



The Last Deployment: How a Gay, Hammer-Swinging Twentysomething Survived a Year in Iraq (Living Out: Gay and Lesbian Autobiog)

Bronson Lemer

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In 2003, after serving five and a half years as a carpenter in a North Dakota National Guard engineer unit, Bronson Lemer was ready to leave the military behind. But six months short of completing his commitment to the army, Lemer was deployed on a yearlong tour of duty to Iraq. Leaving college life behind in the Midwest, he yearns for a lost love and quietly dreams of a future as an openly gay man outside the military. He discovers that his father's lifelong example of silent strength has taught him much about being a man, and these lessons help him survive in a war zone and to conceal his sexuality, as he is required to do by the U.S. military.

The Last Deployment is a moving, provocative chronicle of one soldier's struggle to reconcile military brotherhood with self-acceptance. Lemer captures the absurd nuances of a soldier's daily life: growing a mustache to disguise his fear, wearing pantyhose to battle sand fleas, and exchanging barbs with Iraqis while driving through Baghdad. But most strikingly, he describes the poignant reality faced by gay servicemen and servicewomen, who must mask their identities while serving a country that disowns them. Often funny, sometimes anguished, *The Last Deployment* paints a deeply personal portrait of war in the twenty-first century.

InSight Out Book Club selection

Bronson Lemer named one of *Instinct* magazine's Leading Men 2011

QPB Book Club selection

Finalist, Minnesota Book Awards

Finalist, Over the Rainbow Selection, American Library Association

Amazon Top Ten 10 Gay & Lesbian Books of 2011

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