



This Gulf of Fire: The Great Lisbon Earthquake, or Apocalypse in the Age of Science and Reason

Mark Molesky

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Winner of the Phi Alpha Theta Best Subsequent Book Award

A *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize Finalist

The captivating and definitive account of the Great Lisbon Earthquake--the most consequential natural disaster of modern times.

On All Saints' Day 1755, tremors from an earthquake measuring approximately 9.0 or perhaps higher on the magnitude scale swept furiously toward Lisbon, then one of the wealthiest cities in the world and the capital of a vast global empire. Within minutes, much of the city lay in ruins. A half hour later, a giant tsunami unleashed by the quake smashed into Portugal's coastline and barreled up the Tagus River, carrying countless thousands out to sea. To complete Lisbon's destruction, a hellacious firestorm then engulfed the city's shattered remains, killing thousands more and incinerating much of what the earthquake and tsunami had spared.

Drawing on a wealth of new sources, the latest scientific research, and a sophisticated grasp of European history, Mark Molesky gives us the gripping, authoritative account of the Great Lisbon Earthquake disaster and its impact on the Western world—including descriptions of the world's first international relief effort, the rise of a brutal, yet modernizing, dictatorship in Portugal, and the effect of the catastrophe on the spirit and direction of the European Enlightenment.

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