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Return to Midway

Robert D. Ballard, Rick Archbold

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It has been called "the greatest naval battle since Trafalgar." On June 4, 1942, near a tiny island 1,500 miles from Hawaii, the course of the Pacific War changed dramatically. Before the battle of Midway the forces of Imperial Japan seemed unstoppable. After Midway the Japanese would never again take the offensive.

Fifty-six years later, famed underwater explorer Robert Ballard embarked on a search for the lost ships that had sunk in that historic battle. Accompanying him were a group of Japanese and American veterans who had once faced each other as enemies. Their memories of the epic conflict act as an affecting counterpoint to the story of the high-tech hunt for this great sunken battlefield.

Dr. Ballard's search area was enormous and his targets -- the *Yorktown* and four Japanese carriers -- lay over three miles down, far deeper than the *Titanic* or the *Bismarck.* Equipment failures and time constraints kept working against him, and it often seemed that he might return with nothing. But finally, on May 19, 1998, Robert Ballard and his team located the remains of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Yorktown.*

Astonishing underwater photographs of the *Yorktown* by David Doubilet and Ken Marschall's haunting paintings of the nearly intact carrier are among the visual highlights of this richly illustrated book. In addition, archival and modern images and paintings by leading aviation and maritime illustrators complement this gripping account of one of history's great air-and-sea encounters and the mission to document the lost ships that today bear witness to it.

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