



Crime of the Century: The Lindbergh Kidnapping and the Framing of Richard Hauptmann (HBO movie tie-in)

Ludovic Kennedy

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"At a trial events are often seen in a distorted perspective. A violent event has taken place, and we work backwards from it, considering primarily the evidence bearing on that event. If we work forwards in a natural sequence, from a natural starting point, this evidence may wear a very different appearance." These words from mystery writer Julian Symons are the inspiration for this evenhanded, chronological approach to the paired stories of Charles Lindbergh, whose child was kidnapped and murdered in 1932, and Bruno Richard Hauptmann, who was tried, convicted, and executed for the crime. In a quietly affecting style, Ludovic Kennedy acquaints us with the characters of Lindbergh and Hauptmann in the years before their fates intertwined. Then he outlines the chain of events that led to this textbook case of how to frame an innocent person for a crime. Kennedy wisely sidesteps the vexing question of who *did* kill the Lindbergh baby to focus on the unforgettable story of the kind and hardworking German carpenter who became a scapegoat for a country's guilt.

Note: this book was first published in 1985 as *The Airman and the Carpenter*, and has a new (1996) introduction by the author.

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