



The Only Thing Worth Dying For: How Eleven Green Berets Fought for a New Afghanistan (P.S.)

By Eric Blehm

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Eric Blehm, author of the award-winning *The Last Season*, is back with another true adventure story, *The Only Thing Worth Dying For*. Set in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, *The Only Thing Worth Dying For* chronicles the untold story of the team of Green Berets led by Captain Jason Amerine that conquered the Taliban and helped bring Hamid Karzai to power in Afghanistan. In the tradition of *Black Hawk Down*, *The Only Thing Worth Dying For* is, in the words of former Congressman Charlie Wilson (from *Charlie Wilson's War*), "the one book you must read if you have any hope of understanding what our fine American soldiers are up against in Afghanistan."

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The early, relatively heroic days of the conflict in Afghanistan are memorialized in this engrossing if glamorized war saga. Blehm (*The Last Season*, a B&N Discover Award winner) follows the exploits of Capt. Jason Amerine's Special Forces team Alpha 574, which choppered into Afghanistan in November 2001 to help future Afghan president Hamid Karzai organize anti-Taliban insurgents in the south. The team's mission—to turn chaotic and perpetually stoned Pashtun tribesmen into effective soldiers—seems impossible and, ultimately, proved unnecessary. Indeed, according to Blehm's account, the Green Berets' worst enemies were other Americans: meddling CIA honchos and army brass, a do-nothing Marine officer, and the air force spotter who mistakenly called in an air strike on 574's position, with ghastly results. The author overplays the comradely bond between Karzai and Amerine, who come off as a latter-day Washington and Lafayette, but doesn't quite succeed in wringing a military epic out of what was essentially a turkey shoot. Still, Blehm's warts-and-all account of the U.S. military machine in action is full of tension, color, and real pathos. 16 pages of b&w photos. (Jan.)

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Review

“The Only Thing Worth Dying For is not only brilliant, it’s the one book you must read if you have any hope of understanding what our fine American soldiers are up against in Afghanistan.” (Former Congressman Charlie Wilson)

“A skillfully reported and masterfully written account of one of the most crucial moments of the War Against Terror. Blehm reminds us of the perils, the triumphs and the sacrifices made in the name of freedom.” (Bob Woodruff, ABC News correspondent)

“Through careful reporting and crisp narrative pacing, Eric Blehm has given us a thrilling, forgotten drama from the opening chapter of the war in Afghanistan. *The Only Thing Worth Dying For* will become an enduring classic of this extraordinary theater, where so much hangs in the balance.” (Hampton Sides, bestselling author of *Ghost Soldiers* and *Blood and Thunder*)

“Blehm provides powerful and unflinching insight into a real-life mission that ended in tragedy but left an indelible mark on history. From the comic moments to the bleakest hour, it’s a testament to how a small team of well-trained men can shape a nation’s destiny.” (Stephen Grey, award-winning author of *Ghost Plane: The True Story of the CIA's Torture Program* and *Operation Snakebite: The Story of an Afghan Desert Siege*)

“Eric Blehm has written a literary masterpiece about modern war. The whole witches’ brew is here: valor, honor, heroism, cowardice, incompetence, stupidity, triumph, blood, death and despair. That America has soldiers like these should fill every American heart with pride. Read this book!” (Stephen Coonts, bestselling author of *Flight of the Intruder* and *The Disciple*)

“No other book has gone to such depths in research, nor been so descriptive in recounting this critical mission during the earliest days after 9/11 when the US Army Special Forces successfully waged unconventional warfare in Afghanistan.” (Sergeant Major Billy Waugh, author of *Hunting The Jackal* and *Isaac Camacho, An American Hero*)

“The greatest story of a small unit’s battle through an untamed land since Lawrence of Arabia.” (Adam Makos, editor of Valor Magazine)

“A captivating account of our heroic warriors—a remarkable U.S. Army Special Forces unit’s hard-fought success against incredible odds. It reads with the thrill of fiction—but this is the damned deadly real deal.” (W.E.B. Griffin & William E. Butterworth IV, best-selling authors of *The Traffickers* and *The Honor of Spies*)

From the Back Cover

On a moonless night just weeks after September 11, 2001, a U.S. Special Forces team of Green Berets known as ODA 574 infiltrated the mountains of southern Afghanistan with a seemingly impossible mission: to foment a tribal revolt and force the Taliban to surrender. Armed solely with the equipment they could carry on their backs, shockingly scant intelligence, and their mastery of guerrilla warfare, Captain Jason Amerine and his ten men had no choice but to trust their only ally, a little-known Pashtun statesman named Hamid Karzai. Having returned from exile, Karzai—on the run from the Taliban—was traveling the countryside to raise a militia.

The Only Thing Worth Dying For chronicles the most important mission in the early days of the Global War on Terror, when the men on the ground knew little about the enemy—and their commanders in Washington knew even less. With unprecedented access to surviving members of ODA 574, key war planners, and Karzai himself, award-winning author Eric Blehm cuts through the noise of politicians and high-level military officials to narrate for the first time a story of uncommon bravery and terrible sacrifice, intimately exposing the realities of unconventional warfare and nation-building in Afghanistan that continue to shape the region today.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kenneth Allen:

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Michael Becker:

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Mary Adam:

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