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The Norman Conquest by Marc Morris

When we discuss the substance of the Norman Conquest, to the already much-discussed tale of William of Normandy, better known as "William the Conqueror", leading his troops across the English Channel to seize control of England, the facts are often mixed with fiction, creating an aura of grandeur and romanticism. As Marc Morris emphasizes in his book called *The Norman Conquest: The Battle of Hastings and the Fall of Anglo-Saxon England*, the incidents associated with the conquest of English have been added a lot as they were told a multitude of times. The Bayeux Tapestry alone mentioned in the book has been the topic of discussion for at least ten widespread historic compilations in the last decade alone. All the chief contributors of that year's events – from King Harold to the Viking invader Harald Hardrada, even William of Normandy himself has all have complete biographies. We get this deeply researched book by Mr. Morris, who cannot probably explain why he chose this subject in the first place but is willing enough in trying to do it just the same. If you only read a score of books on the subject, this would be one of them.

As can be quickly understood from hundreds of retellings of this historic event, the original incident is one of the greatest page-turners of the historic record. England's strangely powerful king Edward the Confessor is on his deathbed and has no heir to his throne. This gives rise to the competition between Harold Godwinson and William of Normandy for the rule of England. Harold has the benefit of nearness. There is acclaim that Edward had nominated Harold to replace him as king, a claim that was not opposed by anyone present at the deathbed of the old king. We do not observe Morris taking sides between the English or the Normans, but we can still observe that he still looks, with interestingly judgemental sharpness at Harold’s successive actions to seize power. He can be observing writing that no king has so hurriedly crowned himself after his predecessor’s death.

The move enraged William, who first sent envoys to Harold advising him to abandon his claim to the throne and then applied to Pope Alexander II for papal authorization to invade England. The invasion was launched, and he succeeded in capturing England. Morris is strangely appealing when he is simply conveying the bravery of the Normans with their appearances. He also admires the English for their battle-readiness and their willingness to give all that they have for defending themselves.

The most captivating point of Morris's book is its writing style and the use of the historic sources, counting his examination of the iconic instant of the Norman Conquest: the death of King Harold on the battlefield by a thick wooden arrow that went through his eye. It is an impressive scene on the visual substantiation alone, and Morris portrays a really strong situation that is never conveyed before by the writers covering the subject. He believes that skiving off a particular point can damage the building of an argument. This most limited of William writers neither refutes nor approvals the bloodbath of King Harold, which can be indirectly taken as a strong indication that the butchery happened. It is good and well-developed thinking, and it the most appealing characteristic of this book.