



Goodbye Mickey Mouse

Len Deighton

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ENGLAND 1944

In Goodbye Mickey Mouse, Len Deighton has written his best novel yet: a brilliant, multidimensional picture of what it is to be at war ... and what it was to be in love in the England of 1944.

Goodbye Mickey Mouse Details

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Author : Len Deighton

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From Reader Review Goodbye Mickey Mouse for online ebook

Jeff says

Soap Opera about a group of pilots at the end of World War II and the women they love. The book takes off when the pilots are in the air fighting nazis, but spends the rest of the time stuck in the mud.

Simon says

Len Deighton does it again, another story in which the reader feels immersed in the world of the characters. Along with a detailed back drop and a unique format, each chapter from the point of view of a particular character, this novel is engrossing and entertaining but most of all involves the emotions of the reader.

Kim says

Len Deighton has written some very wonderful historical fiction novels that are meticulous in historical detail and enjoyable fiction reads. "Goodbye Mickey Mouse" is another of those books that tells the story of being an American Air Force pilot stationed in England in 1944. It tells the story of how they interacted with the people of the near by villages, the missions they flew and the loves they met and conquered while they were there.

A very colorful read with a few plot twists along the way. Good read for adults, and older young adults.

Gareth Evans says

I have read a number of Deighton's spy novels and his quirky, but excellent, second world war history, so I fully expected this to be a 4 or 5 star rating. Whilst this is a good solid, entertaining book, it really didn't come alive for me. Deighton's dialogue is usually excellent, but perhaps because of the need to introduce some historical facts, it became stilted at times. I have to confess that I did read this book in relatively short snatches while on a long business trip and this may have interfered with my enjoyment of this book.

Edwin Kort says

Tjonge jonge. Wat een slecht verhaal. Geen moment van echte spanning. Gauw maar vergeten. Jammer van mijn tijd geweest. Deighton's andere boeken zijn stukken beter. Dit haalt zeker het niveau niet die ik van hem ken in het boek SS-GB.

Colby says

This was a re-read - and should be, perhaps every several years or so: not just for vets, but anyone faced with 'impossible choices' or maybe I should have written 'anyone appreciating authentic narration'.

Pedro Adão says

Nice descriptions of airplanes dog fights in ww2

Marc Dauphin says

Another masterpiece by Mr Deighton.

A very moving book filled with nostalgia, yet he made me feel as if I truly was in 1943-44. Rich in historical details, and with a plot that will surprise readers at the end. A most moving book with strong, well carved out, and very believable characters. One of my top 10 ever.

False says

It took me forever to work my way through this book. Some books will do that to you--leave you with no enthusiasm to finish. I'm still reading as much of his work as I can get my hands on, which is to say, not easily.

Ray Grasshoff says

Not a great novel, but very readable and making a decent contribution, primarily for the light it sheds on at least some of the British population's dim view of the antics and presence of American soldiers on British soil during World War II.

Nicole says

Maybe it was the visit to Arnhem and the D-Day remembrances but it was finally time to reread a book that has haunted me for years. When I was 16 this book broke my heart. Twenty pages from the end, with tears streaming down my face, I threw it into the sprinklers to ruin it and never finished it. The characters are subtly drawn, revealed but never fully known, just as they would be if they were real acquaintances. The plot development is well paced, building a picture and story and then ripping it to threads. I may no longer believe in happy endings but this book still broke my heart.

Penny Linsenmayer says

Lots of technical flaws by contemporary standards (authorial intrusions, head-hopping and the like), but top-notch historical details, evocative descriptive writing that I would normally skim, tight plot, superb characterization ---> 5 stars.

Mike says

Another great novel by Len Deighton, this time about an American P-51 Mustang fighter squadron based in England during WWII. Enjoyed the adventures of a cast of well-defined but crazy fighter pilots who have varying ways of dealing with the stress and fear of never knowing if they'll be shot down or have to parachute over enemy territory to captivity as a POW. It's a bit slow in the beginning and some of the subplots are a bit predictable but as the main story develops, the tale gets more and more difficult to put down :) I think I preferred Derek Robinson's "Piece of Cake" about British fighter pilots leading up to the Battle of Britain a bit more but "Goodbye Mickey Mouse" is a VERY CLOSE second. Leighton has done a lot of research to make sure this is a true historical novel that's accurate to the way it would have been within an actual American fighter unit in Britain during the war down to details of the P-51s, aerial combat, etc. It all builds up to a powerful final act. I highly recommend this title. Deighton is one of my favorite authors.

Vikram says

Len Deighton spent several weeks at a US Airbase, living the life of an airman, wearing a flight suit, eating and drinking with flyers at their barbecues and even flying (in the back seat) of an F4 Phantom, so as to get an idea of their life.

