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Lincoln's Last Days: The Shocking Assassination That Changed America Forever

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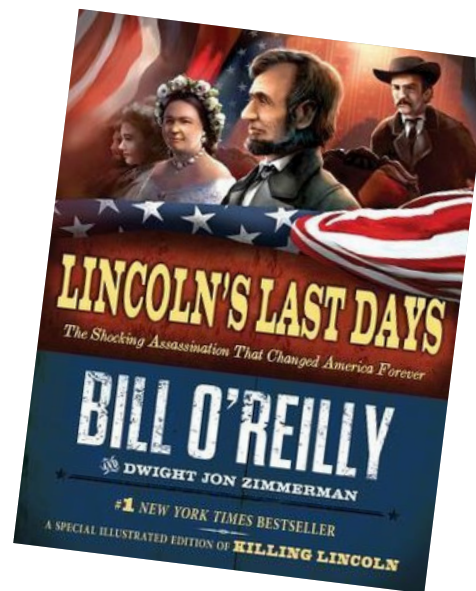
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Book Review

Title: Lincoln's Last Days: The Shocking Assassination That Changed America Forever
Author: Bill O'Reilly and Dwight Jon Zimmerman
Illustrator: Christopher Myers
Reviewer: Kristie Hinckley
Publisher: Henry Holt
Publication Year: 2012
ISBN: 9780805096750
Number of Pages: 316
Interest Level: Intermediate
Rating: Outstanding

Review



The Confederate Army is on the verge of defeat. Robert E. Lee's army at Petersburg is the only thing keeping the Confederates in the fight. Lee manages to escape with half of his army, but the road to Richmond, their capital, is now undefended. Ulysses S. Grant chases them to their ultimate defeat and the war is effectively over. Back Washington D.C., John Wilkes Booth is planning the kidnapping of Abraham Lincoln for the Confederate government. After the news of the Confederate defeat, he becomes so enraged that his plans change. He and his group of conspirators are now going to assassinate not only President Abraham Lincoln, but General Ulysses S. Grant, Vice President Andrew Jackson, and Secretary of State William H. Seward as well. On the night they have planned the assassinations only two are even attempted and only Lincoln's is successful. Booth and his accomplice Harold flee to Maryland and rely on Confederate sympathizers to help them cross the Potomac River without capture. Within a week of crossing they are caught and Booth is shot when he refuses to surrender.

This book is broken down into four parts: the beginning of the end of the war, the assassination conspiracy, Lincoln's last day, and chasing the assassins. Each section is extremely well researched and the author includes many of his sources. The book is written in an engaging and simple narrative that is appropriate for the intended audience. This book includes many interesting facts and stories about the time period as well as Lincoln and many of his contemporaries, including his assassins. There are many pictures throughout the text that show buildings, people, and other items that are important to the story and help the reader to better relate to and understand the events in the book. It is somewhat disappointing that the subtitle, The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever, is not discussed. Lincoln's assassination is only discussed in terms of related historical events and their immediate repercussions. Overall, this book is very enjoyable, educational, and well written.

*Contains mild violence and mild graphic descriptions of wounds