



The Berlin Project

By Gregory Benford

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New York Times bestselling author Gregory Benford creates an alternate history about the creation of the atomic bomb that explores what could have happened if the bomb was ready to be used by June 6, 1944.

Karl Cohen, a chemist and mathematician who is part of The Manhattan Project team, has discovered an alternate solution for creating the uranium isotope needed to cause a chain reaction: U-235.

After convincing General Groves of his new method, Cohen and his team of scientists work at Oak Ridge preparing to have a nuclear bomb ready to drop by the summer of 1944 in an effort to stop the war on the western front. What ensues is an altered account of World War II in this taut thriller.

Combining fascinating science with intimate and true accounts of several members of The Manhattan Project, *The Berlin Project* is an astounding novel that reimagines history and what could have happened if the atom bomb was ready in time to stop Hitler from killing millions of people.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Amazing.” (– David Brin, bestselling author of *The Postman*, *The Uplift War series*)

“Physics and politics, engineering and imagination, “The Berlin Project” has them all. No one has ever been better than Mr. Benford at expressing the sheer excitement of new science and the human tension of making a case, on which the future of the world depends.

“Let’s not think that there aren’t other decisions being made now, or not made now, on which our future depends. The answers depend on the science, yes, but also on the salesmanship. You have to sell the Moon, and Mars and the stars, to the politicians and the public. And if you don’t get it right . . . there will be consequences. That’s why sci-fi is not just for fans.”

(– Tom Shippey, *The Wall Street Journal*)

“Through an informed exploration of what might have been, *The Berlin Project* provides a unique and darkly enthralling perspective on the events underpinning the advent of the atomic age.” (– *Scientific American*)

“In this intriguing alternate history thriller that speculates on the road not taken in the U.S.’s frantic path toward developing an atomic bomb during WWII...En route to that deployment, Benford brings to life all the heavy hitters involved in the Manhattan Project, such as Enrico Fermi, Leo Szilard, and Robert Oppenheimer.” (– *Publishers Weekly*)

"Karl Cohen is working under Harold Urey as a physics research assistant at Columbia University, where their discoveries bring them into the circle known as the Manhattan Project. In this alternate history (illustrated with historical photographs), Karl, being in the right place at the right time, moves up the timetable on the making of the first atomic bomb. Rather than targeting the Japanese city of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, the first “little boy” is deployed June 5, 1944, on Berlin. Physicist and best-selling author Benford (*Timescape*) keeps most of his narrative solidly grounded in historical facts but not overwhelmingly so, and his engaging and compelling characters (all real people) are easy to connect with. While pondering what might have been, this insightful work provides a sobering look at how fragile the whole process of building an atomic weapon really was."

(-- *Library Journal*)

“One of the hallmarks of science fiction is asking “What if?” IN fact, the entire subgenre of alternate history is based on it. Gregory Benford's exciting alternate WWII thriller *The Berlin Project* posits a scenario in which the atomic bomb was ready to be deployed one year early, in the summer of 1944 – thanks to a scientist with the Manhattan Project who discovers a new way to cause a powerful chain reaction. How would the war have changed? Find out in the fast-paced story.” (– *Kirkus Review*)

“Master of SF Greg Benford delivers a taut thriller that pivots off of a spectacular twist of history: scientist Karl Cohen, working on the Manhattan Project during World War II, has a brilliant idea that speeds up development—and the first atomic bomb is ready a year earlier, in summer of 1944, when it could strike a decisive early blow against the Nazis. Laced with real science delivered in easily-absorbed, creative ways, the plot combines espionage, politics, and the “what if” thrill of imagining a world where Hitler was stopped in his tracks nearly a year earlier, as Cohen is forced out of his comfort zone and into the field.” (– *Tor.com*)

“The author does a marvelous job of blending political thriller, spy novel, and science fiction.” (-- *The New York Journal of Books*)

About the Author

Gregory Benford is a physicist, educator, and author. He received a BS from the University of Oklahoma and a PhD from the University of California, San Diego. Benford is a professor of physics at the University of California, Irvine, where he has been a faculty member since 1971. He is a Woodrow Wilson Fellow and a Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University. He has served as an advisor to the Department of Energy, NASA, and the White House Council on Space Policy. He is the author of over twenty novels, including *In the Ocean of the Night*, *The Heart of the Comet* (with David Brin), *Foundation's Fear*, *Bowl of Heaven* (with Larry Niven), *Timescape*, and *The Berlin Project*. A two-time winner of the Nebula Award, Benford has also won the John W. Campbell Award, the British Science Fiction Award (BSFA), the Australian Ditmar Award, and the 1990 United Nations Medal in Literature. In 1995 he received the Lord Foundation Award for contributions to science and the public comprehension of it. He has served as scientific consultant to the NHK Network and for *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

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The Berlin Project

Life has two important dates—

when you're born and when you find out why.

