lives shockingly converge. William Brodrick is a master of crisp historical re-creation, precision plotting, and morally complex characterization.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The suggestion by a reviewer appearing on the back cover that Mr. Brodrick might follow in the footsteps of his renowned countryman David Cornwall, known to lovers of spy fiction as John le Carre, prompted me to read this book. Immediately after finishing *The 6th Lamentation*, I began reading *Absolute Friends*, the latest book by Mr. le Carre. As an act of kindness I won't compare the efforts of these two authors. I have great patience when reading but I have to admit feeling put off by the disjointed structure of this book. Movements of the main character, Father Anselm, at many

points made no sense whatsoever. What appeared to be compelling leads for him to pursue were mysteriously set aside as we find the Father, once again, meandering through the grounds of his monastery conversing with various and sundry characters. The convolutions of the structure and the torpid pace of the inquiry by Father Anselm made it difficult for me to stay engaged with the story, which, in my opinion, is unnecessarily complex. It is also told in such a fragmentary way that it was difficult to hold the pieces together sufficiently to engage one's curiosity. I felt as though plot devices were set up intentionally to jerk me around, whether the fact of a primary character who is unable to talk or a significant finder of fact who stumbles at his table in a cafe and dies from the fall, or the abundance of people telling lies for reasons that escape me. As a fan of historical fiction with a strong element of intrigue I really wanted to love this book but simply couldn't. Reading the autobiographical notes on the author I can appreciate how the various threads of this book came into being.

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