

THE LAST CAMPAIGN

ROBERT F. KENNEDY
AND 82 DAYS THAT
INSPIRED AMERICA



THURSTON CLARKE

AUTHOR OF *ASK NOT: THE INAUGURATION OF JOHN F. KENNEDY*
AND THE SPEECH THAT CHANGED AMERICA

THE DEFINITIVE AND EXHILARATING ACCOUNT OF ROBERT KENNEDY'S 1968 CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT

After John Kennedy's assassination, Robert—formerly his brother's no-holds-barred political warrior—was left stunned and grieving. He was haunted by his brother's murder and by the nation's failure to address its most pressing challenges—race, poverty, and the war in Vietnam. He sensed that America was wounded, and when he announced that he was running for president, much of the country was thrilled to hear his message of healing and hope. Although fearing that there were, as he told one confidant, “guns between me and the White House,” he risked his life to ask Americans to help him reclaim “the generous impulses that are the soul of this nation.”

As Thurston Clarke recounts so effectively in *The Last Campaign*, Kennedy stirred huge crowds, who would often tear his clothes, and moved even the most hard-bitten of journalists and other intimate observers. He challenged his audiences: telling college students he would end the draft deferments that left poor and minority youths to fight in Vietnam and telling whites that they bore responsibility for black frustration and rage. His soft-spoken speech to a largely black audience in Indianapolis on the night of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination was a stunning and effective call for peace in America that can still give the reader chills. After spending most of the campaign at Kennedy's side, reporter Richard Harwood, a former marine who had initially been suspicious of Kennedy, asked his editors at the *Washington Post* to replace him, telling them, “I'm falling in love with the guy.”

Four days after Robert Kennedy was assassinated, two million grieving Americans—weeping,







Also by Thurston Clarke

Ask Not

Searching for Crusoe

California Fault

Pearl Harbor Ghosts

Equator

Thirteen O'Clock

Lost Hero

By Blood and Fire

The Last Caravan

Dirty Money



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