

**STILLE  
NACHT**



**SILENT  
NIGHT**



**The Story of the Christmas Truce**

**Rory Margraf**

Illustrated by Andreea Mironiuc

# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

Omaha, Nebraska

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **A Story of Humanity, Peace, and Love**

*Stille Nacht (Silent Night): The Story of the Christmas Truce* is Now Available

Along the Western Front on Christmas Day in 1914, a curious thing happened. Soldiers began to lay down their weapons and meet their enemy in No Man's Land. They did not meet in combat, but in peace and friendship. In defiance of orders and the nature of war, soldiers recognized their own humanity and that of their enemy and strove to find peace.

Through beautiful illustrations, *Stille Nacht (Silent Night): The Story of the Christmas Truce* captures the joy of this brief moment in time and presents it in a manner that will inspire young readers to seek out the humanity of others and choose peace over conflict throughout their lives.

"The Christmas Truce is a story on which I grew up and fueled my sense of hope and faith in others. It is a story of humanity and brotherhood, in defiance of orders. That day in the trenches showed humanity that no conflict, no order, no amount of propaganda and crafted hatred could ever tear humanity apart, if we choose not to let it. I am excited to finally bring the story of the Christmas Truce to young readers." – Rory Margraf, Author of *Stille Nacht (Silent Night): The Story of the Christmas Truce*

"Wars bring so much pain and suffering and are unfair to those impacted. This book stops time and focuses on that one moment of peace, laughter, and joy. We are more similar than we are different, and this book is such a strong testimonial of this. It was a joy to illustrate it and I hope it will make readers take one moment to appreciate simple things such as friendship and community." – Andreea Mironiuc, Illustrator of *Stille Nacht (Silent Night): The Story of the Christmas Truce*

Rory is a writer from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A Juris Doctor candidate at Creighton University School of Law, he is the author of the *I Know My Rights* Children's Series. His writing has been featured with Porter Medium, Free the People, and the Foundation for Economic Education. His writing focuses on individual rights, peaceful dissidence, politics, and law. He currently resides in Omaha, Nebraska.

*Stille Nacht (Silent Night): The Story of the Christmas Truce* is available now for review; contact Rory Margraf for a full media kit and press copy.

Rory Margraf is available for interview upon request.

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## ABOUT



### RORY MARGRAF

Rory is a writer from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His work has been featured with the Porter Medium, Free the People, and the Foundation for Economic Education. He is a 2019 Writing Fellow with America's Future Foundation.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rory is a Juris Doctor candidate at Creighton University School of Law. His writing focuses on individual rights, peaceful dissidence, politics, and law. He currently resides in Omaha, Nebraska.

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## BOOK INFO

### SALES INFO

Title: *Stille Nacht (Silent Night)*  
Subtitle: *The Story of the Christmas Truce*  
Genre: Children's History / Holidays  
Age Group: 4-12 Years  
Retail Price: \$9.99  
Pages: 43  
ISBN: 979-8218116255  
Publication Date: November 30, 2022  
Formats: Paperback  
Retailers: Amazon

### SYNOPSIS

In the Winter of 1914, the fighting along the Western Front had reached an impasse in the first year of the First World War. Thousands of soldiers filled the trenches, which stretched for hundreds of miles. As the fighting intensified, calls for peace rang out around the world and at home. As the holiday approached, a Christmas Truce was called for by many, but the warring nations dismissed it, choosing to continue the fight.

But on Christmas Day in 1914, a curious thing happened. Soldiers began to lay down their weapons and met their enemy in No Man's Land. They did not meet in combat, but in peace and friendship. Together, they sang songs, exchanged gifts, and even played soccer while they celebrated Christmas together.

Commanded to be enemies, the soldiers on the Western Front found humanity on the battlefield. In defiance of orders, those on the battlefield did not see enemies, but brothers. The Christmas Truce never happened again, but the fields once called No Man's Land will forever hold a moment of peace in its soil.

## F A Q s

### **WHY THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE?**

I grew up hearing the story of the Christmas Truce each year from my father. On long car rides, we would typically listen to the same music, carefully curated to include his favorite songs. One that stood out was *Belleau Wood*, by Garth Brooks. It's a beautiful retelling of the Christmas Truce. From time to time, we would listen to the song and then my father would tell us more about that day. It fueled my sense of hope and faith in humanity and is always somewhere on my mind. As I've gotten older, I have had to watch my country engaged in two decades of discretionary wars, unceasing political conflict, armed conflicts around the world which defy understanding. I have come to understand the story of the Christmas Truce as proof that we are capable of so much love in this world. But it requires the courage to defy our leaders, to stand up for each other and recognize that so much of the hatred in our world is imposed on us. War is an unnatural machination of government. And when we recognize that, whether on the battlefield, at the ballot box, or at the dinner table during the holidays, peace will always follow.

### **WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE WITH *STILLE NACHT*?**

More than anything, I hope simply that readers, both children and adults, will find *Stille Nacht* to be a beautiful and joyful story during the holidays and throughout the year. There are somber moments, inspiring moments, and even moments that may make some readers chuckle. I also hope that this story inspires young readers to pursue peace and understanding in all facets of their lives. Just as I learned as I got older, I hope that readers will see this story as a source for inspiration, choosing humanity over conflict. Maybe, one day, we'll finally come to see war as nothing more than a construct imposed on us. If nothing else, I hope that it will bring a smile to a reader during a time when so much of the world still faces the threat and reality of war.

### **DO YOU CONSIDER THIS TO BE SOLELY A CHRISTMAS STORY?**

The story of the Christmas Truce is certainly a Christmas story, but it so much more than one holiday. It is a story to which every person of every faith and culture can relate. The story itself is about warring nations, with different traditions, cultures, and languages meeting on the battlefield in peace. This blending of culture, faith, and language allows, and even requires, that the story transcend one holiday. Every moment in history, regardless of where it originated, may inspire us today.

### **IS A STORY OF WAR APPROPRIATE FOR YOUNG READERS?**

*Stille Nacht* is not quite a war story, as I view it, but rather a story of peace. Andreea and I chose not to depict weapons and the brutal reality of war, but rather depicting it in a way that is appropriate for young readers and allows them to focus on the joy found on that day. There are so many war stories out there, many of which are inspiring in their own way, but stories of peace seem so rare. There are times in which we must praise the conquering hero, but we must also praise the hero who laid down their weapons and chose not to fight.