

**PAUL FLEISCHMAN**

**"A deft, poignant novel." —The New York Times**

# BULL RUN





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# COLONEL OLIVER BRATTLE

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The booming jerked me out of sleep, woke the dishes and set them chattering, and sent Clara dashing through the dark to the children. "Must be the Lord comin'!" cried one of the servants. I realized I'd been dreaming of Mexico. Strange.

I lit a candle. The clock read four thirty. All of Charleston seemed to be in the streets. I dressed, stepped out the front door, and was embraced at once by a teary-eyed stranger. "Praise the day!" he shrieked into my face. "They're firing on Fort Sumter!"

We gathered on Judge Frye's flat roof. The cannons rattled the very constellations. Shells sailed, their lit fuses tracing caliper-perfect arcs, then exploded. Each illumination of the bay was greeted with appreciative oohs and hurrahs. You'd have thought that the crowds were enjoying a Fourth of July display. Some brought baskets of food to the rooftops and raised glasses in

toasts to South Carolina, Jefferson Davis, and General Beauregard. I was silent, though I shared their allegiance. I'd fought, however, fourteen years before from Veracruz to Mexico City. I remembered well what shells do to living flesh, and felt in melancholy mood. Amid all the cheering, the Negroes were similarly glum—suspiciously so. If they rejoiced that a war that might break their bonds had begun, they dared let no one discern it. By a bursting shell's light, I eyed Vernon, my body servant. He caught my glance and the slimmest of smiles fled his lips, like a snake disappearing down a hole.



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# LILY MALLOY

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Minnesota is flat as a cracker. Rise up on your toes and you can see across the state. Scarce even a tree in sight but for a few willows beside the creeks. Father said God put willows here that man might have switches to enforce His commandments. Father was a grim-faced Scot and a great believer in switching. Each morning he put on his spectacles, without which he was all but blind. And each evening all six of us were whipped for *whatever failings he'd noticed that day*. If no fault could be found, we were whipped just the same for any wrongs committed out of his sight. Wee Sarah was not spared, nor Patrick, seventeen and tall. Father was taller still.

One chill April Sunday in 1861, we rode in to church and found a crowd before the door. Mr. Nilson was reading from a newspaper. Fort Sumter had been attacked. The gallant defenders had surrendered the next day. The President had called the Union to arms. That such a

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**TOBY BOYCE:** "I was eleven years old and desperate to kill a Yankee before the supply ran out."

**GENERAL IRVIN MCDOWELL:** "I felt myself to be a horse who's ordered to gallop while still hitched to a post."

**GIDEON ADAMS:** "To be a Negro living in the midst of whites, unknown to them, is to be a ghost spying on the living."

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