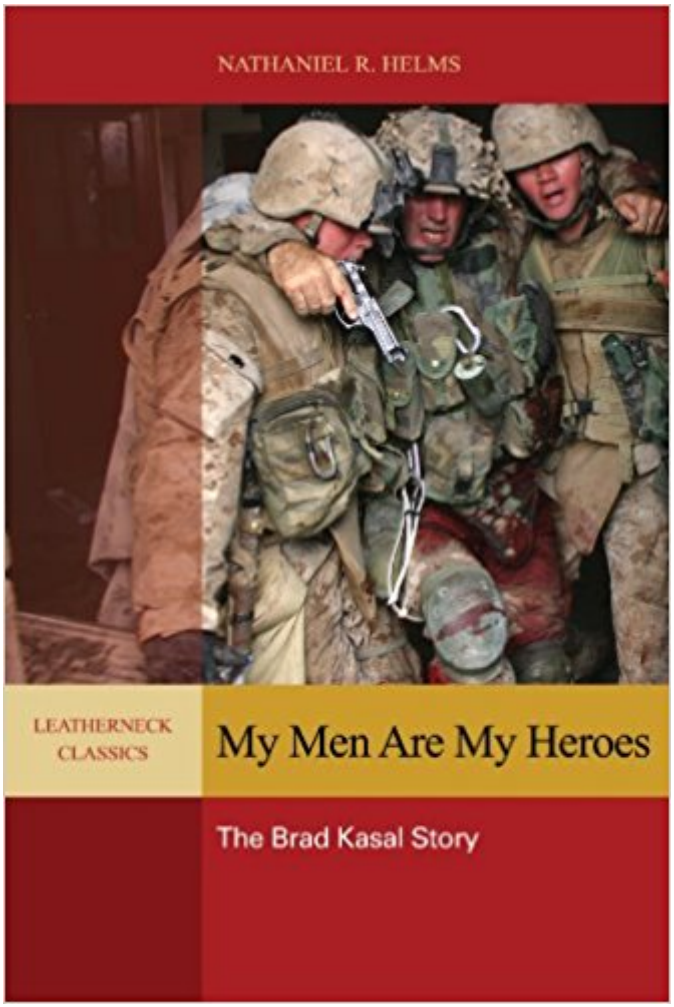
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My Men Are My Heroes: The Brad Kasal Story (Leatherneck Classics)



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Synopsis

My Men Are My Heroes introduces its readers to a living standard of Marine Corps esprit de corps and military decorum. Sergeant Major Bradley Kasal, the pride of Iowa, is a small town boy who wanted to be a United States Marine even before a poster perfect Marine recruiter marched into his high school gym and offered him a challenge Kasal couldnÃ Â¿Â t resist. Two decades later Kasal stood stiffly at attention, one leg literally shot in half, while the Navy Cross was pinned to his chest. Kasal is currently the Sergeant Major of the Infantry School at Camp Pendleton, CA until he retires in May, 2012.After a brief visit to his childhood KasalÃ Â¿Â s story quickly gathers steam, introducing the reader to his early Marine career; adventure filled years that earned him the name Ã Â¿Â Robo-GruntÃ Â¿Â from men who donÃ Â¿Â t offer accolades easily. Kasal uses his experience climbing the ranks to illustrate how Marines grow, and how they are shaped by the uncompromising attitudes of the officers and non-coms charged with turning young Marines into tigers.KasalÃ Â¿Â s adventures culminate in Iraq. By now he is 1st Sergeant Kasal, ramrodding Kilo Company, 3/1, a rifle company in 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, the mighty Ã Â¿Â Thunder ThirdÃ Â¿Â that would cover itself with glory in 2004. Two days into Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003 Kilo is ordered to hold open a critical road between two bridges that SaddamÃ Â¿Â s fierce Fedayeen Saddam were just as determined to take away. Kasal makes in his stand on that road, literally standing tall amidst fierce gunfire, demonstrating the kind of leadership Kilo Company needed to get the job done. KiloÃ Â¿Â s fight was part of the first big test of Marine Corps combat capabilities in the second Iraqi War and the only major engagement the Marine Corps fought during the heady days of the Ã Â¿Â Drive UpÃ Â¿Â to Baghdad. When it was over the so-called Ã Â¿Â NinjasÃ Â¿Â of the Fedayeen Saddam were smashed. A week later Kasal was in Baghdad, welcomed with open arms by the exuberant population.A year later 3/1 was back to Iraq, in Anbar Province, the epicenter of the brutal war now raging in the former tribal stronghold of Saddam and his henchmen. The smiling faces that had greeted 3/1 the year before were gone. Kasal is the 1st Sergeant of Weapons Company, 3/1, the armored fist of a light infantry battalion. After four months of ambushes, IEDs, and deadly skirmishes 3/1 is ordered into Fallujah, to take the ancient city back from Al Qaeda and the foreign fighters who had turned the ancient Ã Â¿Â City of MosquesÃ Â¿Â into a fortress. It is there, in November, 2004 that the Ã Â¿Â Thundering ThirdÃ Â¿Â entered into Marine Corps legend and Kasal into the Pantheon of Heroes for his actions during the most savage battle the Marines fought in the Iraq War. At a non-descript house in a walled neighborhood in Fallujah Kasal, at the time accompanying a squad of KiloÃ Â¿Â s riflemen into a contested house, becomes involved in a close-quarter duel with fanatical Chechen