This book, Goodbye Mickey Mouse, is a very well written account of the atmosphere on a US airbase during World War II, with a wide variety of characters woven into an interesting tale...

Tim says

Another meticulously detailed and researched near factual novel, about an American airfield in Britain, it's pilots, crews, officers and girls.

Apparently it's very popular with women as for once Deighton does show them as very distinctive characters and he seems to have considerable empathy.

Bettie? says

22.05.2017: ordered.

John says

I thought this was superb. A really well told story, which clearly shows the 6 years of research that went into it. Each chapter follows a different character which portrays the story from multiple view points, keeping things interesting and moving along. There's plenty of action and descriptions of the actual flying along with a love story and Deighton's usual cynicism (this time about the press office and their need to spin a story). Highly recommended.

Bobbi says

This was another delightful discovery on the bookshelves in the apartment we're renting here in Italy. I was not familiar with the author's work but after reading this novel, I'll definitely be looking for more of it. The novel is set in England, 1944, on a U.S. Army Air Force Base. The author cleverly tells the story in short chapters, each about a different character. That probably sounds confusing, but it isn't, and serves to move the story along nicely. In the book's Introduction, Deighton explains, "I decided to allot one character to each chapter so the story was told through the eyes of technical specialists, clerks and tradesmen as well as through the eyes of the flyers . . . but I would look over the shoulders of each participant rather than relate the episode in their voice." I thought it worked very well.

The main characters are the brave young flyers who go "up there" in single seat P-51 Mustang fighters on missions to escort and provide cover for the heavy bombers on bombing runs over Germany. I got nervous reading each scene about these missions because I just knew they all wouldn't make it back to go home at war's end. The vivid aerial battle scenes are not for the squeamish. In addition to the flyers, the author introduces their commanding officers and the hard working ground crews who keep the planes in the air. Locals (many of whom were not happy about this "friendly invasion") also play a part in what I found to be a gripping, heartbreaking, inspiring tale. The ending had a twist I never saw coming.

Ian Fraser says

Evocative, poignant historical novel rich in detail. A sense of what it might have been like for young American Mustang fighter pilots in East Anglia in 1944, escorting bombers into the heart of Germany, knowing full well it might be their last mission. And what it was like, in those circumstances, being in love, and living life to the maximum, to the edge. At the centre of the novel are two young men: the reserved, but romantic, Captain Jamie Farebrother, a very fine pilot, estranged son of a desk bound, and influential USAAF colonel, and the cocky Lieutenant Mickey Morse, well on his way to becoming America's number one flying ace. Alike only in their courage, and flying skills, they forge a bond of friendship in battle with far-reaching consequences for themselves, and for the future of those they love.

"Goodbye, Mickey Mouse, and thanks. No need to worry, I'll glide to the coast. Tell Vicky I'm gliding to the coast."

Simon Mcleish says

Originally published on my blog here in July 2004.

It seems obvious to compare this novel set in an American fighter unit stationed on a Norfolk airfield in the Second World War with Deighton's earlier Bomber. But although the setting is similar, there are many differences between the novels, at several levels. The tensions between the Americans and the locals - the pilots trying hard to live up to the "overpaid, oversexed and over here" cliché - bring a different atmosphere to the story, as does an unusual interest in public relations, not an aspect of the war effort which gets much attention. (And it resonates - spinning war stories for a media circus is not new to wars fought in the eighties and nineties, by any means.)

Bomber reads as though it's a book based on a documentary, because of its twenty-four hour timespan and the careful research into the background details. While Goodbye Mickey Mouse is obviously as well researched, it doesn't feel like a documentary, because the action is spread over several months, the research is presented less obtrusively, and it has a more complex plot which leads up to a veterans' reunion thirty years later. Deighton has also ditched the German characters which are important in Bomber and drastically reduced the descriptions of flying; Goodbye Mickey Mouse is a far better novel as a result.

Comparisons with Bomber proving something of a red herring, it is actually quite hard to find novels which are much like Goodbye Mickey Mouse. It is mainly the theme of the relationships between the Americans and the local British civilians - not quite conquerors and vanquished, but it must have sometimes felt like it - that is so unusual. A British writer almost exclusively using American points of view is also not common.

Goodbye Mickey Mouse - the title relates to the name given to one of the planes and a discussion about whether a phrase like "goodbye" in a name is unlucky - is not really a thriller, centring as it does on relationships not action. That is, of course, Deighton's intention, but it would not make the novel appeal to fans of, say, his early novels. For the general reader, Goodbye Mickey Mouse is also not perhaps Deighton's most immediately appealing writing, though it would repay the effort required to read it.
