

KIRKUS

TITLE INFORMATION

TIME FALL

Ashby, Timothy

CreateSpace (354 pp.)

\$12.75 paperback, \$4.99 e-book

ISBN: 978-1481026673; February 15, 2013

BOOK REVIEW

Author Ashby's (*Devil's Den*, 2011) historical actioner follows six U.S. Army Rangers who jump from an aircraft in 1945 and travel nearly 70 years by the time they hit the ground.

Near the end of World War II, Lt. Arthur Sutton leads his troop on a covert mission in Germany, but the soldiers are unaware that they've landed in 2011. One of their raids inadvertently thwarts a planned terrorist attack but also gets a German counterterrorism outfit on their trail. In the future, the men must work with a sergeant whose thirst for vengeance—his Jewish family suffered Nazi atrocities—causes him to become unhinged while they're being pursued by retired Gen. Hanno Kasper, a loyal Nazi who'd rather see them dead than taken alive. Despite the time traveling, Ashby's novel isn't so much sci-fi as historical fiction with a modern-day setting: The soldiers believe it's 1945 for much of the story; Kasper wallows in archaic Nazi principles, always carrying the Iron Cross given to him by Hitler when he was a young boy; and American investigator and Vietnam vet Eddie Cassera delves into the past after finding a recently killed soldier who's been MIA for decades. Time traveling, in fact, is a minor plot device, and the author is prudent in its execution—characters concentrate less on how they arrived in the future than what action to take while there. Sutton, who loses the others after an injury, is an ideal man out of time. Scenes of the lieutenant slowly grasping his circumstances are handled deftly; his fascination with such contemporary things as an iPad or YouTube aren't tongue-in-cheek but endearing, as when he's shown a video of his favorite musician, Benny Goodman. In the same vein, Sutton's relationship with Paula, a German woman who sympathizes with his plight, is enduringly unassertive—a comfortable enhancement that doesn't call attention to itself. Ashby's blissfully concise prose makes this 350-pager feel half the length. History buffs will delight in the World War II backdrop, but the book's action, style and unremitting pace make it a triumph across-the-board.

Timothy Ashby

www.timashby.com

