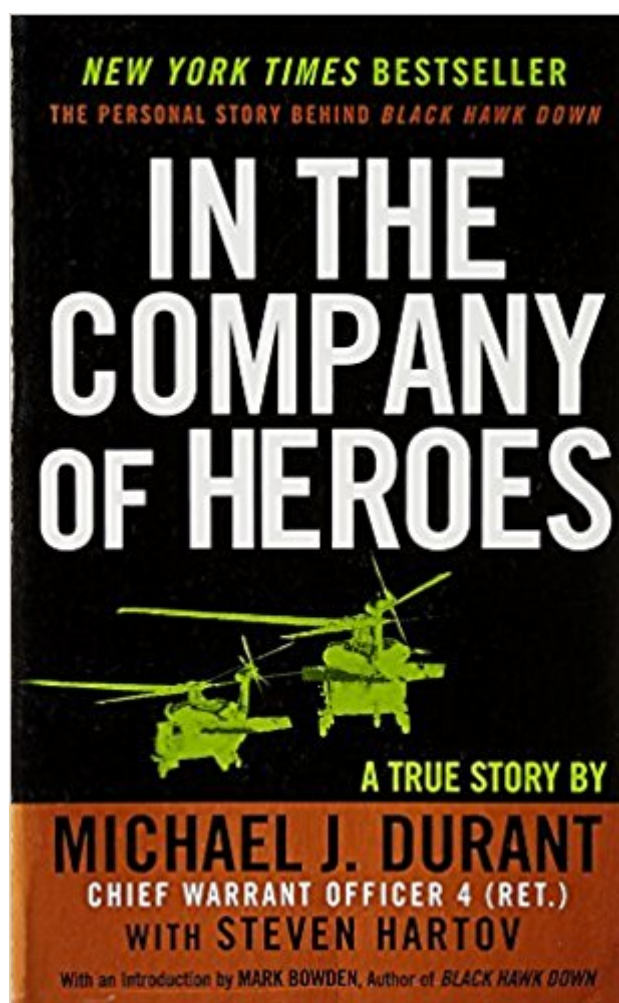


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In The Company Of Heroes: The Personal Story Behind Black Hawk Down



Synopsis

Piloting a U.S. Army Special Operations Blackhawk over Somalia, Michael Durant was shot down with a rocket-propelled grenade on October 3, 1993. With devastating injuries, he was taken prisoner by a Somali warlord. With revealing insight and emotion, he tells the story of what he saw, how he survived, and the courage and heroism that only soldiers under fire could ever know.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The 1993 battle in Mogadishu between American soldiers and Somali militiamen gets a human-scale retelling in this jaunty but harrowing memoir. Durant went down with the Black Hawk he piloted; after a terrifying crash in which his back and leg were broken and a violent fire-fight, he was held captive for ten days by Somali militiamen as a pawn in their stand-off with American peacekeeping forces. Frightened and in agony from his wounds, he called on his survival training to help him endure, but he also relied on the empathy of some of his Somali captors, especially the gruff but sympathetic guard who feeds, bathes and bonds with him. Durant is a gung-ho army honcho, not much given to introspection, and the book often takes leave of the captivity narrative to recount his exploits in conflicts from Panama to Iraq, and to celebrate the bravado and leave-no-man-behind esprit-de-corps of his "Night Stalkers" helicopter unit. The writing is full of terse jargon, weapons specs, helicopter-assault procedural and special-ops swagger ("They were the kind of professionals who could pick off a rabbit from a roller-coaster with a BB gun"). But overall the story remains taut, and the prose evokes both the chaos of combat and the anxiety of confinement. Durant's perspective on the Somalia conflict is somewhat limited and jingoistic

("Mogadishu was Tombstone, and we were Wyatt Earp"), but his is a revealing portrait of the human face of war. 16 pages of b&w photos. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

Adult/High School-A decade ago, Durant and his crew were shot down while flying a U.S. Army Special Operations Black Hawk helicopter in the heart of Mogadishu. The only survivor after a firefight with hostile forces of warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid, the author recounts the conditions of his 11 days in captivity, with experiences that ranged from heroic to gruesome, harrowing, bizarre, and compassionate. Suffering severe injuries to his back, leg, and face, moved under guard through a sequence of rudimentary facilities in a volatile combat environment, and facing the deadly risk of discovery by rival clans, Durant became a political pawn receiving global media attention. Readers of Mark Bowden's *Black Hawk Down* (Atlantic Monthly, 1999) who wished for a more technically detailed analysis of the mission's operational aspects will savor this account. The book also incorporates chapters on the arduous training required to earn a spot in an elite squadron and lays groundwork for appreciating the Mogadishu engagement by describing prior high-risk special operations in Korea, Panama, and Iraq in which Durant participated. Each episode resonates with the sense of bonding among combat brethren, and the professional esprit and conviction behind mottoes such as "NSDQ" (Night Stalkers Don't Quit), as exemplified by Durant's squadron mates who flew above the embattled city in the days after his shoot-down, broadcasting: "Mike Durant-. We will not leave without you." A dramatic narrative by a talented storyteller. Lynn Nutwell, Fairfax City Regional Library, VA Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