—Mark Twain

1.

September 26, 1938

Not yet an hour on the ground back home in America, and already he was in trouble.

Karl Cohen had just passed through the immigration office with his new bride, Marthe, when the family descended. His tiny aunt Ida tossed off the cheerful accusation, “Where’s your shiksa wife?”—somehow missing Marthe three feet away, perhaps because of Marthe’s polished Paris look.

“She’s not a goy,” he muttered, voice low. Ida’s eyes danced mischievously behind horn-rims. Karl kept his smile steady.

His mother, Rae, led the tittering inspection brigade, all eyes now on Marthe’s tailored gray suit, fashionable hat at a rakish tilt, stylish brushed leather shoes, Paris fashion on parade. His aunt Ida embraced him, saying again, “She’s my new goy greenhorn niece, eh?”

“She’s not a goy,” Karl said stiffly as his uncle Jack leaned in for a handshake, saying gruffly, “Name’s not very Jewish, this Marthe. How do you spell it?”

Karl managed to ignore that as his sister Mattie rapped back at Jack, “The French way, damn it.”

As Karl managed the leather suitcases in their dustcovers, he said, “She’s as much a Jew as you, Jack.” He couldn’t keep a grating tone out of his voice.

In some official way that was true, though Marthe had converted from Catholicism only a week before, and gotten her tourist visa the day after that. Jack nodded and helped with the hatboxes, the toilet case that tinkled from the cut-glass bottles within, and another case for soap and cosmetics. The army of gear a woman carried! Karl had never known that till the hurricane-swept voyage over on the Normandie—pursued, a deck officer said, by a German U-boat. More drama than a honeymoon cruise needed.

They came onto the Pier 49 entrance along the Hudson River, the women afloat on their chatting, Marthe's eyes darting among these new relatives, her carefully lipsticked smile fixed, hand still clutching her passport with REPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE stamped boldly on it. "I had to show them the check you kindly gave me, for a thousand dollars," Marthe said to Rae in her lilting fashion. The family brightened at this accent that made words flow like a liquid. "It is required, to show I am not an indigent. The inspector tossed my French francs aside as worthless." Bronx laughs greeted this.

Karl breathed in the peculiar scent of Manhattan, its crisp urban flavorings. He felt a gauzy lightness as his family chattered around him. He was back, they were safe. The New World.

A shortwave radio on a chair was rasping out a speech in German and Karl recognized it: Hitler, making his threatened ultimatum speech in guttural, barking stutters. The oncoming catastrophe was pursuing them, even here. Would the English and French let Hitler take the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia? All signs at the Munich meeting said they would, or else there would be war.

Rae asked, "What will Hitler do next?"

"We decided not to hang around and find out," Karl said as they got into two cabs. A chorus of agreement, but eyes were still on Marthe.

Karl ended up next to Uncle Jack, who bore in immediately, his usual brusque business style. "You don't get the inheritance money from your grandfather Jonas, y'know, till I verify that your wife is . . . one of us."

Karl bristled but kept his voice level. "She is—here."

The certificate of conversion to the Jewish faith they got in Paris had gold script and flourishes. Jack studied it. "Just last week!"

"It's official. She had been meaning to—"

Marthe broke in from the window seat, "I had been attracted to the faith before, and Karl made me finally do it." She smiled, hands carefully knitted together in front of her. Karl noticed she wore her best leather gloves. "You will find my rabbi specifies the syllabus I studied."

Jack's mouth twisted, vexed. "You get nothing from my father's estate if I judge her not to be a Jew, y'know."

Karl softened his tone. "We have nothing to live on, Jack. I had to get her out before the war."

Jack scowled, turning away from Marthe, and whispered, "My dad felt we Jews should stick together. But this new gal of yours—"

"My wife."

“—she’s a Catholic, just got some paperwork done, that doesn’t mean—”

“Jack, I’m broke.”

Jack frowned and worked his mouth around, as if tasting something sour. A short snort of frustration escaped his teeth. “I’ll think on it.”

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Terri Rouse:

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Brittany Belliveau:

A lot of people always spent all their free time to vacation or go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. In order to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read the book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent all day long to reading a e-book. The book The Berlin Project it is rather good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space to deliver this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

Shaun Richards:

Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book especially book entitled The Berlin Project your brain will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in most aspect that maybe mysterious for but surely will become your mind friends. Imaging each and every word written in a guide then become one contact form conclusion and explanation this maybe you never get ahead of. The The Berlin Project giving you one more experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful facts for your better life with this era. So now let us show you the relaxing pattern the following is your body and mind will probably be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning a. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

Leola Grant:

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