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TITLE INFORMATION

LEGACY OF HONOR

The Air Warrior - Book Two

Larry A. Freeland

Publish Authority (462 pp.)

BOOK REVIEW

This second book in Freeland's planned trilogy about the McCormick military family aims to put readers in the pilot's seat.

The saga began in *Legacy of Honor: The Patriarch* (2022) with Sam McCormick's service in World War I. The main character of the current volume is Sam's son, Sean McCormick, who flies B-17 and B-29 bombing missions against strategic sites in Germany and Japan during the last two years of World War II and, in the book's second half, in the Korean War. Freeland is an absolute master of flight-combat narrative; a decorated veteran of air combat in Vietnam, his ability to put the reader in the seat of a B-17 beset by German fighter planes and anti-aircraft fire is superb: "We are now flying in German-controlled airspace.... Radio chatter is sparse but intense. They are headed toward us, the trailing formation. My stomach tightens, it's cold up here, but I'm already sweating, and my heart races." Readers will find themselves on the edge of their seats as Sean guides his crew through multiple terrifying encounters with a relentless airborne enemy. The camaraderie of the men with whom he flies is also well-handled, as their mutual respect and shared commitment to duty allow them to persevere over dozens of hair-raising missions from which some don't return. Although Sean is the key character here, his encounters with famous historical figures, such as Gen. Curtis LeMay and Gen. Jimmy Doolittle, give the narrative a feeling of authenticity that ensures the dramatic narrative doesn't overwhelm the true historical context. Freeland's skills are less effective at dealing with personal relationships, and some readers may also wish deeper introspection from the main character in particular. For fans of combat fiction, though, this book will be a welcome addition to a genre already packed with exciting literature, and readers interested in how ideas of duty and honor sustained American servicemen under the most trying conditions will find it well worth the investment.

A novel of wartime bombing missions that makes for gripping reading.

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