A good book that deals with one of our finest during captivity. Follows where *Black Hawk Down*, the book and the movie, left us wondering what happened to the fallen pilots, and what became of their fortune. A tough book written with a light heart, a good sense of humor, and plenty of flashbacks to good rock and roll songs, and previous missions before. I found the book, if anything, a little less on the dramatic state of things, and more on the light hearted personality of the author. Even the moments of extreme bad news, the narrator finds time to shoot out a couple of wisecracks regarding his situation, surely a braver man is capable of taking a lighter tone to an otherwise very dramatic situation. These pilots are the best of the best, their daring is beyond what most would be willing to undertake. Respect and admiration for these individuals comes easy, and the book shows what they are made of. 3.5 Stars.

Like a great many people, I've watched the movie Black Hawk Down. I loved that movie and have watched it more times than I can count. That movie made me want to learn more about Operation Gothic Serpent. In my quest for knowledge, I came across this book. I had heard about it in the past, but I finally had to read it. Now, I'm not an avid reader. There are books I like, but not all that many. When I first started reading, I couldn't put the book down. I finally forced myself to stop reading at 1:30 AM! This book is an emotional roller coaster. Some parts are making you almost cry from laughing, while other parts make you cry from sorrow. The writing is fantastic and makes for an easy read. Durant's tale is nothing short of incredible. One of the wonderful things about this book is you don't need to be a history or military buff to understand and follow it. You could literally know nothing of what happened and still love the story. If you have any interest in military history, or even if you don't, I highly recommend this book.

This book is a great compliment to the book "Black Hawk Down". Mr. Durant not only takes you inside his captivity but also provides many stories of the brotherhood within the Night Stalkers, including many stories of his fellow men in the Mog that lost their lives. This book is a great stand-alone story, but also gives more insight and humanity to the brave men that sacrificed so much on that day in October, 1993.

Mr. Durant, sir, first, may I thank you for honoring your country the way you have done and still do--and secondly, thank you for sharing this story with the rest of us. It will be significant for Special Ops in training...for instructors to use your story as one of survival in captivity. (No, I am not in the military...just using some common sense.) I have decided to write my review to you personally, as there have been so many other Reviewers that I'd be a needle in a haystack if you ever read them all. What went down in Mogadishu, was you, sir. I can remember seeing your face on t.v. those years ago when everything just so happened to go just so wrong. I can't imagine how you sustained your inner peace with so much physical pain and mental anguish of not knowing exactly what was going on. You are used to knowing exactly what is going on, making that a hardship and a trigger for you in your mind. Your captivity will be something unforgettable. But I did notice (in your fascinating book) that even though you were in a rock bottom situation, you still used all of your senses that were left to you, and you used them to survive your upheaval, as well as your time spent there. I absolutely loved finding out who Firimbi actually was! I had a huge smile on my face, realizing that 'so much conflict in life could be resolved if we all could communicate', via your relationship with

him. This indecisiveness between the two of you only shows that if we let ourselves find a way to communicate country to country/person to person, we'd understand each other's ways better. So much of this type of conflict exists in Somalia as they are literally brainwashed by their government that we are an axis of evil, as the U.S. promised food and amenities to the poor, yet their corrupt government kept it from them, thus blaming us. I don't have to tell you the rest...you know why you were sent there, though not expecting what we saw on t.v., and magazines around the world of you. I am so glad that you made it home. I am terribly sorry for those whom did not. (just as those who were frantic to find you...had your same instrument ingrained in them...leave no soldier behind). And if times ever get tough, just always remember the two women of the husbands who perished looking for you. They don't want you to blame yourself. Take any of that weight that is still there off of your shoulders because in the long run, you will be together with them in the next life. And I hope that writing this book (though it may have been quite difficult) strengthened you in more ways than you had expected it to. All the best to you and have a happy and healthy life! Jane Lavoie for Peace around the globe--(somehow, someday!)

I thought the movie was an accurate depiction of the events at the crash site but after reading this book, no way. Michael Durant brings the men that died that day back to life and tells the stories of who they were and how they got into super 62 and eventually the crash site. As you read this book the level of detail transported back in time and it's like you were there in the events as they happened. I thought it would just recap the movie but instead you go from Korea medivacs to Grenada, to training in the U.S. and eventually to Somalia. After reading *In The Company of Heroes* I appreciate how experienced and talented those men were. I remember watching the events unfold and the names of the dead on the tv screen but this book shows that those men pioneered many of the tactics and equipment that our forces use today. It's an amazing journey through this book. The movie was a complete waste of time and got almost all the facts of the crash site wrong. If you had any interest in the events surrounding Black Hawk Down this is a must read! I can't wait for his next book.

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