



# **The War I Always Wanted: The Illusion of Glory and the Reality of War**

*Brandon Friedman*

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Growing up in the shadows of the giant B-52 Stratofortresses that thundered away from the nearby Barksdale Air Force Base, Brandon Friedman dreamed of becoming a warrior and defending his country. But dreams of heroism and the realities of war can look very different, and when Brandon joined the army as a second lieutenant in peacetime, he had no way of knowing how his world was about to change.

This is Brandon Friedmans story of coming of age in a world awakening to the horrors made plain on 9/11. With the U. S. Army moving into full-fledged combat operations half a world away against Al Qaeda and their Taliban hosts, Brandon found himself facing an elusive enemy on unfamiliar ground. He tells how, as an infantry platoon leader in the elite 101st Airborne Division, the famed "Screaming Eagles," he and his unit struggled to find their footing in the high valleys of the Hindu Kush while battling radical Islam in operation Anaconda.

A brief respite at their home base in Kentucky, and Friedman and the Screaming Eagles were off to war again, this time in Iraq. In this gripping memoir of a young soldier learning the hardest lessons of combat, we see the terrors and disillusion of war as the insurgency in Iraq spirals out of control. And we see the true valor of character emerging under fire.

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