



Ghosts of Vesuvius: A New Look at the Last Days of Pompeii, How Towers Fall, and Other Strange Connections

Charles R. Pellegrino

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The eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79 and the subsequent destruction of the thriving Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum are historic disasters of monumental proportions, resonating across millennia and remembered to this very day. Now Dr. Charles Pellegrino -- the acclaimed author who unearthed Atlantis, returned readers to Sodom and Gomorrah, and revealed startling new secrets about the most fabled sea tragedy of all in his superb *New York Times* bestseller *Her Name, Titanic* -- takes us back to the final days of an extraordinary civilization to experience an earth-shattering catastrophe with remarkable and unsettling ties to the unthinkable disaster of September 11, 2001.

Through the modern wonders of forensic archaeology, astonishing facts about the everyday lives of the doomed citizens of Pompeii and Herculaneum have been brought to light, revealing a society that enjoyed "modern" amenities such as central heating, sliding glass doors, penicillin, hot and cold running water -- and a standard of living and life expectancy that would not be achieved again until the 1950s. But these thriving twin cities would be buried along with every hapless citizen in less than twenty-four hours when Vesuvius came frighteningly alive, sending a fearsome column of smoke and fire twenty miles into the sky.

Employing volcano physics, Pellegrino shows that the Vesuvius eruption was one thousand times more powerful than the bomb that leveled Hiroshima, bringing to vivid life the frightful majesty of that volcanic apocalypse. Yet Pellegrino digs deeper, exploring fascinating comparisons and connections to other catastrophic events throughout history, in particular the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. As one of the world's only experts on downblast and surge physics, Pellegrino was invited to Ground Zero to examine the site and compare it with devastation wreaked by Vesuvius, in the hope of saving lives during future volcanic eruptions. In doing so, he offers us a poignant and unforgettable glimpse into the final moments of our own "American Vesuvius."

A stunning combination of science, history, humanity, and riveting storytelling, Charles Pellegrino's *Ghosts of Vesuvius* is an extraordinary accomplishment, an electrifying, edifying, astonishing, and powerful work of literary art.

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