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Featuring an introduction by the author, photographs by Gary Knight, and illustrations by Bob's nephew Jamie Knight, this illustrated history of France begins with the ancient Gauls and follows through the present day. From the towering pyramids of the 5th century BCE to the giant mushroom cloud of World War II, this is a dazzling and visually stunning account of the country's past, written by a truly worldly Frenchman. Between the first Viking raids and the rise of Napoleon, France was always at war. No one knows when, where, or how the strife began, but it continues unabated today. Since the Normans, the church, the monarchy, and the nobility have ruled France, the ruling class has been tempted to ignore the people, and has sought to control them, manipulate them, and exploit them. The French Revolution was no different. Its leaders, bourgeois republicans, were the enemy of the people, the enemy of France, and the enemy of everyone. Yet, in the person of the ill-fated King Louis XVI, they found the perfect scapegoat for the nation's problems. For thirteen months, he was hauled before the revolutionary tribunal for a series of ridiculous charges, from being a tyrant who oppressed the people, to a son who was unfit to rule, to an accomplice to high treason, and finally to the cause of France's problems. His execution on January 21, 1793, at the age of forty-nine, effectively put an end to the monarchy and ushered in the French Revolution. The following year, a republic was established. Yet in the year that followed, an increasingly angry, radicalized nation led by Robespierre and his bloodthirsty team of radical Jacobin leaders directed its fury against the King's family, the aristocracy, and anyone who opposed the revolution. The Reign of Terror began with a huge wave of killings in which tens of thousands of French citizens were condemned to death on false charges. The philosopher and writer Montesquieu was among the targets, for although he had always opposed the revolution, he had been imprisoned for more than a year before being released and banished. His home was searched and then destroyed, and his books were all burned. His was not the only political victim. As the prisons filled up with Jacobin prisoners, thousands of innocent people were executed or left to starve to death in the jails. Soon, the political tone changed. What began as radical revolution against a hated and unjust social system had now become a reign of terror against the 82157476af

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