fighters. The fight rages throughout the house, at times Marines and the foreign fighters were exchanging rifle fire and grenades at ranges of less than 10 feet. For almost two hours the squad is trapped inside the house. During the brawl Kasal is shot seven times, almost loses his leg when it is nearly severed from his body, and sustains 47shrapnel wounds when he used his body to shield a wounded Marine laying next to him from an enemy grenade. In the skirmish, forever known as the Ã Â¿Â Hell HouseÃ Â¿Â fight, Kasal was awarded the Navy Cross, the nationÃ Â¿Â s second highest award for heroism.

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Customer Reviews

This is the first paperback edition of the riveting story of legendary U.S. Marine First Sergeant Brad Kasal. It is a page-turning account of Kasal’s courageous mission to rescue fallen comrades while under intense enemy fire during the Battle of Fallujah. At a house in a walled neighborhood, Kasal and his squad became involved in a close-quarter, two hour duel with fanatical Chechen fighters. During the fight, Kasal was shot seven times, almost losing his leg, and sustained 47shrapnel wounds using his body to shield a wounded Marine from an enemy grenade. Because of his actions in the skirmish, Kasal was awarded the Navy Cross, the nation’s second highest award for heroism. The book is a new addition to the Leatherneck Classics Series. My Men Are My Heroes has been selected as required reading by the Marine Commandant’s Reading List and as a "Marine Corps Legend" book by the Marine Corps League.

Nathaniel R. Helms is a Vietnam veteran and former police officer, who lives in St. Charles, MO. He is the author of My Men Are My Heroes: The Brad Kasal Story selected in 2012 for the USMC CommandantÃ Â¿Â s Ã Â¿Â Recommended Reading ListÃ Â¿Â and as a Ã Â¿Â Marine Corps LegendÃ Â¿Â book by the Marine Corps League.

The book satisfies those who want to know the story behind the picture. It's not particularly well written (it is somewhat disjointed), but I think the author did a decent job with what he had to work with. We don't really get to hear the details about Brad Kasal that make him a real character and I suspect that is because he is still in the Marine Corps and doesnt want to let his book confirm the Marine reputation for being the hell raisers most of us already know they are. The author seems to skirt around this and tell us, "you get the point, right?"I found some of the descriptions of the battle particularly interesting, like Psyops blasting AC/DC. The recovery aspect was touching and though I felt the author held back, there was still truth in his words. I give this book three three stars because it was an enlightening story about a battle we dont hear much about, and a glimpse into the life of one of the toughest men in America, but I felt that much of what could have been said was left out.

Marine, civilian, or anyone else. This book was written for people who aren't all that familiar with the military lifestyle. It's basically a journey through Brad Kasal's Marine Corps career. As a Marine myself, I almost read it all in one sitting. It had me nodding and smiling. It also had me inspired, and on the edge of my seat at times. There are a some good pictures inside which help out a lot. Some are gruesome. Like I said, this is a great book for anyone who wants a REAL good accurate look into the Marine Corps, it's more personal and intimate than it is political. Which I like. This book explains to people why we love the Marine Corps, while at the same time not necessarily agreeing with our government. One of my favorite books ever. And I'm one of those dudes who never reads.

