



Infested: How the Bed Bug Infiltrated Our Bedrooms and Took Over the World

Brooke Borel

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Infested: How the Bed Bug Infiltrated Our Bedrooms and Took Over the World Brooke Borel Bed bugs. Few words strike such fear in the minds of travelers. In cities around the world, lurking beneath the plush blankets of otherwise pristine-looking hotel beds are tiny bloodthirsty beasts just waiting for weary wanderers to surrender to a vulnerable slumber. Though bed bugs today have infested the globe, the common bed bug is not a new pest at all. Indeed, as Brooke Borel reveals in this unusual history, this most-reviled species may date back over 250,000 years, wreaking havoc on our collective psyche while even inspiring art, literature, and music—in addition to vexatious red welts.

In *Infested*, Borel introduces readers to the biological and cultural histories of these amazingly adaptive insects, and the myriad ways in which humans have responded to them. She travels to meet with scientists who are rearing bed bug colonies—even by feeding them with their own blood (ouch!)—and to the stages of musicals performed in honor of the pests. She explores the history of bed bugs and their apparent disappearance in the 1950s after the introduction of DDT, charting how current infestations have flourished in direct response to human chemical use as well as the ease of global travel. She also introduces us to the economics of bed bug infestations, from hotels to homes to office buildings, and the expansive industry that has arisen to combat them.

Hiding during the day in the nooks and seams of mattresses, box springs, bed frames, headboards, dresser tables, wallpaper, or any clutter around a bed, bed bugs are thriving and eager for their next victim. By providing fascinating details on bed bug science and behavior as well as a captivating look into the lives of those devoted to researching or eradicating them, *Infested* is sure to inspire at least a nibble of respect for these tenacious creatures—while also ensuring that you will peek beneath the sheets with prickly apprehension.



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