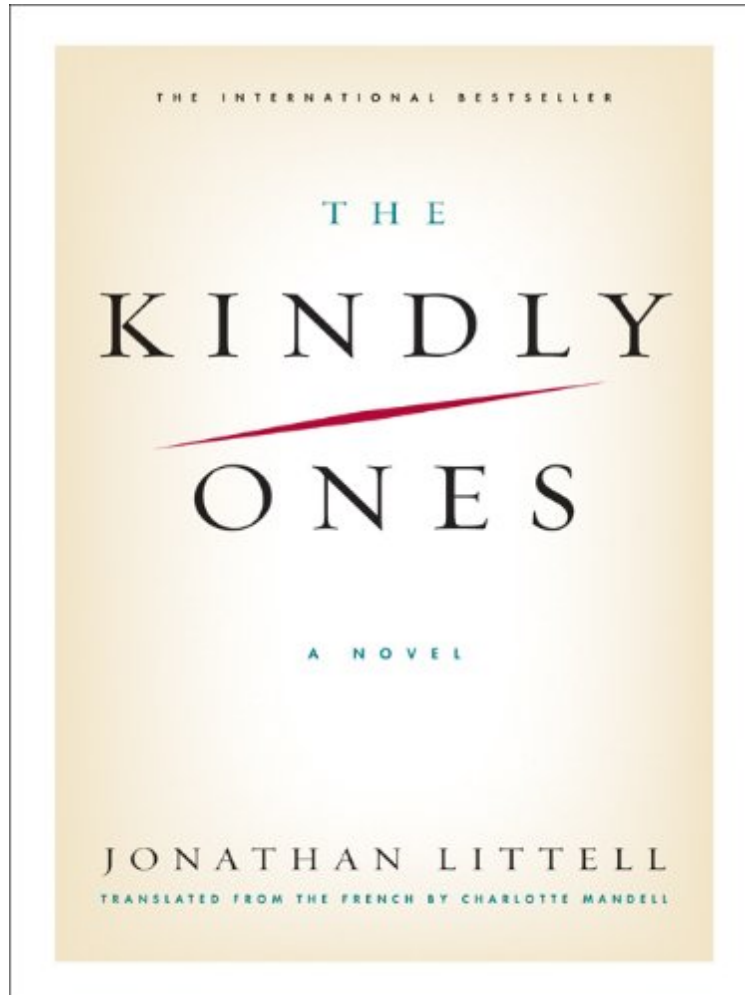


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## The Kindly Ones: A Novel

Von Jonathan Littell

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**Von Jonathan Littell : The Kindly Ones: A Novel** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Kindly Ones: A Novel:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen8 von 10 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An excellent book that could have been a masterpiece.Von marginalI just loved to read this 1000 page book in English, though I see it now as a mistake not having read it in German for obvious reasons. It is very intense and quite rough at some points, opening now and then to interesting considerations concerning the war, the "Endlsung", the NSDAP, and so on. It is undisputable that the author made a serious and very detailed research for writing this book, even if we do not always agree with him. But agreeing or not agreeing is not the point. The point is to let us be dragged for a few days throughout a world of extreme violence ruled by perfectly normal people, which adds even more brutality to the whole affair.Those who think this is a kind of "American Psycho" placed at World War II will be deceived. What we

deal here with is an extraordinary and historically accurate fall into the German war campaign, seen through the complex and sometimes disturbed mind of SS officer Maximilien Aue. And believe me, he does his job so well that you really feel to be part of all that madness. The flow of the story is very catching and we will stumble against some delicious characters with strong and interesting personalities along the way. Some critics accused Jonathan Littell, the author, of plaguing the pages with unacceptable scenes of pornography. Well, this is not true at all. There is in fact at the beginning a short detailed description of homosexual sex and at the end of the book some good five or six pages describing a dreamlike sexual state of feverish euphoria by Max Aue, which I believe was aiming at a better comprehension of his fragile state of mind at that particular moment. Among the 1000 pages and between these two scenes you will find perhaps four more sexual mentions with short "pornographically" content, though nothing which could be called disturbing. To brand this book as dirty because of this is simply pathetic to say the least. To be honest, some degree of pornography in a book that deals with much of the horrors of war could even be desirable. Nevertheless, I believe that in this field the author was not up to the task. Much of those scenes and some rough language could have been left out, not because of the "moral question" but because they just do not fit in. Every time Littell wrote the word shit, there seemed to be some uneasiness in the air, like if the context and phrasing would revolt. It simply did not sound good and almost always felt forced and unnecessary. This kind of matters should be left for masters like Bukowski, where every dirty word has a golden taste. All in all a fantastic book that misses the status of masterwork by a few inches.

Kurzbeschreibung Simply astounding. . . . The Kindly Ones is unmistakably the work of a profoundly gifted writer. Time A literary prize-winner that has been an explosive bestseller all over the world, Jonathan Littell's The Kindly Ones has been called a brilliant Holocaust novel a world-class masterpiece of astonishing brutality, originality, and force, and relentlessly fascinating, ambitious beyond scope, by Michael Korda (Ike, With Wings Like Eagles). Destined to join the pantheon of classic epics of war such as Tolstoy's War and Peace and Vasily Grossman's Life and Fate, The Kindly Ones offers a profound and gripping experience of the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust. Pressestimmen The force and clarity with which Littell renders the physical realities of war and mass murder are simply astounding. . . . The Kindly Ones is unmistakably the work of a profoundly gifted writer. (Time magazine) An alternately fascinating and impressively researched novel. . . . Its feverish voice is weirdly mesmerizing, the scope awesome. (Newark Star Ledger) A world-class masterpiece of astonishing brutality, originality, and force. (The Daily Beast) A great work of literary fiction, to which readers and scholars will turn for decades to come. (Antony Beevor, The Times (London)) The meticulously realistic main plot of The Kindly Ones is brilliantly organized and written (BookForum) Unquestionably brilliant Littell is a gifted writer and what he achieves is unparalleled The novel [is] scrupulous in its period details and generous in its scope (The Nation) An extraordinarily powerful novel. Above all, it is a sophisticated exploration of issues of morality, evil and luck The novel as a whole brilliantly shows how ordinary men become killers. (The Observer (London)) Werbetext Brilliant, frightening, furious, apocalyptic: The Kindly Ones is a literary tour de force and an explosive bestseller across Europe, selling over 1 million copies.