This is one of those books that manages to succeed despite its failings. The story this book has to tell is one everyone should hear. Yes, the bookÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s poor execution detracts from the readability of the book, but I would encourage you to slog through the antiseptic prose and lack of personality to reach the important underlying story. Understand that this book isnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t as much about Brad Kasal as it is about his men. The title of the books is My Men Are My Heroes. It is not I Am My Own Hero. If you can remember that as you read the book, the book starts to make a little more sense to you and becomes more readable.KasalÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s story is one that

reminds us of those things that are truly important in life. This book does not focus as much on the actions in which Kasal took part, but more on the life beyond those actions -- both before and after. Sitting comfortably on our couches at home, it is easy to forget that the time a Marine spends at war is quite limited compared to the number of years in which he lives outside of the war. Yet that time becomes a defining moment for these men that inevitably affects every aspect of their life and the lives of those who interact with them. And that is where this book succeeds.This book does a good job of helping the reader better understand the Marine as a whole. This book takes you from the young man who dreams of becoming a Marine to the battle tested warrior and beyond. It gives a fuller picture of the Marine and his mindset. And that mindset isnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t an egocentric ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s all about meÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• mindset. Again, reference the title of the book.Take the time to read this book and consider what KasalÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s story is really about. This isnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t a war story so much as it is a life story. Of course when youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re a battle tested warrior, I suppose it is safe to say that your life story is indeed a story of war and its far reaching affects on your life. That my not be a war story in the classic sense, but it is still a story of war nevertheless.

I am going to completely honest when I say that I only came across this book because it is on the CMC Reading List. Having that said, I am certainly glad I did and completely understand why it is on Commandant Amos' reading list (for Lance Corporals.)SgtMaj Kasal is the ideal Marine grunt. Almost all of his promotions were earned Meritoriously. The story focuses on his life before the Marine Corps, going through the ranks (and before OIF II) as well as his participation in OIF I before coming to what the story is ultimately about, OIF II the Battle of Fallujah.One thing I started to notice is although I cannot completely relate to him about being a grunt, I can take pride in so many stories he provides the author. There are things that only a Marine would understand, which always amuses me. Also, I have worked for 1stSgt (now SgtMaj) Ruff in Camp Lejeune, and am currently under the command of Major General Toolan (whom was SgtMaj Kasal's Col. during OIF I.) It makes the story more personal to myself, as well as give me a lot more respect for these warriors that I have/had the pleasure of working under.One complaint I have is this story focuses on how amazing SgtMaj Kasal is. Do not get me wrong at all, a war hero deserves insane amounts of respect. And I am certainly not saying SgtMaj Kasal does not deserves it, however isn't the story called "My Men Are My Heroes?" Of course the story calls on recollections from the Marines that have worked for and were with SgtMaj Kasal during Fallujah, but the story more focuses on how incredible he was, how amazing he was to his Marines and why he is a hero... I can't help myself by

wondering, what about the other Marines? The ones that saved him, helped him, fought along with him, died for this country? Why aren't their stories more than a sentence long and a dedication page in the front of the novel? I understand that it is a story about SgtMaj Kasal and mostly his recollection, but I would've liked to know more of why these men are his heroes instead of why SgtMaj was the best 1stSgt ever.Also, one statement that makes me laugh: "Marines consider their GySgt's Gods." What? I laughed when I read that. Do not get me wrong: I respect my GySgt very much. He has been doing this for 18 years, and knows a lot about the Marine Corps. He is a good man in general, and an especially good man to have on your side... but do I consider him a God? No. He is a GySgt. I look up to him, rely on his wisdom of the Corps, but I certainly do not consider him a God.I would suggest this novel to all Marines. No, I take that back. Not just Marines, but all Americans. While you're sitting safe at home, this will give you a look at what sacrfices are military makes for your freedom.Semper Fi!

Outstanding!!

Amazing book. One I will read again in the future.

Sure a great story about a remarkable man and situation that shows how Marines have one another back. I know the author is also a vet, but I was a little disappointed in the his writing style. Never the less, great reading.

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