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On Desperate Ground: The Epic Story of Chosin Reservoir--the Greatest Battle of the Korean War

By: Hampton Sides

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From the New York Times bestselling author of *Blood and Thunder* and *Ghost Soldiers*, a chronicle of the extraordinary feats of heroism by Marines called on to do the impossible during the greatest battle of the Korean War. "Superb ... A masterpiece of thorough research, deft pacing and arresting detail... This war story the fight to break out of a frozen hell near the Chosin Reservoir has been told many times before. But Sides tells it exceedingly well, with fresh research, gritty scenes and cinematic sweep." *The Washington Post* On October 15, 1950, General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of UN troops in Korea, convinced President Harry Truman that the Communist forces of Kim Il-sung would be utterly defeated by Thanksgiving. The Chinese, he said with near certainty, would not intervene in the war. As he was speaking, 300,000 Red Chinese soldiers began secretly crossing the Manchurian border. Led by some 20,000 men of the First Marine Division, the Americans moved deep into the snowy mountains of North Korea, toward the trap Mao had set for the vainglorious MacArthur along the frozen shores of the Chosin Reservoir. What followed was one of the most heroic and harrowing operations in American military history, and one of the classic battles of all time. Faced with probable annihilation, and temperatures plunging to 20 degrees below zero, the surrounded, and hugely outnumbered, Marines fought through the enemy forces with ferocity, ingenuity, and nearly unimaginable courage as they marched their way to the sea. Hampton Sides' superb account of this epic clash relies on years of archival research, unpublished letters, declassified documents, and interviews with scores of Marines and Koreans who survived the siege. While expertly detailing the follies of the American leaders, *On Desperate Ground* is an immediate, grunt's-eye view of history, enthralling in its narrative pace and powerful in its portrayal of what ordinary men are capable of in the most extreme circumstances. Hampton Sides has been hailed by critics as one of the best nonfiction writers of his generation. As the *Miami Herald* wrote, "Sides has a novelist's eye for the propulsive elements that lend momentum and dramatic pace to the best nonfiction narratives."


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