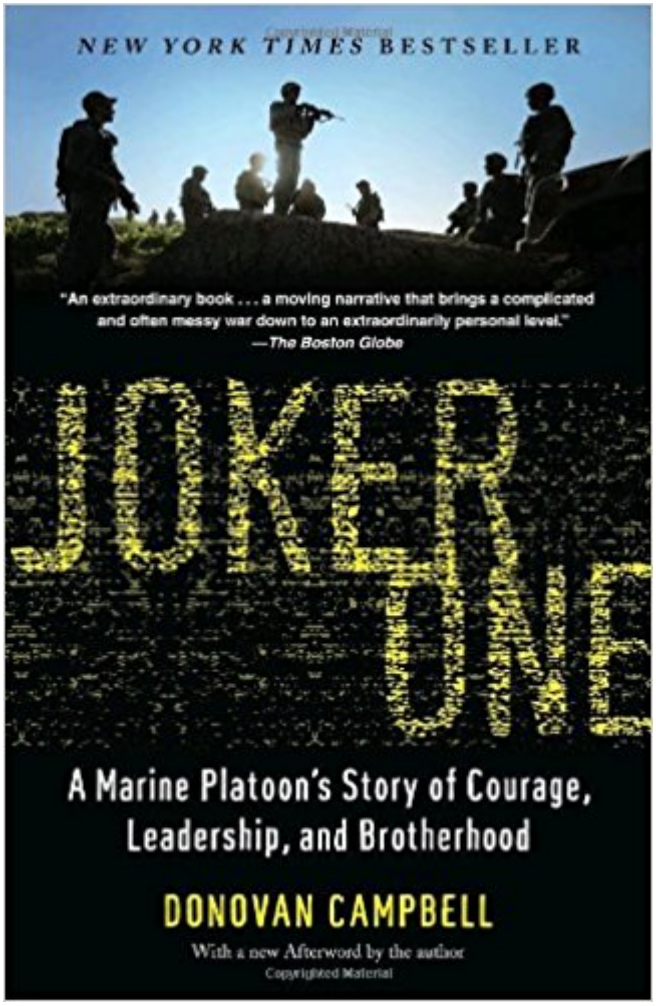
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Joker One: A Marine Platoon's Story Of Courage, Leadership, And Brotherhood



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Synopsis

After graduating from Princeton, Donovan Campbell wanted to give back to his country, engage in the world, and learn to lead. So he joined the service, becoming a commander of a forty-man infantry platoon called Joker One. Campbell had just months to train and transform a ragtag group of brand-new Marines into a first-rate cohesive fighting unit, men who would become his family. They were assigned to Ramadi, the capital of the Sunni-dominated Anbar province that was an explosion just waiting to happen. And when it did happenÃ¢â ¬â •with the chilling cries of "Jihad, Jihad, Jihad!" echoing from minaret to minaretÃ¢â ¬â •Campbell and company were there to protect the innocent, battle the insurgents, and pick up the pieces. Thrillingly told by the man who led the unit of hard-pressed Marines, Joker One is a gripping tale of a leadership and loyalty.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Campbell decided as a junior at Princeton that attending Marine Corps Officer Candidate School would look good on his rÃƒÂ©sumÃƒÂ©. Three years later, in the spring of 2004, he was in Iraq commanding a platoon known by its radio call sign, Joker One. Campbell tells its story, and his, in an outstanding narrative of the Iraq War. Joker One counted around 40 dudes: country boys and smalltown jocks; a few Hispanics and a single black. Some were college men with futures; some had pasts they preferred to forget. The battalion was assigned to one of Iraq’s worst hot spots: the city of Ramadi, where faceless enemies found shelter among 350,000 Iraqi civilians. Joker One fought from street to street, house to house and ambush to ambush for seven straight

months. By the end of the tour, even the Gunny's hands had started ceaselessly shaking, Campbell writes. Faced with urgent life-and-death decisions, Campbell had learned that there are no great options... you live with the results and shut up about the whole thing. For all his constant self-questioning, Lt. Campbell brought Joker One home with only one KIAÃ¢â ¬â •a record as impressive as his account. (Mar. 17) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Critics praised Campbell as a gifted and deft writer who retells his Iraq tour in Ã¢â ¬Å“powerful, exacting detailÃ¢â ¬Â• (Dallas Morning News). While Campbell avoids much analysis of the war overall, or even his platoonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s specific mission, most critics found this to be a virtue. As the New York Times noted, Campbell Ã¢â ¬Å“never quite puts his finger on the meaning, if any, of the extraordinary violence,Ã¢â ¬Â• but he does Ã¢â ¬Å“[lay] it all out for anyone else who wants to have a try.Ã¢â ¬Â• Only the Denver Post found CampbellÃ¢â ¬â„¢s unreflective style trying, citing that the author Ã¢â ¬Å“seems awkwardly obtuse when it comes to ascertaining the needs of other people.Ã¢â ¬Â• Most reviewers, however, admired the bookÃ¢â ¬â„¢s honest day-to-day look at attempting to quell the Iraqi insurgency.Copyright 2009 Bookmarks Publishing LLC --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Joker One is perhaps the most loving account of a Marine platoon IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve ever read. Few things can get me to tear up even a little and IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve read several different accounts of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. From Generation Kill to No Easy Day to American Sniper, nothing IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve read about those wars has moved me like Joker One.
ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s obvious from the early pages that Donovan Campbell deeply cared for his Marines and strove to not just be a competent officer, but a good man, in service to those under his command.Campbell does spend some time on the themes well covered by other war accounts - the gallows humor, the comically absurd, the surreal juxtaposition of normal Iraqis carrying out every day business in the middle of a war zone, the tragic and inhumane occurrences of modern warfare - but it is in CampbellÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s open and honest account of the love he had for his Marines, and the love those Marines had for each other, that Joker One sets itself apart.At the end of the book, after tearing up several times, I have to say that Joker One is now one of two books I would recommend to anyone wanting to attempt to understand what it was like in the Iraq war (the other being Generation Kill). ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s one of the best IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve ever read.

I do a lot of reading and this book was much like watching a movie. Whenever I had a few minutes to spare I'd turn on my iPad to pick up where I left off. It's incredibly insightful and there were many instances where I was on the verge of tears. If you're in the profession of arms, especially if your an officer, this should be required reading. This adds to the "5,000 year mind" aspect. Very much worth the price.

Excellent story. Usually all we read about are the fire fights and the action. This book goes much deeper. It really touches on the psychological drain that combat places on soldiers. This book is written from the perspective of a platoon leader, an officer, a really good officer who cared about his men. It gives you a perspective that you won't find in many, or any, other books on battle. At least I haven't!Worth the read and excellently written.

When I first bought this book I thought it was going to be a fictional story. However as I started reading it, I learned that it was in fact a true life account of a Marine unit serving in Anbar province Iraq. The book started off very slowly and as I read it started to pick up in action which is what I was looking for. As I continued reading I realized that the unit was probably the same unit that my best friend served with in Vietnam as a corpsman in 1969 where he was KIA at LZ Russell when the base was overrun by North Vietnamese troops so I continued reading. The book picked up speed about one quarter of the way into it. It made me realize what my friend had gone through in 1969 in a lot of ways. The more I read the more I was in awe at what these young men had to put up with. I knew that being in a combat Marine unit was not a party but I had no idea it was that bad. Being a Vietnam veteran myself who joined the Navy and was stationed in country in Vietnam I had it good compared to these guys. I'm surprised that any of them got home alive and I honor their bravery, self devotion to each other and patriotic duty to our country and so should all Americans.

I have listened to this in the audio book form, So many audio books I listen to I wonder what they were thinking when they chose the reader, not this one. This is an amazing audio book, The first time I listened to it I was really taken with how well everything was described, listening to the book I found myself feeling I was there. If this was ever made into a movie it would be a blockbuster hit immediately. This book invoked a lot of emotion from me as I listened to it. A great story of brotherhood and Donovan Campbell really digs deep within himself to write this. Donovan is great man who is not afraid to open up his shortcomings, challenges, heartbreaks, and successes. You won't find a lot of macho over exaggerated claims of heroism in this, just the heart of a young

Marine lieutenant who tells a story of his courageous men that you will come to love and care about. Donovan also takes you through his own physical and emotional journey in the process. I have listened to the book several times now, and love it every time! I even believe that someone who served in any situation like this that may be struggling can possible find help in a book like this. I heard a story about a Dr. who deals with PTSD, he said the biggest thing he finds with these guys is the feel like they can't express what they are feeling, they can't talk about it because they are men, and men keep their feelings inside because to talk about what is on the inside shows weakness. I could not agree more, and I think this book shows a man opening up about what is going inside and I think it portrays true manhood and character. This teaches men about courage even when you are scared. This can apply to a solder in battle of the guy who is just getting up every day and going to work trying to do the right thing.

This first-person account of a rookie Marine platoon leader's experience in Iraq is on par with "Generation Kill" and "One Bullet Away" as a classic war diary. The author recounts his successes and failures without ego, always giving credit (or blame) to the people responsible. People who believe they have become warriors by virtue of hundreds of hours at the console of "Call of Duty" should read this and then consider what it's like to carry a 70 lb. pack and a 20-lb. mortar tube while on foot patrol in 100-degree heat. Donovan Campbell takes you there as well as anyone could.

Fabulous book about a young marine officers interaction and development with his young marines daily life and death scenarios in a dangerous part of the world, you'll read about the ridiculous political standards they have to adhere to in life and death situations, it'll make you mad as hell that we put these great young Americans in harms way and they have to ask permission to defend themselves, absolutely absurd, but again such is the case in a political war, they are heroes and the ones that gave the ultimate shall never be forgotten !

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